







# NIMRUD AND ITS REMAINS

VOLUME I







1 ND2547(B) 'Ethiopian' and lioness. Length 10.5 cm. From well in N.W. Palace. See p. 139.

# NIMRUD AND ITS REMAINS

# VOLUME I

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# COLLINS

ST JAMES'S PLACE · LONDON

1966

© The British School of Archaeology in Iraq, 1966 All rights of reproduction reserved Printed in Great Britain at The University Press, Aberdeen Blocks by Gilchrist Brothers Ltd., Leeds I dedicate this book to my wife, Agatha Christie Mallowan, who shared with me in the joys and trials of excavating Nimrud and lightened our labours through her imagination, her skill, and her kindness



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## NOTE ON SPELLING

In the spelling of ancient proper names, for reasons of economy, we have omitted the more complicated pointing and adopted certain standard simplifications. For instance, Akkadian  $\check{s}$  is represented as sh; the various forms of h, whether h or h, we have rendered as h and the two forms of t are undifferentiated.

## ABBREVIATIONS IN CAPTIONS

(AM)	In the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford
(B)	In the Iraq Museum, Baghdad
(вм)	In the British Museum, London
(MET.MUS.N.Y.)	In the Metropolitan Museum, New York

Any objects other than those mentioned as belonging to these four museums were given to the Expedition and are, up to the time of writing, the property of the British School in Iraq; but subsequently a few more objects have been allocated and it has only been possible to indicate the precise location of the most important articles.

## PREFACE

SEVEN years have passed since I began the writing of this book. The long delay in completing it is partly due to the time taken in excavating Fort Shalmaneser and to the great variety of evidence which has had to be examined subsequently; partly to the claims of other academic work. Indeed I despaired of finishing the task, until, in 1962, All Souls College, Oxford, did me the honour of electing me to a Fellowship, and freed me from many other duties. Even now, however, I feel I could spend seven more years on this work, but it has become urgently necessary to put down what I know before it is too late. What has been said here is but the prelude to many other publications that are bound to follow, mostly of a specialized character.

Much laboratory work has preceded this general account of the dig, not only on the repair, maintenance and restoration of the antiquities, but also in the shape of articles contributed during each successive season to our periodical *Iraq*. It has been our practice, and it is certainly a good one, to put into print some account of what has been done in the field, within a few months of terminating a season. This method necessarily involves the expression of inadequately tested opinions and provisional conclusions. How much I have benefited from these preliminaries, reference to the earlier, relatively short, accounts will show.

The form and scheme of this book is in a sense archaic, a continuation of Layard's narrative. But it is, I believe, appropriate that we should revert to this method at the present time, for recently, in 1963, his full and vivid biography, by Gordon Waterfield, has been published. In these days of increasing specialization, there is something to be said for attempting to weave into the narrative of the excavation the many different threads of evidence which combine to represent the picture of a living past. Above all, I have wished to relate the archaeological and the literary evidences to the architectural, with which they were so closely associated. The knowledge of Assyria obtained from Nimrud has a bearing far distant in time and in space, east and west, and has been accompanied by the discovery of many beautiful things which illustrate the ingenuity and skill of ancient Asiatic craftsmen. A general and sufficiently detailed survey of our finds follows in these pages, but the preparation of a scientific catalogue of the ivories, of which some hundreds of specimens have been illustrated here, has still to be undertaken, and is already in hand for special publication elsewhere. The detailed architectural account of Fort Shalmaneser

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will, we hope, eventually be written in a single volume by Mr David Oates, who has had the major share in the discovery.

In acknowledging my gratitude to many different persons and institutions without whose aid the work could never have been achieved. I begin with the Iraqi authorities, whose hospitality, courtesy and scientific collaboration has been generously open-handed. All excavators from abroad must inevitably be a nuisance to the hosts who entertain them; none have been more helpful and forebaring than our Iraqi friends. To more than anyone, we are indebted to the late Dr Naji al Asil, who was Director-General of Antiquities during the greater part of the time when we were at work on Nimrud. His death in 1963 was a grievous loss. He had shown unsparing energy in the promotion of archaeological enterprises throughout the country, and he encouraged our operations at Nimrud without stint from the very beginning. His successors have been no less co-operative: first Savid Taha Bagir, then Dr Faisal el Wailly, the present Director-General, and Savid Fuad Safar, the Inspector-General of Antiquities. I wish also to mention the name of Savid Hussain el Awni, who was Assistant Director when we began work in 1949 and smoothed our path at that difficult time. Year after year, as is required by the Antiquities Law, the Department has dedicated a member of its staff to assist us, and to translate the catalogue records into Arabic. One and all of these members have proved to be friends and valuable colleagues. Their names are as follows: Dr Mahmud el Amin (1949); Savid Izzet Din (1950-1, 1953, 1955); Dr Faraj Basmachi (1950-3); Savid Subri Shukri (1952); Savid Tariq el Madhlum (1956-8); Savid Selim al-Jelili (1960-3); Sayida Selma al Radi (1963). In addition to these representatives, who took part in the expeditions, various members of the Department have spent time in Nimrud for the purpose of restoration and conservation: they included: Savid Akram Shukri, Tariq el Madhlum, Behnam Abu Suf, Ali Nakhshabandi, Selim al Jelili, 'Isa Toma.

Other members of the Department who have rendered important aid are: Sayid Akram Shukri in charge of the laboratories, skilled in technical and artistic matters alike; and Sayid Antran who has also shown remarkable kindness and patience; many of his beautiful photographs appear in this volume. I also mention with gratitude, Sayid Gergis al-Awad, librarian; Beshir Francis, Sadiq el Hassan, formerly editor of *Sumer*, and many others in the same Department.

I forbear to mention by name the many Mutesarrifs of Mosul, who amid the pressure of official duties invariably lent us their powerful support and smoothed our path to the dig; among them there were personal friends for whom we had both affection and esteem. In Mosul again, we had reason to be grateful for the good offices of the Museum staff and the Director, Sayid Daiwachi. It is also a pleasure to recall our friendly relations with Shaikh Abdullah Nejeifi, the landowner at Nimrud, and his entire family, of which Shaikh Abd al Aziz is the present head. No less cordial was the co-operation we received from other farmers including the family of Sherif Dabbagh, and from Sayid Salem Namak.

Again in Mosul we received the most generous hospitality from successive occupants of the British Consulate for so long as it continued to function there, and likewise from the British Council: in this connection I cannot omit to mention the names of Mr and Mrs Ross Thomas who kept open house for members of our expeditions and rendered us innumerable kindnesses. The help we received from the British Council extended to the officials in Baghdad, where we recall especially much happy entertainment from Mr J. Jardine as well as from other Directors. An annual lecture on the progress of the work at Nimrud, held in the British Council's hall in Baghdad, was always admirably organized and attended by a full house.

No less closely connected with the excavations were officials of the Iraq Petroleum Company, in Baghdad and in Mosul, and especially in Kirkuk and in 'Ain Zala. There were many tasks which we could not have completed without the loan of skilled technical assistance and of machines for the removal of heavy stone slabs, for shifting dumps, and for pumping out wells.

In recording our debt to the institutions which have so generously subscribed to the work, I have to mention first of all the British School of Archaeology in Iraq, under whose auspices all the expeditions have taken the field from the outset. The next major contributor has been the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, which has granted financial help in the most generous measure, and has collaborated with us in the happiest form of partnership possible. In saying this with all sincerity I have to record how much we owe to successive Directors, to the late Mr Francis Henry Taylor and to Mr J. J. Rorimer, and most particularly to my old friend and colleague, Mr Charles Wilkinson, a distinguished archaeologist, who has retired this year, and has been honoured with the title of Curator Emeritus of his former Department. His successor, Mr Vaughn Crawford, continues to show us the same goodwill and co-operation.

We have also worked in the closest collaboration with the British Museum. thereby continuing a partnership which began with Lavard in the middle of the last century. I owe a profound debt of gratitude to successive heads of the Department of Western Asiatic Antiquities (formerly entitled the Department of Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities) first to Dr C. J. Gadd (now Emeritus Professor), a friend who has invariably imparted to me of his great learning whenever I have gone to him for help. We were fortunate in 1952 to have been able to persuade him to join us for a season in the field at Nimrud itself, where he met on the spot the stones of Assyria, about which he had already written so much. His successor, Dr R. D. Barnett, author of the Catalogue of the Nimrud Ivories, has been no less helpful, and I have consulted him frequently. I cannot here mention all the members of that Department, but I must pay a special tribute to Professor D. J. Wiseman, who both from the British Museum and from the School of Oriental and African Studies visited Nimrud and took an active part in the work. He has contributed much, both directly and indirectly, to this volume, and none has worked harder in the cause of our excavations.

Another great debt is owed to the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, which has contributed to the dig financially during every single season, and has thereby doubled the value of its gifts, since we always knew that we could count on it for support, whenever we took the field: this generous aid was begun at the time when Mr D. B. Harden was Director of the Department of Antiquities. I am no less indebted to his successor, my friend Mr R. W. Hamilton, now Director of the Museum, who opened the work with me in 1949 and in the previous year had assisted in setting us up in our house in Baghdad. In mentioning

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the aid received from the Birmingham City Museum and Art Gallery, I wish to include the name of Mr Adrian Oswald, who has always been particularly helpful. Among other associates I recall with pleasure the name of my friend, Professor J. Laessøe, who besides many times acting as epigraphist, induced the Rask-orsted Foundation to give us a generous grant, and brought with him a number of skilled colleagues, whose names are mentioned below: I am happy to think that at Nimrud our Danish friends refreshed themselves in modern archaeological technique, and prepared for the successful excavations which Dr Laessøe subsequently conducted in the Dokan. Another Danish colleague, Dr Hans Helbaek, of the National Museum, Copenhagen, visited us in 1955, and we are indebted to him for the informative examination of vegetable remains which we discovered in the course of our work.

A special visit was made to Baghdad by Mr Gardiner for the purpose of undertaking colour photography and some of his work is illustrated here.

In naming the many institutions which have given us support, both financial and scientific, I must particularly acknowledge our indebtedness to the Institute of Archaeology, University of London, which provided us with facilities for the care and maintenance of fragile objects and for the storage of much material: all this was made possible by the goodwill of successive Directors, first Professor V. Gordon Childe, then Professor W. F. Grimes, who consistently gave me their support during my occupancy of the Chair of Western Asiatic Archaeology at the Institute. In this connection I owe special thanks to many officials at the same Institute, for advice and aid: to Miss I. Gedye and to Mr H. Hodges in the laboratories; to Miss J. du Plat Taylor in the Library. Mr M. B. Cookson and Mrs V. M. Conlon of the Photographic Department have supplied me with many fine photographs; Mr H. M. Stewart redrew a number of the plans and some objects, with a delicate touch. In the restoration of the ivories I cannot overstress the skill and patience of Miss M. Howard and Miss Olive Starkev.

Two generous grants from the British Academy towards the preparation and cleaning of a large collection of ivories which still required urgent attention in Baghdad, enabled me to illustrate in these volumes a number of fine pieces which would otherwise have awaited publication elsewhere.

Other institutions which supported us with liberal grants included the Griffith Institute, Oxford; Penguin Books Ltd, through my friend Sir Allen Lane; the University of Cambridge; the Australian Institute of Archaeology, Melbourne; the Iraq Petroleum Company; Durham University; Imperial Chemical Industries Ltd; the Patrimoine des Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire, Brussels; the Daily Telegraph; the Royal Ontario Museum, Canada; the University of Sydney, Australia; the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge. Here it is also appropriate to pay tribute to my old friend Sir Bruce Ingram, formerly editor of the Illustrated London News, which has published so many illustrated accounts of the excavations. Sir Bruce took an enthusiastic interest in the work and made eager inquiries about our discoveries at the end of each season; to his assistant Mr Edward Bacon we are also grateful for the care which he exercised in assembling our material for publication.

The administration of so many successive expeditions has been no light task, and for their part in this I must mention with gratitude the great help received

from many officials, all of them acting in an honorary capacity, of the British School of Archaeology in Iraq. We owed much to the first Chairman, Sir Edgar Bonham-Carter, and to his successors, as well as to successive Presidents, the Rt Hon. L. S. Amery, and the Rt Hon. the Lord Salter. We also acknowledge our debt to a succession of Honorary Secretaries, to Sir Edward Keeling, who was a pillar of the School for many years, and subsequently to Mr Kevin Hayes and Miss G. C. Talbot; also to our Honorary Treasurers, first Sir Osborne Mance and then Mr G. E. Dent, both of the Ottoman Bank. A former Chairman, Sir Robert Brooke-Popham and our present Chairman, Sir John Troutbeck, also generously devoted their care and guidance on our behalf. Successive Ambassadors in Iraq: Sir Henry Mack, Sir John Troutbeck, Sir Michael Wright, Sir Humphrey Trevelyan, and Sir Roger Allen have all taken an encouraging interest in the work and visited us in the field.

The list of those who served on the staff of the Nimrud expedition year after year is a long one. Before coming to this in detail, it should be recorded that I directed the first eight campaigns in the field, 1949–57; in 1958 I joined the expedition towards the end of the season, and thereafter revisited the School in Baghdad in order to prepare material for publication, and Nimrud in the autumn of 1962, to discuss the plan of our last campaign with Mr J. J. Orchard. There were no expeditions in 1954 and in 1959, but much progress was then made towards assembling material for publication, and in the former year, 1954, almost the whole of *Iraq* volume XVI was devoted to a relation of our discoveries at Nimrud.

Now I must mention, first and foremost, Mr David Oates, to whose technical skill in the conduct of the dig much is owed, particularly in the task of excavating Fort Shalmaneser, from 1957 onwards, and in acting as Field Director in 1958, and again in 1960–2. This arduous task is one that has required great physical and mental stamina, and in the pages that follow it will be seen how much I am indebted to him, and how often I have quoted from his preliminary accounts. It must also be recorded that during our last season, 1963, when we successfully completed excavations on the south wall of the Fort, the work was under the charge of Mr J. J. Orchard, at present Secretary-Librarian of the School; he was assisted in the survey work by Mr Nicholas Kindersley, who was responsible for planning the additions to the building that were discovered that year.

Another name that deserves honourable mention is Miss Barbara Parker, formerly Secretary-Librarian of the School in Baghdad, who served on no less than ten campaigns at Nimrud, supervised the building of the house, and undaunted—camped on the site alone when the autumn came round in order to collect labour for replastering the roof, and to keep our dwelling in good repair. During the season Miss Parker acted as epigraphist and photographer; and thanks to a host of Iraqi and British friends faced with a smiling equanimity domestic and official problems that often required much ingenuity to solve.

Lack of space prevents me from mentioning in detail the specific contributions which have been made by the many persons who have served on our staff; in many cases their names have appeared as the authors of articles in the printed pages of *Iraq*, and in fact this book is a corporate contribution in which to each of them has had a part. The following served on the staff of expeditions

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to Nimrud: Dr Richard Adrian (1958); Miss J. Beidler (1955); Lady (Olwen) Brogan (1962); Mr Neville Chittick (1951); Mr V. E. Crawford (1961, 1963); Mr D. H. French (1960); Mr M. L. and Mrs A. T. Friis (1957); Professor C. J. Gadd (1952); Mr Erik von Gericke (1961); Mr R. W. Hamilton (1949-55); Mrs P. Harper (1962); Mr D J. Hillen (1951); Miss M. H. Howard (1956); Mr P. Hulin (1956); Mr F. S. Johansen (1957); Mr N. Kindersley (1957, 1961-3); Mr J. V. Kinnier Wilson (1961); Miss D. Kirkbride (1951); Professor J. Laessøe (1956-60); Professor and Mrs M. E. L. Mallowan (1949-58); Mr A. Millard (1961); Mr T. Mitchell (1962); Miss M. Munn-Rankin (1950); Mr David Murray Threipland (1958); Mr D. Oates (1955-62); Mrs D. Oates (formerly Miss Joan Lines-1952-3, 1956-8); Mr J. J. Orchard (1960-3); Miss Stephanie Page (1062); Miss Barbara Parker (1950-61); Mr J. E. Reade (1962-3); Miss Charmian Reed (1961); Mr J. H. Reid (1952-5); Mr Wallace Russell (1956); Mr H. W. F. Saggs (1952); Miss C. A. Searight (1960, 1962-3); Miss S. N. Shaw (1963); Mr Kelly Simpson (1951); Mr H. S. Smith (1960); Mr D. B. Stronach (1957-60); Miss Olga Tufnell (1955); Mr Hilary Waddington (1956); Mr Carroll Wales (1958); Professor D. J. Wiseman (1950-1, 1953); Mr Anthony Wood (1956).

Coupled with these names are two others which none of us who served at Nimrud will ever forget: our foremen, Mohammed Halaf el Muslah, a merry and jovial figure, and Abd el Halaf el Anqud, gentle, and discerning in judgement; they brought their sons, cousins, and brothers with them and led a motley assortment of local labourers as well as a few dozen more highly trained workmen from their native district of Sherqat across the river from Assur, which has been connected with archaeological excavations ever since Walter Andrae and Robert Koldewey opened the dig at Assur sixty years ago.

Finally, I must give my best thanks to those who have assisted in the production of this book. Mrs L. P. Kirwan typed the first draft, and undertook many different tasks, including the mounting of the photographic records at the end of each season; her devoted help, given unsparingly since 1950, has been a constant source of encouragement. Miss Georgina Thompson gave me invaluable technical assistance for the final revision and made many constructive suggestions. Miss Vera Katrak began the difficult task of organizing the arrangement of the illustrations and rendered skilled service in their preparation but the final layout of the plates is the work of Miss Jean Whitcombe; I have benefited much from the advice and critical comments of Mr Peter Hulin, who read and checked the final draft of the manuscript; but none of these persons is responsible for any of the errors that must inevitably occur in a work of this kind. Mrs Leri Davies undertook the final reading of the proofs, the compilation of the bibliography and the index and made constructive suggestions on many subjects which required further investigation.

I should not like to omit from the list of acknowledgements the sense of indebtedness to my late master, Sir Leonard Woolley, whose imaginative approach to the problems of excavation has constantly been in my mind; to Professor Sidney Smith, who has always generously given from his rich store of original knowledge; to Sir Mortimer Wheeler with his brilliant insight into the technique of stratification; and finally to my colleague, Professor Seton Lloyd, who has handled so many Mesopotamian problems with distinction. I am deeply indebted to the staff of my publishers for patient and conscientious supervision in the preparation of the text and illustrations.

Last but not least, I am happy to mention the great debt I owe to my wife who has been an indefatigable and stimulating helper, and has accompanied me in the field, both on excavation and on survey, for more than thirty years.

Greenway House Churston Ferrers, 1963



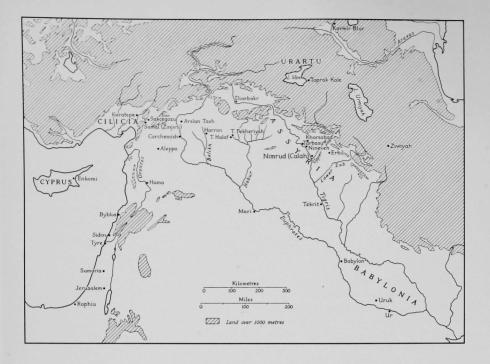
## FOREWORD

## NINEVITE PRELUDE

HEN did we first think of digging Nimrud? I hardly know the answer, but when I look back it seems that the plan had begun to take shape in my mind a long time ago. Between the years 1925 and 1929, when assisting Sir Leonard Woolley, I had often seen amid the ruins of Ur the inscribed bricks of its Assyrian governor. He was called Sin-balatsuiqbi, which means: 'the god Sin has proclaimed his majesty', an appropriate title for one who had charge of a city dedicated to the Moon. This man had had a distinguished and dangerous career.<sup>1</sup> In his early days he had sought favour with the crown prince in Nineveh by sending him a present of a pound of gold. His brother had been murdered after an intrigue with Babylon, but nevertheless in due course he obtained the office which he had long coveted, and embellished the city of Ur with nine new chapels. In so doing he excavated many ancient foundations and marvelled at the dead language of Sumerian inscriptions which his scribes miscopied for posterity.

How did this man manage to survive Babylonian intrigues and to represent so successfully the interests of his Assyrian overlord about 650 B.C., five hundred miles away from the capital? What kind of government had appointed him to his post? How did that alien country compare with his own? These were the thoughts that made me wonder how much might yet remain to be found in the distant cities of Assyria.

After the end of my first season, in March 1926, I drove northwards, excited at the prospect of seeing the upper reaches of the Tigris in the spring. In those days we used to travel in the earliest known type of Ford, which was as good as a mule on rough ground. It cost us sixteen Turkish gold pounds to go from Baghdad to Alexandretta through Mosul and the Sinjar, a three-day journey, and I remember an old man telling us that it had taken him just three months by caravan forty years before. But it was on that drive to the north between Kirkuk and Erbil that I had my first glimpse of a country that seemed like an archaeologist's paradise. Between those two cities, alongside a very ancient track, there lay mound after mound, prehistoric, Assyrian, and Achaemenian villages now desolated amid the wheat and barley of that fertile, rain-laden district. These sites lay on or near the ancient royal road which had once connected Susa in south-western Iran with Sardis. Some miles further north it had to pass through Assyria which stood at the junction of many cross roads, and could bar or open the way to Armenia, Syria and Babylonia as well as to Iran.



The first impression of Assyria's ancient capital, Nineveh, is not disappointing. In the spring across the Tigris from Mosul you see a massive bulwark of green mounds, and drawing nearer you hear the noisy crunch of the sheep plucking at the grass, as they graze upon the slopes. Many a time I have watched the small Arab or Kurdish shepherds dressed in a hooded cloak, darting behind their flocks like small magicians of a bygone age, as they make those strange gargling sounds which must have been heard in the first of the Ninevite villages on the virgin rock six or even seven thousand years ago. As time went on, I came to know that mound very well, for in 1931 I dug there with Dr R. Campbell Thompson. We sank a huge shaft ninety feet deep down to bedrock and in doing so discovered that Assyrian Nineveh, a deep accumulation of brick-built cities which had piled up one on the other between 1800 and 612 B.C., had been built over the top of a far older succession of prehistoric settlements. The Assyrians, like all good soldiers, had an eye for a commanding situation, and nearly always this meant taking possession of some ancient ruin. It was here, on the mound called Quyunjik, which in Turkish means 'the little sheep', that they staked one of their fortunes; but wisdom which was probably born of dissension taught them to establish other foundations elsewhere-at Assur, at Nimrud, and at Khorsabad. After they had made houses for their gods in Assur, they set about building Nineveh, a great city enclosing 1,800 acres and surrounded by a twelvemile circuit of wall which was still unfinished when the place was sacked in 612 B.C.

Although as I write it is thirty years since we stood on the top of Nineveh and dug into its remains, the feeling of exhilaration comes back to me as if it were but yesterday. How could it be otherwise as one looked at the Tigris on one side and the snow-capped hill called the Jebel Maqlub on the other? In the morning breeze which fanned the meadows one heard the sharp grunt of the burly pickman at each stroke as he loosened the heavy turf that concealed the

remains of this famous city. The diggers were a vigorous uninhibited company of peasants, and I remember feeling some apprehension when for the first time Thompson, having done what was called the morning 'stint', left me in charge for the afternoon. The men, one hundred and fifty of them, were ready to test the newcomer, and the opportunity was not long in coming. A stroke of the pick suddenly exposed the larger part of a finely inscribed Assyrian royal prism which had belonged to King Esarhaddon, 681-669 B.C. That moment, however, was no time for an examination of it: there were two contenders for possession, and the struggle soon turned into a public *mêlée*. Somehow I forced a way into the middle of this turbulent crowd, and the older men separated the two principal combatants. When we emerged with the trophy, the offenders were instantly dismissed and order was gradually restored to the usual accompaniment of sanctimonious speeches appropriate to the occasion. The incident drew us together and from that time on we were friends.

This little scene will now seem disgraceful to the modern professional digger accustomed to elaborately organized, well staffed, expeditions. But it would be wrong to omit it from the record, because it gives a fair picture of our modest dig at that time. It seems almost incredible that in those days the total cost of the expedition which employed one hundred and forty workmen for five months amounted to f,1,700. The work at Nineveh was financed by Sir Charles Hyde, editor of the Birmingham Post, and managed with the utmost economy by Thompson. No more conscientious accountant can have lived; at the end of the season he completed the reckoning on the spot and returned the balanceelevenpence in stamps. Our drawing-table consisted of an old pastry board knocked down for half a crown at an auction in Oxford; the survey pole was a long branch of a gnarled oak from the Kurdish hills. Yet on the completed contour-map the circuit of the walls coincided with that revealed by air photographs, and the small margin of inevitable error was of no practical consequence. As it happens, the whole of the top twenty feet of the mound has so often been plundered by the foes of Assyria, then by Greeks, Parthians, Romans, and generations of other treasure seekers, that ten times the money would hardly have availed to establish a better sequence of evidence. Much remains to be done, and on the mound itself it is in my opinion the northern and north-western sectors that still hold out the best promise to future generations of diggers. Were I endowed with f.100,000 and a free hand I would undertake to find in Nineveh things that would vet startle the world.

It is however most unlikely that anyone will ever find himself in so fortunate a position. Indeed, with the strictly limited resources available to archaeologists it will be necessary in future to rely increasingly on assistance from machinery, perhaps loaned by generous-minded corporations. Recently the oil companies have assisted liberally in this way. This kind of help however was not available in 1931. Indeed at that time the future looked black for our expedition. The men had in the previous season been paid according to their capacity, at the rate of one shilling, eightpence and sixpence a day. Thompson proposed a reduction of twopence all round. I remember how, as we went up to the mound on the first morning to engage labour, he decided to break this news. His proclamation was not met with popular acclaim: in fact there was an uproar. Above the hubbub of angry voices he was endeavouring

to explain in Arabic that England had come off the gold standard, and what that meant in economic terms. The exposition of that difficult situation was not finding a satisfactory response when he turned to me and said: 'You have a cut at it now.' My Arabic was in any case totally inadequate for advancing a thesis which even in English I ill understood, and the sight of a worthy peasant with a pick held high over my head was discouraging to the pursuit of an academic subject. I expressed inability to co-operate. However, we found the labour, at the new rate, and, as we explained, the more mouths benefited. We were a happy company, and I should add that Thompson was nonetheless the most generous of men. Many a time as the sweetmeat vendor ascended the mound he bought up the whole consignment and distributed it to the gangs; to a needy friend I have known him part with all he had.

The memory of that season at Nineveh is one of great delight. A six-year apprenticeship under Sir Leonard Woollev in the desert at Ur had, it is true been an enthralling experience, but Babylonia was a flat, desiccated country, often ridden with sandstorms, and the green downs of the north seemed a paradise by contrast. We lived in a little mud-plastered house a mile away from the mound, and a stone's throw from the mosque of Jonah, once the site of an Assyrian armoury. Quinces grew in our courtyard, and a mass of roses in front of our neighbour's garden near by. We worked hard. When rain threatened we rose in the darkness, two hours before dawn, and took the omens on the roof. If we decided to risk work, we used to flash a lantern three times towards the top of Nineveh, a mile away, in order to attract the attention of our watchman, whose response we suspected was usually due to his wife's rather than to his own wakefulness. From there the signal was taken up and passed on another two and a half miles northwards to the village of Gadhia from which most of our workmen came. Sometimes our prognostications were wrong, but perhaps not more so than many a modern meteorological forecast. We were using an intelligence system familiar to the kings of Assyria in 1800 B.C., as we know from the royal letters found at Mari on the Euphrates.

In the early months of the year it could be bitterly cold and, in anticipation, Thompson would ride out and meet the Kurdish caravans bringing firewood from the hills for sale in Mosul. He used to bargain with them over a distance of several miles and reckoned on breaking them down to rock-bottom price by the time they reached the pontoon bridge over the Tigris, at the entry to the town. There they would have had to pay a toll and municipal dues, and the reckoning was that both sides would benefit by striking a bargain beforehand. But that year prices were high, and Thompson could not achieve a reasonable figure. As it grew colder the situation became desperate, and one day when he was up on the mound and I was down, Mrs Thompson and my wife sighted another caravan. Under their orders I set out to meet it, and purchased the lot at a price which would have been wholly unacceptable to my chief. Thereafter I expected a reprimand for which no amount of approval from the women folk would compensate. Thompson however greeted the news of this transaction with a grin; the younger generation had been taken in, not he, and all was well.

Five months at Quyunjik convinced me that the churned mass of debris in the Assyrian levels of the akropolis was an unpromising spot, even for careful archaeological examination. A magnificent sweep of ancient farm-land and

Assyrian mansions lies on the flats below, on ground that is privately owned, and we may be sure that a store of knowledge lies buried both there and under Nebi Yunus. Move away the top twenty feet of soil on the akropolis and you have a prehistorian's paradise. The value of Thompson's archaeological work was mainly topographical; he was able to fix the position of a number of gates, a new palace, a temple, and a big dam or reservoir built by Sennacherib. His most splendid discovery was a bronze head, probably of Sargon of Agade, c.2400 B.C., unsurpassed of its kind in the ancient world. Our joint effort in sinking a great shaft from top to bottom of the mound set up a framework which established the long prehistoric succession of cultures, and has withstood the test of time. But posterity will remember him for his devotion to the study of Assyrian cuneiform. He had an amazing knowledge of the great Assyrian library collected by Assur-bani-pal, and made scores of joins with tablets discovered in the previous century; he himself found many new and fascinating texts, among them a mention of an earlier Cyrus, and another referring to Gyges of Lydia. Greatest of all was his contribution to the knowledge of Assyrian botany, chemistry and geology-his principal legacy. These books are a mine of obscure learning and will remain standard works for years to come. He was the robust type of Victorian scholar, bold, and quick to assimilate new sources of evidence He imparted to me a love for that ancient land which we had together enjoyed to the full.

I returned to that district for another year, 1932, after he left, but my thoughts at that time were wholly prehistoric and my interests centred on a small mound, Arpachiyah, four miles away from Nineveh, a village which produced round houses, cobbled streets, pottery, and little stone amulets of superb quality, more than six thousand years old. Afterwards, I spent another six years in Syria working at settlements in the Habur and Balikh valleys, but owing to the World War it was not till 1948 that I was able to return to Iraq, a country where I now have so many old friends that it is for me a second home. The British School of Archaeology in Iraq, since all its activities were suspended during the war years, had accumulated some savings, and we were prepared to organize a new expedition.

Thompson had made me realize that there was still much to be learned from a properly stratified dig conducted on an Assyrian site, and more especially that our knowledge of the sequence of development in the use of Assyrian materials, especially in the minor arts, was still defective. Much had been learned, and much is still being learned, from the thousands of documents discovered principally at Nineveh and Assur, but how were these and the other great cities of the Assyrian Empire developing during the changes of fortune that we hear of both in the cuneiform record and in the Old Testament? Why was the great city which King Sargon built at Khorsabad never finished, and abandoned as a capital when he died in 705 B.C.? What was the condition of life when the empire came to an end in 612 B.C.? How did the style of pottery, of seals, jewellery, tools and furniture alter during that time, and what influence did Assyria have on the arts and crafts of her neighbours? How did the people live, and what was the basis of Assyrian economy? The answers to many of these questions presented a challenge, an invitation to the digger.

The true homeland of Assyria is not a large country; its four major cities

are confined within an area of not more than five hundred square miles, and none is more than seventy miles apart from the other: the river Tigris was its life-line. Khorsabad, thoroughly and yet still incompletely dug by French and American expeditions, was a one-period site, denuded of its treasures, and offered no temptation to the digger. Nineveh, as we have seen, was not a practical proposition. About seventy miles below it, on the west bank, lay Assur; but that had already been intensively excavated by the Germans between 1903 and 1912. That dig had already told us much about the growth of the place, from the time when the first Assyrian tribe burnt out the local inhabitants two or three centuries before 2000 B.C., until the Parthians settled there in the second century when the Assyrians were but a dimly remembered nation. There remained Nimrud, anciently known as Calah in the Old Testament, Kalhu to the Assyrians. Twice in the previous twenty-two years I had visited that lovely spot. Within the akropolis one could still see fragments of Assyrian stone reliefs sticking out in the long grass. From the top of the Ziggurrat, the old temple tower, one could scan the five-mile circuit of its walls. This had been the scene of Lavard's triumphs between 1845 and 1851. But the magnificent stone sculpture which he had found, the three palaces, and the two temples, were of a severely royal and official character. They stood like a bold array of landmarks in the path of Assyrian history; much was missing, and the course was but dimly discerned. I had a feeling that things yet unknown, of great quality and worthy of long contemplation, would emerge from the soil.

## CHAPTER I

# NIMRUD LANDSCAPE

T is hard to decide what is one's strongest impression of Nimrud. I think of it in the winter as a lofty island in a sea of mud; in the spring as a green meadow gleaming in the sun; in the early summer as a torrid watchtower, remote and proud, in a pitiless solitude. Across the fields, two miles to the west, flow the swift waters of the Tigris. From the town walls you can see the stream rushing past the steep mud-banks cracked and parched in the blistering sun, hemmed in on the west by cliffs of gypsum, mud, and sandstone; downstream you come to islands of boar-infested scrub. Eastwards, less than a score of miles away, are the hills of Kurdistan edging back to the high mountains of Iran with their topmost peaks over the perpetual snow-line. On both sides of the river, and up to the eastern foothills, lies an undulating stretch of Assyrian pasture and downland, studded with small towns or hamlets which are perched upon the accumulated mounds of ancient cities.

Sometimes I have a picture of the golden-breasted bee-eaters flying down to their holes in the ruined walls at sunset, sometimes of the pair of sheldrake which used to settle on the flanks of the S.W. Palace. But no spot was more alive than the top of the prehistoric mound in the southern citadel, when shortly after sunrise our night-watchman stood by, counting up the villages in the valley from which the labourers had just arrived to take part in the dig. They came from Naefa, Nimrud, Nahmaniyah, Suf-et-tuth or 'Mulberrybank', and from half a dozen other hamlets which stood clear on the horizon as far as flat-topped Kashaf where the Tigris joins the Zab seven miles away. The eye could still pick out the line of the old canal which had once watered the plain between Nimrud and the Zab, the 'Canal of Abundance' which Assurnasir-pal had planned at the beginning of his reign in 883 B.C. to irrigate his tenant-farmers' fields.

Clanking up the sides of the mound with their little black kettles, morning after morning, came our small army of 200 men. Those who lived in Abbas Rejeib or in Nejefia rode up the cobbled street of King Shalmaneser, some of them mounted on donkeys, grateful for a stony grip on the steep climb from the outer town into the citadel. And near the beginning of the week there was always a gathering of hopeful villagers, who had trudged in for many miles, begging for a place if not now, then later on, when a vacancy might occur. About half of the men were permanent; the others came and went, having earned enough in silver to buy a little extra tea, sugar or cloth in Mosul. The stiffening,

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a hard core of skilled labour, was made up of between sixteen and twenty men from the Shergat villages opposite to Assur. Some of them had digging in their blood for three generations back; indeed the oldest remembered Walter Andrae whom he had served as a boy not long after 1900. The best of the skilled labour was very good indeed; each man was in his way an artist, and endowed with the craftsman's pride; one would be best for cleaning a wall-painting, another for a skeleton, a third for ivories, a fourth for clay tablets. Some had flair for following up a clue, some had eves that seemed to attract discoveries to them. Only the skilled could disentangle from the surrounding clay the mud-brick walls of which most ancient Western Asiatic buildings are ordinarily composed. To this ability, developed after many years of arduous training, the recovery of a large part of the ancient Assyrian ground plans is due, for most of the stone carvings which once lined the palace walls have long been abstracted from the soil. For these men, the work did not end at sunset. I have heard them discussing a problem far into the night: I have seen them come over to criticize each other's progress; on a holiday they would survey the ground wondering what was to come. It is right that before we begin to tell the story of Nimrud we should pay a tribute to them. They made their mistakes, they had their quarrels, their jealousies, they were sensitive to fancied slight, as all artists are. But they were enthusiastic, tenacious, and loved the dig; they were merry. We remember them with affection and with gratitude.

Many things must happen in preparation before ever a pick is allowed to strike the ground on an ancient site. As no army can go into battle with any hope of success unless the whole operation has been carefully planned, so it is with digging. And the analogy is a good one, for however carefully you may choose your field of battle—and we have seen what were the reasons for the choice of Nimrud—you cannot be assured of success; you cannot say if the opposition of the soil itself, or economic or personal difficulties will defeat you. Like any military commander, the archaeologist must know when and where to seize his opportunities, no less than how to make them.

The opportunity presented itself after the Second World War when the British School of Archaeology in Iraq, which for long had had its headquarters in London, was enabled, thanks to a Treasury grant, to appoint a Director, to rent a house in Baghdad, and to draw on its endowments for the purpose of an annual dig. Having been appointed Director in 1947, I spent the first five months of the following year in Iraq. During that time the Department of Antiquities had the happy idea of making soundings in the Makhmur plain, between the Zab rivers, and my wife and I spent three enjoyable weeks digging with Dr Mahmud el Amin in a small fort which was an outpost on the old Assyrian road between Erbil and the Tigris. That gave me another opportunity of looking at Nimrud, and again I noted how favourably it compared with the other capital cities. I returned home to the University of London in May of that year and the following winter was back again with the promise of funds for one season's dig, yet still uncertain where to go. Wages had increased sixfold since I was last in Iraq: could we venture on a big site? There was a risk that little might be found, and that we might not raise the money to make the effort worth while. For it is a maxim of digging that to double your gangs is to multiply your chances not twice, but fourfold. But large sites were then proving their worth. The Iraq Antiquities

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Department had conducted a series of campaigns in prehistoric Eridu which had revolutionized our ideas about the beginnings of civilization in Babylonia; an expedition from the Oriental Institute of Chicago and the University of Pennsylvania was about to chance its hand again in the south at the Sumerian city of Nippur. One morning in January 1949 I called on the Director of Antiquities, Dr Naji al Asil, who began telling me about these two great enterprises. Suddenly any thought of caution which I may have had, left me, and I was moved to ask if we might return to Nimrud, where a hundred years back the first British expedition had made some startling discoveries.

How different the archaeological climate had become since that time! Scientific exploration in 1849 was still in its infancy; no country in the world vet possessed any kind of antiquities service for the protection of its ancient monuments, and although a few men of vision were beginning to realize that methodical excavation might be the means of recovering the memory of forgotten civilizations, they were regarded at home as treasure-hunters, abroad as seekers after gold. Museums, it is true, were beginning to be recognized as the proper repositories for the more important historical monuments and remains; there was already some recognition that the privilege of digging involved an obligation on the part of the digger both to explain and to conserve his discoveries. But a century ago Iraq was but a distant pashalik of the moribund Ottoman empire; to obtain a firman the digger had to be in touch with Istanbul, a distance of over 1,000 miles, and communications were both slow and dangerous. Anyone who sought to dig in Assyria was at the mercy of the local authority in Mosul, and it was hardly to be expected at the time that a pasha, even with nine tails,<sup>1</sup> should view such an undertaking with anything but suspicion. Even when the local governor was disposed to be friendly, fanatical opposition from the religious authorities could put a stop to a kind of activity which was regarded as an unbeliever's malpractice. The archaeologist was then faced with constant danger as well as with obstruction.

Now things were changed. Since 1919, after the First World War, Iraq had become an independent kingdom; and a properly directed Antiquities Service had been in existence for more than 25 years. It was staffed by experts who had become scholars in their own right, and had kept abreast of modern research by constant association with their colleagues from abroad, that indispensable condition for the development of any science. Whether it was the art of digging, of deciphering cuneiform, of photography, of restoration and conservation, of librarianship or administration, there was a trained man of high calibre available. Such activities can only be maintained and stimulated by drive and enthusiasm at the top, and in this the Department was fortunate in its Director-General, who was never content merely to remain in his office, but was happiest touring the country and seeking new fields to conquer, encouraging the Department's judiciously organized expeditions at Eridu, at Hatra and elsewhere, and vigorously sponsoring in Sumer the publication of results. His encouragement and his colleagues' friendly co-operation made the Nimrud Expedition possible, and opened the way for us to what Aristotle calls happiness: unimpeded activity.

It was the practice of the Department to delegate to a visiting expedition an official as collaborator. In our first season we were fortunate in finding a man with

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a strong sense of humour, Dr Mahmud el Amin; and indeed in the early days of a dig an outlook which can appreciate the funny side of things is very necessary. Early in March 1949 we set out for Nimrud in a taxi from Mosul, while waiting for our lorry with the supplies to join us. The rains had been heavy and the place was a bog: near the Ziggurrat we were irretrievably stuck. For the next mile we walked, if walk you could call it, with the water nearly up to our waists, until we reached the Shaikh's house in the village half way between the mound and the Tigris. Ribald remarks passed between us as we exhorted one another not to get wetter than need be, and on no account to drop our hats in the mud: no part of our person was undamped by the time we reached the dark hall of the Shaikh. Our host was equal to the occasion; he ordered a retainer to bathe our feet in hot water and when they were warm he called a skilled masseur who would have done credit to the Hammam in Jermyn Street.

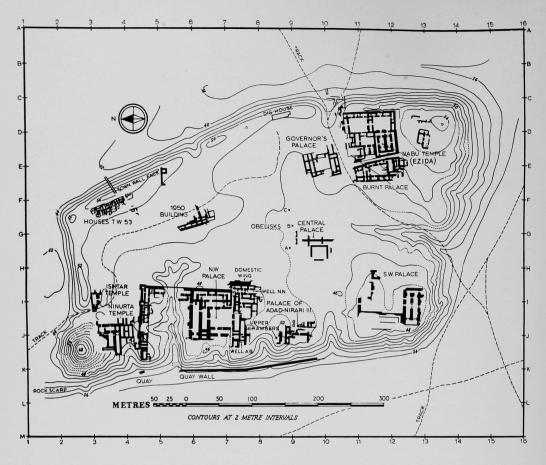
The object of this visit was to make final arrangements for our own accommodation and for that of the 20 skilled Sherqatis who were to form the nucleus of our labour. Our coming was not unexpected, for we had already broached the topic three months back; two large halls had been swept out for the men; a small store room had been built; a big wooden gate added to the courtyard; and a little mud plaster had been applied in the vain hope of making the roof watertight. We had also agreed on a rent and discussed the topic of where, if our operations proved successful, we might build an expedition house. Such matters, which seem simple enough in retrospect, often cause acute anxiety at the time—anxiety because the digger is always in a hurry; the landlord never. These trials were still to come.

The four in our party, R. W. Hamilton, who had also worked with Thompson at Nineveh, Dr Mahmud, my wife and myself made ourselves reasonably comfortable, if not luxurious, in the four rooms which we had selected. Our bedrooms were in a mud-brick tower, below was a long dark kitchen, and a living room in which we ate, catalogued, stuck pottery, examined tablets, stored the more valuable antiquities, and did the drawing, the entertaining, and finally the photography. This chamber was already scant of window and was easily turned into a darkroom, but if we walked across the floor in the room above, mud from the ceiling fell into the negative-dishes below. When my wife was busy developing we retired to the passage or worked in our bedrooms. We received few visits, partly on account of the wet, and partly because news of the dig had hardly yet been noised abroad; but once we did succeed in entertaining the whole of the Dominican Order in Mosul to tea; on that occasion most of us were obliged to sit on the floor. Our servants consisted of an Indian houseman, the faithful Ibrahim, a man of few words, efficient unto us and sufficient unto himself. He seemed to combine well with the Persian cook, an Iranian Escoffier who was also a poet, and when not engaged in composing a sweetmeat, read Hafiz aloud; often enough while the cauldron was in one hand the poems were in the other. Thirdly there was the driver who had the doubtful privilege of managing our lorry, a heavy four-wheel-drive Dodge, which had once belonged to the United States Navy. This remarkable vehicle was virtually amphibian; nothing else could have negotiated the sea of mud between the village and the mound. Day after day it swayed to and fro on its journey, vainly seeking for firmer ground, Salem at the wheel in his high red tarbush, his only

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other personal property a feather duster tied to the windscreen. He was no mechanic and it was painful to him, no less than to us, when perforce he had to lie down, bespannered, in the mud, still with the *tarbush* on his head. Somehow the iron constitution of that truck survived all its ordeals; twice a week it did a 50-mile journey with chains on its tyres to fetch supplies in Mosul, and every day it carried bricks, stones, pots and digging apparatus between the house and the mound. For three weeks we lived in mud, looked at mud, and dug in mud; then suddenly it dried and everything was baked to a hard, cracked, rutted crust.

The day decreed for the opening of the dig was the 17th March, 1949, and this involved some delicate negotiations. The initial fixing of the labourers' wages is always difficult for employers and employed, in a business which has no parallel, and where precedents are unknown. We used deliberately to choose for our dig the two months immediately preceding the harvest. During that time the humblest peasant is normally without employment and without money. He has already received whatever advances may have been negotiated by local merchants against a part of his crop, he has enough grain in his store to feed himself, his family, and his ass if he has one. Ready silver once a week for the purchase of small luxuries, especially tea, sugar, tobacco, some cloth, and a few trinkets for the women-folk, is a boon. What is a fair wage for his labour? For the humblest type of workman, that is to say for the man who carries a basket, the answer has to be the wage which is paid to unskilled labour in the towns, and the fact is that no archaeological expedition could possibly afford to pay more. To the skilled it can and must pay a generous rate, and this has always been recognized. But at the beginning it is usually difficult to agree. The natural suspicion which is characteristic of the peasant the world over convinces him that he is being exploited; the local village bosses are hoping for a rake-off; the employers are deemed to be men of untold wealth. The argument that if we doubled the wages we must halve the number of employed, and that our chances of returning for further campaigns were greatly diminished, was of no interest; that we were not commercial, obtained no personal reward from the soil and worked largely for love of the job was irrelevant. And so it was that on the 17th March we walked up through the bog, accompanied by our faithful Sherqatis, to the derisive exclamations of the surrounding villagers who declared that ten, not three shillings a day was the proper wage for a basketman. Already on the previous evening a little intimidation had been tried when our twenty picks and spades had broken the ground on top of the mound. A cheerful village chieftain in a taxi had indulged in some shooting practice, well over the workmen's heads, it is true, but that kind of sport is not conducive to concentration when a man is worrying about the separation of the surrounding clay from the face of a mudbrick wall. We expected some trouble on the following morning and we were not disappointed. A scuffle ensued between those who wished to work and those who did not; there were a few bruised heads on the Tigris bank as blacklegs from more distant hamlets across the river sought to gain the mound and obtain enrolment. The Shaikh, who was with me, had been warned that responsibility for trouble would be his, while Hamilton and Mahmud set off for Mosul in the truck to enlist the aid of local authority if need be. Within two hours, before ever they had reached the town, the trouble was over. Seventy men from more



1. Contour map of the akropolis showing the position of excavated buildings (1957).

distant villages had asked to be enrolled; those nearer to hand found their places taken. In the evening two burly policemen arrived, the symbol of law and order; on the next day we took on the local labour, and set to work 115 strong, which was as many as we could then afford.

From start to finish the omens at Nimrud were good. It is true that we went through many periods of anxiety when nothing would go right; the soil was barren; the floors of great Assyrian chambers were found to be empty after we had hacked away small mountains of fallen mud-brick; when wall paintings were discovered it was usually a signal for rain; the most promising spots were frequently pitted with plunderers' tunnels: every digger will have had these experiences. Then one's conscience would say: 'You have been foolish to tackle so vast a site, even with 200 men you are but pricking at the mound; you need more time to cut sections, more money, more apparatus!' But my conscience, like Gobbo's, was a poor one, 'for the heavens rouse up a brave mind' says the fiend, and a digger must run with the unknown, however

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hazardous that may be. Besides, as I have said, there were the omens. Once you have the feel of Babylonia and Assyria in your bones, no matter how sceptical or rational you may be, you are on the lookout for them. I remember my delight at the beginning of our fifth season when driving up to the mound I saw on my right hand, standing on top of the Ziggurrat, a great eagle, shortly before sunset, drying its wings after the rain. Of course I then knew that my wish for that season would be fulfilled-and it was; but not in the way that I had expected. And so on the very first day, at the beginning of the dig, there was an auspicious omen of a different kind. I had chatted with the Shergatis and told them something of the history of digging at Nimrud in the last century and what were the prospects of discovery. I told them about the great palaces which Lavard had recorded and drawn out on paper for posterity, and how in one of them he had found some splendid ivories, but that their date was still uncertain and the conditions of their discovery needed further investigation. Of them Layard himself had said: 'In all these specimens the spirit of the design and the delicacy of the workmanship are equally to be admired."2 They consisted of ornaments, either flat or in three-quarter relief depicting mythical creatures such as the winged sphinx, gods and goddesses who had stepped out of the Egyptian pantheon, combined with the lotus and the palmette, of beautifully carved cattle and other subjects partly overlaid in gold and incrusted with blue glass. It was possible that yet more carvings of the kind were to be found, that we might obtain more clues to the precise date at which they had been made and the purpose for which they had been intended. That was only one of many possibilities, but if at the beginning we could throw some light on this problem, that in itself would be a great encouragement to those who had entrusted us with the task of re-examining Nimrud.

Where were we to look for the answer in the first place? Layard had left us a clear pointer. His most important discovery had been the famous N.W. Palace which King Assur-nasir-pal II had completed in the fifth year of his reign-879 B.C. The plan of it was first published and described in Nineveh and its Remains, in the year 1849, and our return to this famous building was therefore an appropriately observed centenary. At its south-west angle is a small rectangular room which stands near to the side of the mound, about half-way between the Ziggurrat and the southern end of it; on the plan it was marked as chamber v, and Layard had said that it was 'remarkable for the discovery, near the entrance (a), of a number of ivory ornaments of considerable beauty and interest. These ivories, when uncovered, adhered so firmly to the soil, and were in so forward a state of decomposition, that I had the greatest difficulty in extracting them, even in fragments. I spent hours lying on the ground, separating them, with a penknife, from the rubbish by which they were surrounded. Those who saw them when they first reached this country will be aware of the difficulty of releasing them from the hardened mass in which they were embedded. The ivory separated itself in flakes. Even the falling away of the earth was sufficient to reduce it almost to powder. This will account for the condition of the specimens which have been placed in the British Museum. With all the care that I could devote to the collection of the fragments, many were lost, or remained unperceived in the immense heap of rubbish under which they were buried.'3



2. Aerial view of Calah (Nimrud) showing the five-mile circuit of tower wall enclosing akropolis and ziggurrat at its south-west corner. The total area of the town is 884 acres (357 hectares), including akropolis, about 60 acres (24 hectares). The ancient bed of the Tigris and stone quay-walls were on the west side (*right-hand side of photograph*), directly overlooked by the ziggurrat and palaces to the south of it.

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3. Panorama—west side of Nimrud.

4. The ruined ziggurrat about 43 metres high is a landmark visible at many miles' distance from Nimrud. Founded by King Assur-nasir-pal II and completed by his son Shalmaneser III (859-824 B.C.), it was dedicated to Ninurta, god of war and the chase, the patron saint of the city. The original staged tower was approached by staircases, but only the mud brick core now remains, and on the northern side a pilastered façade of burnt brick with ashlar masonry blocks of limestone at its base. The building served as a watch-tower, was doubtless used for the taking of celestial observations, and was closely connected with the Ninurta temple at its foot. See ch. vt.

#### NIMRUD LANDSCAPE

One might imagine that to locate the chamber when plans were available would be a simple task. Indeed the moment you have identified fixed points on the map there is no difficulty in pegging out the spot. But on the first day we had not vet time to do this, and to identify the site by eye is a very different proposition. Vaguely I had waved the Sherqatis to what I thought might be the general direction, and they had gone forward to appraise the ground with a professional eye. This side of the mound was honeycombed with pits and ancient dumps now covered with grass; there was no question of pacing the site, an irregular coast of green hillocks. We were therefore happily surprised to find, after an afternoon and a morning's work, the first signs of mud-brick walling lined with inscribed slabs of grev gypsum soon identified by Dr Mahmud al Amin as the work of Assur-nasir-pal. By the 20th March, when Robert Hamilton had established our position with his tacheometer, it was evident that from the very first day of the dig the men had actually been clearing chambers y and w-surely a good omen for the future. Looking at what I had written in my field notebook at the time I see that I had remarked: 'Small fragments of gold foil and of ivories overlooked by earlier diggers are being recovered from these chambers, which in any case may only have been partially excavated and perhaps will produce yet more interesting unknown material.' That forecast proved to be correct. The rooms had been refilled with the soil extracted from them by Layard's men, but we gathered by careful sifting some hundreds of fragments of ivory carvings, mostly it is true perished beyond repair, but among them a dozen or so well worth the recovery.<sup>4</sup> There were three delicately carved human heads and various fragments which were obviously parts of a set found a century ago. In the debris of chamber v two engraved plaques, perhaps unfinished, suggested that some of the work must have been executed at Nimrud itself, in spite of the foreign appearance of many of the pieces. These two little plaques depicted a human body with a bull's head, perhaps a masked ashipu or incantation priest, and a bull or a cow seen in profile. All this however was but secondary, disturbed material; there was something still more important to come. After several days of slow digging we found in the south-west corner of the room, a little under one metre above the level of the stone paved floor, a small patch of undug soil strangely overlooked by our predecessors. Lying on this island of harder clay in the surround of softer thrown soil was a superb figure of a cow, head turned back and licking the tail of the calf which it had once suckled. This wonderful piece, ND362 [5] carved in exquisite detail, with its little tongue, dewlap and finely engraved hair, comes to life through the sensitive curvature of the body and turn of the head. It was obviously part of a set of similar figures found by Layard in the same chamber; they may once have adorned the opposite sides of an ornamental throne or chair. In the course of the next five weeks, although we found much besides-buildings, seals, pottery and metal-nothing more beautiful came out of the ground. If I were to asked choose what I should like to possess, that would be the piece, chiefly for reasons of sentiment, because it was our first inspiriting find, partly because it is a little treasure of touching delicacy, lovely to hold in the palm of the hand.5

But apart from its beauty the discovery of the ivory cow was of archaeological and historical value, and it was important that we had been able to observe with our own eyes a piece of the famous Nimrud collection, lying in the same



5. ND362(B). Ivory cow, length 7:5 cm., in three-quarter relief, originally represented as suckling a calf and licking its tail; the first important object found by the Expedition, in 1949. Eight other fragmentary ivories belonging to the same set had been found by Layard in 1847 in rooms v, w, of the N.W. Palace. This was a favourite theme for ivory carvers both in Syria and in Assyria; many mutilated fragments of similar figures were found in Fort Shalmaneser; cf. also the complete open-work panel ND6310 found in room NW15 of the same building, see ch. XVII.[436-7]. Beautiful modelling, enhanced by exquisite detail; the cutting of the little tongue required a practised dexterity. Scale c. 1/1

conditions in which the remainder had originally been found.6 This one, at all events, was not lying on the stone pavement of Assur-nasir-pal and could not be directly associated with the hand of that monarch. It seems improbable that it was lying on a prepared floor raised above the original level, though the small area of undisturbed soil still visible was insufficient to enable us to form a judgement. But in the light of subsequent discoveries I think we can say with confidence that all these ivories had been torn out of their original setting and cast back by some enemy, in heaps, into the wrecked rooms and passages of the palace which they had stripped of its more valuable fittings. The heavy clod on which this ivory lay had probably fallen from the top of the wall or from an upper floor when the building was shorn of its beams; it is easy to picture the hand of some rude soldier casting back into the wreckage the elegant finery of half a king's throne after he had first torn off the part that really mattered, the gold. He had come to the right spot to effect that purpose, for next door, at the entrance to room U above the original inscription of the founder, there was another one engraved 160 years later by King Sargon, 722-705 B.C., to say that he had used it to store the treasures captured from Pisiris the king of Carchemish.7 What we had found may have been the last remnant from that store.

# CHAPTER II

# PROGRESS OF THE EXCAVATIONS: THE GOVERNOR'S PALACE

AS soon as we realized that we had correctly identified the treasury of the N.W. Palace we began to move most of the men across the mound to its eastern flank. Apart from a big building known as the S.E. Palace or Burnt Palace [1] which touched on the Nabu Temple (dedicated to the god of science and learning), and a solitary room known as the Vaulted Chamber, 400 yards to the north of it, the map was a blank. At a glance one could see plenty of top-soil cover; buildings must be lying beneath the surface; if they were there what were they? Why had nothing of their outline been revealed?

We began making our trenches in a plotted square on rising ground to the north of the solitary chamber, long since refilled with earth. As soon as we set to work we found that a bare 2 feet (61 cm.) of humus overlay ruined mudbrick walls of the Assyrian period; then down came the rain which forced us to start another trench 40 yards to the south. That first week was a trial, for day after day we were driven out of our water-logged trenches on to drier ground; but knowledge came out of adversity, for wherever we trenched the remains of mud-brick buildings appeared, and at the end of a week we knew that the greater part of this sector of the mound was virtually untried soil. Here it would seem we might have every expectation of discovering buildings, offices, houses, even perhaps temples of the same period as those which the Assyrians had built

The notes for chapter 11 will be found on pp. 319-20.



6. Shalmaneser Street, cobbled and stone-paved, climbed up from the outer town into the akropolis. Inscribed stone lion flanking the entrance. On the south side of the street lay Ezida and the Burnt Palace, on the north side, the Governor's Palace. See also ch. v, p. 83.

on the other side of the mound between 900 and 700 B.C. Why then had the place been neglected by the early diggers? The answer is simple. A century ago the technique of tracing mud-brick walls had not yet been developed. The ground itself was by no means unscarred and much random digging had occurred, but except in places where the walls had been baked hard by a conflagration or where burnt-brick pavements survived no one had succeeded in recovering a ground plan. Moreover in this part of the mound there were no stone reliefs to guide the diggers along the wall-faces. Layard had been fully occupied by the great stretches of carved masonry which had lined the faces of buildings on the western side; his successors, far less competent than he, sank shafts here and there and very soon gave up the search, often having cut clean through an unrecognized wall in the process. I noted in my field-book at the time: 'In this part of the mound such monuments as remain must lie much deeper. To discover what is there is merely a question of time and money, but there can be no possible doubt that a wealth of information about the ancient Near East is still hidden in this part of the citadel, no less than in the completely undug town itself."

Yet another form of evidence which promised well for the future had emerged from those water-logged trenches. In every one of them we found at least some fragments of inscribed cuneiform tablets. The general belief that a site so important as Nimrud had failed to yield any such documents had never discouraged me from thinking that they must have existed—and in abundance. Optimistically I had hoped that there might yet be a library and, as we shall see later on, that too eventually materialized. During our first season, with the solitary exception of the N.W. Palace, we discovered increasing numbers of documents in all the other buildings. At the time of our first search only one tablet was positively known to have been found at Nimrud. What remained in the way of written records were repetitions of the 'Standard Inscription', an official account of the king's campaigns and building activities, inscribed either between or across the sculpture which lined the palace walls.

The little scraps of cuneiform which we were finding in the first week were therefore a thrilling discovery: it implied that in time we must find larger collections which would illuminate the inarticulate antiquities for us to make of them a humaner study. To hear a man's voice speaking again, through the medium of a clay tablet, has always seemed to me a marvel as great as wireless; it is practically a television of the past, an instrument by which we make authentic contact with a long dead world reanimated in the handwriting of its masters. The first batch of clay tablets was very soon to come.

At last, towards the end of April, the weather began to clear and we were able to concentrate uninterruptedly on a spot which lay about 275 metres from the northern limits of the mound. The site we had chosen was opposite the high-lying Nabu Temple, just north of a deep ravine which was on the line of an ancient Assyrian street and was still used by visitors coming in from the east  $[\mathbf{1}, \mathbf{6}]$ . Substantial mud-brick walls began to appear in several places, less than 2 feet ( $\mathbf{61}$  cm) below the surface; it was already clear that to discover their foundations we should have to dig deep, and I engaged the maximum number of men that we could afford, about 140, in the hope that we might be able to recover a substantial part of the ground plan before the season ended.

The place proved to be typically Assyrian in its layout, and had obviously been designed to accommodate a large number of persons. For instance, the great central courtyard, which was not quite symmetrically laid out, measured rather more than 23 by 18 yards. That meant that on occasion a crowd of 500 persons could comfortably have assembled there, though it is in fact more likely that this ample space was partly intended to allow room for pack animals and merchandise no less than for human beings.

On the north and south sides of the open court lay two great audience-halls, both of which had once been decorated with wall-paintings of simple geometric designs. The larger of the two reception halls was over 16 metres long and 4 metres wide, and the other was not much smaller. Here again we may calculate that on special occasions it would be easily possible in one room to entertain 100 persons who would have sat on cushions cross-legged against the wall. A double row of smaller offices abutted on the great hall, on either side of the building, which had a frontage of about 45 yards (41 metres). We found its limits north, west and south, but the much ruined remains to the east we had to leave uncompleted.

The massiveness of the construction and the care which had been expended upon it were sufficient proof of its importance. All the mud-brick walls were carefully finished with a plastered surface, and cobalt blue, red, black and white paint had been used in the northern hall to illuminate a series of coloured roundels which were set a little higher than eye-level. The best preserved part of the scheme was in a rectangular bathroom at the south-west angle. Here the black and white concentric spoked circles resembled a target with a central bull's-eve which was hollowed and had evidently been made to contain some perishable material, no trace of which remained. It is possible that the centres had once been filled with coloured pegs, often referred to as sikkati in the Assyrian texts: thus one of the kings, Esarhaddon, mentions them in connection with the red ochre and blue bands which ran round the walls of his palace at Nineveh.<sup>1</sup> At Nimrud, however, the niches were framed rather more simply, with parallel lines in black. The bathroom was very well preserved [7]; in addition to the mural paintings, the burnt-brick floor was also in good condition, overlaid with a thick coat of bitumen to make it waterproof; two smoothed limestone bath-slabs with curved ends lay on either side of a central bunghole from which the bath water could be emptied; a two-foot bitumen dado survived as waterproofing along the walls, and a main drain carried out the water through the wall into the street beyond. The builders had realized that the drain itself would need clearing from time to time, and had built a manhole within the thickness of the wall under a low arched roof through which a sanitary inspector could crawl: this was then sealed, filled with loose brick, and covered with plaster.

There can be little doubt that the elaborately finished and gaily decorated bath was intended to be used ceremonially. The Assyrians were much given to washing; there was in fact a special class of texts which prescribed the proper ritual for the ablution house. As in many Oriental religions, cleanliness came next to godliness. The people were not less superstitious than any other, ancient or modern, but the practice of purification which may have grown from an instinct of self-preservation had become allied to their religious ceremonial.

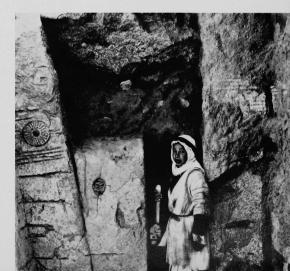


7. Governor's Palace, the royal bathroom showing blocked man-hole of main drain which ran into the street. Brick floor now exposed was originally waterproofed with bitumen.

Depilation, anointing with oil, the burning of incense were three freedoms from vermin, from dirt, and from stench—a dispensation which the Assyrians owed to ancient Mesopotamian practice.

The exact function of the pair of bath-slabs, which were carefully and symmetrically embedded in the floor on either side of a wide central niche in the north wall, is a problem. Copper bath-shaped receptacles with curved ends have been found both in Babylonia at Ur, and in north-west Syria at Zinjirli, and they are of about the same date as our bath-slabs.<sup>2</sup> It has therefore been suggested that these stone bases, which are a regular feature of all big Assyrian buildings, were inset into the brick pavements as foundations for big sheetmetal baths much resembling our own in shape. I think however that this interesting theory is not very probable, for the two known examples in metal from Ur were used as coffins, and had they been baths of this kind some scraps of sheet metal must have survived in one of the many buildings within which these stone slabs have been discovered. It is more likely that the stones were used as a smooth base for the barefooted bather to stand on, while water was poured over him on the one and he was rubbed with oil on the other. The rounded end of the slabs, when they are in pairs, faces towards the niche, another interesting point, for the holiest part of any sanctuary usually centres around a niche in the wall, and it may be that during the ablutions prayers were recited. The painted rings on the wall were also perhaps connected with a prescribed religious magic.

8. Governor's Palace, small entrance chamber to bathroom filled with black ash after destruction in 614 B.C. (see p. 42). Note fallen mud-brick lintel in doorway which was 1.7 metres high and black painted roundels with peg-holes between framing lines on the door-jambs.



Next door to the bathroom there was a small entrance-chamber full of ash, the debris from the burning which had eventually destroyed it [8]. The geometric roundels were also well preserved here and we were lucky to find a part of the lintel of the doorway still in position, a most unusual survival which enabled us to calculate the height of the door, which was rather low (1.7 metres, about 5 ft 6 in.). Its entrance however was rather narrow, and this was probably therefore exceptionally low—most of the doorways in the building must have been nearly 2 metres in height, but dimensions varied and there was no hard and fast rule.

All the fittings in the doorways were of good quality. In the audience-hall at the south end there had been a double door, each leaf of which must have swung on a heavy wooden pole. The doors themselves had long ago perished, but in several of the gates one could still see the big stone jambs cut into the shape of a horse-shoe, and, sunken into them, the copper sockets on which the gates had pivoted. One can imagine how on windy days the great swinging doors must have rattled and creaked; Isaiah speaks of the howling of the gate in his time;<sup>3</sup> much earlier the Sumerians had used oil to lubricate the doors in their temples at Ur.<sup>4</sup> The Assyrians placed heavy bolts against theirs and tied them to stone rings in the pavement, a device which served both to mitigate the force of the gales and to lock them against intruders.

At the north-west end of the building one of the long halls led into a small, almost square chamber, about 5 by 6 metres. The entry was across a neatly dressed stone threshold, and the floor had been paved with burnt bricks as in the rest of the building [9]. These bore the name of King Shalmaneser III, 859-824 B.C., and suggested that the building may possibly have been planned in his reign, though other evidence proved that it was still in use more than a century later. It was in this room, in the last days of the season between the 17th



9. Governor's Palace, tablet room κ showing raised stone threshold and floor with inscribed bricks of Shalmaneser III.



10. Governor's Palace, an inhumation grave containing two clay vases of the late 7th century B.C. sunk beneath the floor of the tablet room  $\kappa.$ 

and 25th April 1949, that we found the first substantial collection of inscribed clay tablets recorded from Nimrud. This was the moment we had hoped for and the means by which we could identify the building, explain its purpose, discover its date, and reveal the names of the persons who had lived and worked within it.

The first of these documents appeared at a depth of about 8 feet (2.4 metres) below the surface beneath a thin line of black ash. They were in no sort of order, but were lying in confusion, some flat, some upright, some aslant in soft thrown debris, part clay, part ash, part broken mud-brick; most of them lay in the southern half of the room through a depth of 80 centimetres (about 2 ft). A few of them were actually wedged between the partly torn up burnt-brick pavement of Shalmaneser III. Although there were, in places, signs of a trodden mud floor a foot above the level of the original one, this can only have been short-lived, and I suspect that it represented a period of abandonment when mud was falling in from the tops of the ruined walls. It was clear that the tablets themselves represented, as it were, the contents of ancient Assyrian wastepaper baskets and had been dumped into this chamber at the time when the place was being restored after a sack; the sack was represented by frequent traces of ash at varying depths both here and elsewhere in the building, in the same stratum. Over the top of this dump a new, beaten mud floor had been made; the walls had been re-plastered and a doorway in the north wall sealed. To this later period belonged an inhumation grave which lay parallel with the east wall; it contained a skeleton and beside it a copper or bronze (?) safety-pin (fibula) and two Assyrian vases [10].

Thus we had obtained a valuable archaeological sequence which can be summarized as follows:

I. Period I. Earliest. A burnt-brick pavement inscribed with the name of Shalmaneser III who died in 824 B.C.

2. Period II. Above (i). Upper Level. The room is filled with rubbish, partly composed of disused clay documents, and the floor is raised by 80 centimetres. A new occupation begins, and at this period a body is buried underneath the floor, dislodging some of the burnt bricks of Shalmaneser III of which the earlier floor had been composed.

If we could date the tablets we could hope for an indication of the time at which the earlier building was sacked; we could also hope to find out what was the earliest possible date for the grave, which cannot have been dug before the time of the latest document. We could then perhaps give at least an approximate date for the pottery and for the metal pin, and we might even expect to obtain a clue to an event which must have marked a low ebb in the fortunes of Nimrud, for so important a building could not have been sacked without a violent disruption of government.

It may be imagined then that we were on the tiptoe of expectation when we embarked on the task of lifting the tablets from the soil. But that was a slow and difficult business. The chamber in which they were found lay low in relation to the surrounding ground and had become a sump for rainwater. The tablets were wet and glutinous, many had suffered severely from salt which had been sucked through the clay and in some cases had completely disintegrated one of the inscribed faces in the process; others were so far riddled with crystals that they were beyond repair. Nevertheless enough survived to yield some very important information. We managed to salvage 76 in all, and together with another 24 which had spilled over into the adjacent chamber and were found in the following season we had recovered the first 100 Assyrian texts in clay from Nimrud.

The inscriptions were of course all in the Assyrian wedge-shaped writing usually described as cuneiform. The language is of the Semitic family, allied

11. Governor's Palace, room M adjacent to K the tablet room, showing stepped entrance to court on south side. Levels II–IV are Assyrian, I Hellenistic.



to Hebrew, Aramaic, and Arabic, and many of its words are still current in the speech of the Near East today. How delighted I was on one occasion, when looking over an old Assyrian ruin called Tarbisu a few miles north of Nineveh, to hear a peasant use an archaic Assyrian word for the lower city (*sufla*) which, though no longer a common expression in popular speech, had survived in that district. The decipherment of these documents therefore presented no great difficulty to an expert in the language. Dr Mahmud in a short time had discovered that some of them were written in the reign of Adad-nirari III, 810-782 B.C., and later on, after they had been dried and cleaned, Mr D. J. Wiseman, who joined us in the second season, made a closer examination of their contents. Nearly all of them turned out to be business records, but there were a few letters; the whole lot covered a period of almost exactly a century, between 808 and 710 B.C.<sup>5</sup>

It was evident that the building had been in the first place the office, and perhaps also the residence, of the governor of the district, of the governor of the city, and of the chief commissioner for lands or lands-registrar. Many names of various other officials, both civil and military, also occurred in the tablets, one of which, for example, was a record of a sale of land witnessed by the major-domo, physician, and secretary of the commander-in-chief on the one hand, and five veterans or pensioners on the other.

One cannot expect to find exact equivalents in translation for the titles of officers: the functions and authority of a commander, civil or military, must inevitably differ from age to age and from country to country, but these tablets have a most interesting official vocabulary which gives us some insight into the processes of ancient Assyrian administration. Thus the principal officers mentioned in our archive-room offer some interesting points of comparison with living practice in the country today.

The District Governor : Assyrian bel pihati, literally lord of the area of responsibility, a very powerful officer directly responsible to the king. He would be a near equivalent of the Mutesarrif of the Mosul lima (province) at the present time, and ultimately must have been the chief authority in matters concerning land. irrigation, food supply, revenue, taxation, government transactions and the ordinary processes of law. He was also responsible for liaison with the commander-in-chief (the turtan) and in one letter (ND424) one of his subordinates successfully negotiated for a share of slaves-50 in all-at Rapiqu, following on some successful campaign; elsewhere (ND420) he receives information about troop movements. In all this he was of course assisted by many kinds of subordinate official. His relationship to another high officer known as the shaknu (the man set (over)), is not altogether clear, and indeed sometimes the same man could hold both titles.<sup>6</sup> But shaknu, which appears to have been an older title for town-and-district governor, declined in importance after the reign of Tiglath-pileser III who, when he reorganized the empire into new provinces, entrusted the new spheres of authority to a bel pihati.7 However that may be, one letter, ND417, found in the Governor's Palace, proves that these two high officers addressed one another as equals: in this document the shaknu was replying to a request for mulberry wood and promised to send the bel pihati a good supply of it.8

When on tour, the district-governor no doubt inspected the country-town

commissioners, Assyrian *rab alani*, literally commandant of towns, who were responsible for groups of the smaller towns or hamlets outside the Assyrian capitals. Probably they were the equivalent of the modern *mudir nahiya* in the country districts today, and perhaps had more or less the same functions: to supervise the census, to be responsible for property returns, and to impress persons liable for military service or enforced labour—the corvée; they must have been responsible for the post, for the tithe, and for the conservation and maintenance of official property. It is interesting that the documents emanating from them were kept in a separate office, room s (404, 459); these officials of course did not reside at Nimrud (Calah), though no doubt on occasions they had to call in at the head office.

It was evident that after the two chief civil officials the third most important was the Chief Land Registrar, Assyrian amel SAG, literally 'Head Man', which indicates how important that office was. We have several of his tablets; we know his name, Bel-ittia, the name of the town governor to whom he was responsible, Bel-tarsi-ilimma, and that he was sitting in this very building in the latter half of the reign of Adad-nirari III, between about 700 and 782 B.C. He had to supervise the sale of land which varied in area from about 2 to 40 acres, the former being the size of the smallest holding, and it is clear that the greater part of any new land available for sale and development must have been royal domains, although the royal family, veterans from the army, and some of the nobility and merchants must also have held estates of their own. Within the town itself the walls enclosed an area of just under 900 acres, the greater part of which had probably been developed in some way by that time, but in the country right down to the Zab much ground was available. It is noticeable that the Land Registrar, besides buying and selling land (ND266), lent copper and bronze (ND217), and clearly disposed of the necessary currency for the financing of public works and trading ventures.

When writing letters concerning business and administration in the city, correspondents found it convenient to refer to specific districts which included: *The akropolis*: Assyrian *alu libbi ali*, literally the city within the city, that is the high-lying mound on which we had been digging, about 60 acres in area.

The bazaar: Assyrian alu pan suqi. The suq is of course still used in modern Arabic in the same sense.

*The barracks :* Assyrian *alu halshu*. One of the principal fortified areas lay in the far south-eastern quarter of the outer town, probably in the vicinity of the arsenal now known to us as Fort Shalmaneser.

The necessary authority for more important executive action was given by Royal Proclamation (*amat sharri*), king's orders; thus two tablets, ND435 and 437, concerned the requisition of barley and a court-martial of certain officers, but these rescripts could also deal with lesser matters such as the dispatch of fourteen porters from the bazaar on errands which were to take them outside the city.

The majority of the tablets, however, were concerned, as might have been expected, with agriculture, the tithe, the harvest, and the collection of wheat and barley; there were also numerous loans, credit notes, dockets and memoranda in which occur lists of cattle, gold, silver, copper, bronze, and lead.

These documents have supplied us with a most interesting cross-section of Assyrian administration and general business activity during the 8th century

B.C. As this was an official building we necessarily see the results of direct government negotiation and official state activity. But it is evident that as communications were relatively slow and trade widespread, there must have been considerable scope for personal initiative and enterprise. The function of the state was to provide security, and it had the requisite powers for enforcing a contract. While much of the land, perhaps most, was state-owned, and irrigation depended on the corvée, that is forced labour, many important enterprises must have been at least parastatal, if not under direct official control. The archives are clear proof also that the government office acted as an agricultural bank, that it purchased land, advanced seed against the harvest, disposed of slaves, and held valuable raw materials in the shape of metal with which it could finance long distance trade ventures. Thus one of the tablets, ND462,9 is a letter written to the District Governor from the territory of the Daunani (Cilicia, in south-east Asia Minor), where contemporary sculpture, clearly influenced by Assyrian art, has recently been discovered at Karatepe. The writer informs the head office at Calah (Nimrud) as to the present position of the caravan, that the pack animals are in good condition, but that their maintenance is likely to prove expensive. There is no doubt that the Governor of Calah had financed the journey which, as likely as not, was for the purpose of obtaining silver, tin, lead, and perhaps woven garments.

Another little tablet, ND261, also shows the kind of parastatal operation by which the Governor of Calah in 707 B.C. financed the weaving industry. In the Treasury we find a tablet in which 23 men from a named city were recorded as creditors to the Governor's head weaver. The cloth was of a selected variety known as *birmu*, and the transaction was witnessed by three fellow weavers, doubtless from the Calah workshops, and a carpenter. It is easy to guess that the creditors were sheep farmers who had supplied wool, and would be entitled to payment in suitable form, at the proper time; whether in the shape of cloth itself, in provender, or in some other commodity, we do not know. In another contract of about the same period, 793 B.C. (ND211), we see the other side of the operation, in which eleven persons are noted as creditors for the supply of 21 finished garments and other articles. At a period when money was not yet circulating the successful pursuit of trade depended largely on the ability of a central clearing-house to guarantee the necessary credit against the exchange of raw materials. That could obviously best be pursued by government authority, and although in the succeeding centuries we find increasing evidence of private banking, the transactions in the Governor's palace at Nimrud are under the aegis of the state.

In connection with weaving we find frequent mention of a town called Kurba'il,<sup>10</sup> which seems to have been not far from the river because we hear that it suffered from floods. From other sources we know that the king's robe was woven there, but that did not prevent a company of five musicians from having to sell their land to the country-town commissioner, the *rab alani* (ND264). All these transactions were properly registered and recorded within this building; there were as a rule penalty-clauses against non-fulfilment or breach of contract.

We learn also that the land around Calah was as favourable for horse-breeding as it is today; roan, dun, and grey horses are frequently mentioned. The



12. ND305 (BM). Cylinder seal, pale mauve, translucent chacedony, length 2.7 cm. Three bearded, shaggy, heroes—part-man, part-bull—are holding the heavens aloft. The kneeling figure in the centre carries for the moment the whole burden, which consists of the winged sun-disc (with pendent fillets) encircling the god Assur (?). The two figures on either side wear helmets with flower at the top. In the field a winged griffin and an attendant who stands in front of a bull-legged table. In the sky are water-pots and a cock. Perhaps the Governor's personal seal. From the Governor's Palace in ash debris which filled room B, adjoining the bathroom. Date, first half of 8th century B.C.

Assyrians were assiduous growers of fruit; one document (ND419) mentions 1,200 seedlings (*ziqpu*), that is slips in batches of 40, including pomegranates, fig and medlar, supplied to Nimrud from a neighbouring district, perhaps Kakzu between the Zab rivers. In the same room another tablet (ND428) recorded the supply of chaste-wood, cypress, juniper, myrrh, elder (*suadu*) and reeds. The myrrh must have come from Arabia.

One important historical document was found: a beautifully written large fragment of a text of Tiglath-pileser III, ND400,<sup>11</sup> which gives the results of a campaign famous in Assyrian annals, since for the first time, 734 B.C., it brought the country face to face with Egypt. Here we can follow the king marching down the Phoenician coast collecting an immense booty of ivory, fine oil, spices, horses, cattle, and flocks. It is hardly surprising that the prince of Gaza fled without striking a blow. At Rapiqu (Raphia) on the Egyptian frontier the king set up his landmark in the shape of a statue. Four years previously Menahem, the king of Israel (2 Kings xv, 19), had been obliged to pay his tribute, and Isaiah was vainly attempting to preach the folly of appeasement in Judah. But more than 30 years were to elapse before Assyria could attempt an attack on Jerusalem, and 50 before it was ready to invade Egypt.

This document however is a testimonial to the recovery of Assyria, which had suffered a decline in the four previous reigns; and it seems that at this time the building was refurbished, for a new set of painted murals overlying the older ones appears at the south end of the building, and a retaining wall was added to hold up the original boundary wall which had evidently shown signs of collapse.

To this king, Tiglath-pileser III, or possibly to the previous period of prosperity under Adad-nirari III, we must attribute a magnificent cylinder seal [12]. This was made of a pale mauve translucent chalcedony, and engraved with a mythological scene in which three shaggy heroes, part man, part bull, are shown holding the heavens aloft. It is a strange anticipation of the Greek legend

of Atlas holding up the earth.<sup>12</sup> In the sky are water pots or libation buckets, and a cock, symbol of the dawn. The sky in fact is represented by the winged sun-disc from which the national god Assur appears. An attendant, a bullfooted pedestal table, and a winged griffin also appear in the same scene. Most interesting is the cock, which here makes its first appearance in Calah; it is significant that at about the same time Proto-Corinthian vases, c.740 B.C., with representations of cocks, were being imported into Syria at the port of al Mina.13 There must be some connection between the two early pictures of that bird on the coast of Syria and in Nimrud. It can hardly be doubted that so fine a seal must have belonged to one of the highest officers in the district, either to the bel pihati or to the shaknu, and it may well have been handed down from one officer to another in succession. One wonders whether the officer who last owned it was killed when the city was sacked, or if it was cast aside when his office was looted. At all events it was found in the burnt debris of the small chamber adjacent to the bathroom and was part of the filling when the level of the floor was raised in the course of the repairs, probably shortly after 612 B.C.

None of the magical devices associated with the building had sufficed to save it; the painted concentric rings perhaps significant of the planets; a little ninesided cylinder inscribed with an incantation to the raging dogstar Sirius, ND280, a medical text, ND460, with its record of expensive recipes from Carchemish; none of these availed.

We have seen that the latest date on a tablet from this building was the year 710 B.C.,<sup>14</sup> but that can only be an accident, for Assyria was still prosperous at this time. It seemed safe enough to conclude at the end of our first season that the Governor's Palace cannot have been destroyed before the end of Sargon's reign in 705 B.C. But we now know from collateral evidence which came from excavations in the other great buildings at the south-east end of the mound, that this palace must have been destroyed almost a century later. Indeed the deep bed of ash which we observed over the floor in many of the rooms on the south side of the building must represent the holocaust which overtook the citadel and the fortifications in the outer town.

The building, though renovated after the sack, never again assumed the important function which it had fulfilled until Sargon's death. In the 7th century B.C. the city's business appears to have been conducted nearer to the Ziggurrat; but persons of substance still continued to live here, as we could judge from a series of well equipped burials with good pottery, jewellery, and some metal objects which were buried under the floors of the subsequent period. The inhumation grave which we found in the tablet room K evidently belonged to the time of attempted reconstitution after the sack and may be assigned to the decade which followed after 612 B.C., for pottery and fibula found with it showed no change from earlier forms.<sup>15</sup>

Two problems remain: first, who in fact founded the building; secondly, were the discarded tablets really lying in the room in which they had originally been filed? I think the answer to the latter question is certainly yes, in the case of the main part of the collection which was housed in room K. For this small square room, which opens off one end of a long hall, is typical of other archive rooms which have been found elsewhere in Assyria, particularly at Nineveh and Assur. When the place was repaired, after the sack, a good part of the

4

collection must have been lying in confusion in the room itself, or spilled over in the adjacent chambers. It was convenient to have it there as part of the filling, or to dump it back into the discarded archive-room. The same consideration probably applied to the smaller collection found in room s on the north-east side of the building; those in room M were probably out of place.

The problem of the origin of the building is less certain. At the time of its discovery I was inclined to think that the inscribed bricks of Shalmaneser III, 859-824 B.C., commonly found in the pavements, were part of a stock re-used after his death by one of his successors. He must have been fully occupied completing the Ziggurrat, the N.W. Palace, and the great fortress which contained his new throne-room at the south-east end of the town, not to mention the temples he was building in Assur and other cities. At all events there was nothing here which we could ascribe to his reign other than the bricks. The obtrusive position of one of his inscribed bricks in a wall of the bathroom does however suggest the possibility that he may have initiated it. We cannot be sure.

But it is certain that another monarch, Adad-nirari III (810-782 B.C.), must have had a hand in the building, if not in its foundation then in its upkeep, for we have many tablets dated to his reign, and one which belongs to the year when he was still a minor, and his mother, the famous Queen Sammuramat, was acting as regent. That powerful lady, a legendary figure to the Greeks who remembered her as Semiramis, must have made her presence felt here. Indeed the District Governor Bel-tarsi-ilimma, whose office was in this very building, dedicated a statue for her life and for that of her son in the temple of Nabu which stood just across the road, on the south side of Shalmaneser III Street.

13. A set of nearly one hundred palace-ware vases, many of them of very delicate fabric, seen as found on a mud brick table in room s at the north-east end of the Governor's Palace. They must have formed part of the Governor's dinner service; they included platters, wine goblets and bottles. They were buried under fallen mud-brick when the building was sacked in 612 B.C. and are typical of the best Assyrian pottery made during the last decades of the empire.



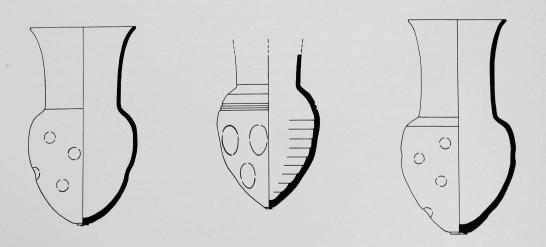


14. ND1839. Pottery goblet, delicate palace-ware. Height 8.5 cm. The dimples are the impressions of the potter's finger tips which caught the vase as he pinched it off its clay matrix. From a shelf in room ZT12, N.W. Palace, closely comparable with specimens found on the table in the Governor's Palace. Date c.630 B.C.

It is interesting that a few of the contracts belong to the reigns of the four weak monarchs who succeeded Adad-nirari III, including one of Assur-nirari V who was murdered in his own palace. They, fortunately for Assyria, were succeeded by two great and energetic monarchs, Tiglath-pileser III (745-727 B.C.) and Sargon II (722-705 B.C.) whose documents were, as we have already seen, found in the same building.

The last phase in the lifetime of the palace was illustrated by a dramatic discovery [13]. This was a mud-brick table in one of the rooms (s) at its northeast end which contained a set of nearly a hundred beautifully made palace-ware pots [14-17]. We called it the governor's dinner-service: plates and wine cups, goblets and other vessels lay in a heap on a big mud-brick pedestal buried under the debris of the collapsed walls. A contract dated 728 B.C.<sup>16</sup> involving the District-Governor was found in the same room; but we know from the evidence of stratification that the palace survived into the 7th century, and that it was burnt and dismantled in about the year 614 B.C. Thereafter it was repatched and used as an abode by survivors from the sack who buried their dead under its floors; this reoccupation may have lasted for another generation or more after which the site was abandoned. But the waste area of the great central court was used as a graveyard by Hellenistic villagers at the end of the 3rd century B.C., whose houses we subsequently found at the south end of the mound.<sup>17</sup>

15-17. Types of palace-ware vases found on a table in room s of the Governor's Palace. Pale, greenish buff, 'dimpled' ware, decorated with finger-print indentations. (*left*) ND553, height 13.8 cm. (*centre*) ND1313(j), actual height 10.7 cm. (top missing), ribbed; (*right*) ND624, height 15 cm. All of these specimens are in Baghdad. Scale c. 1/2



# CHAPTER III

# WE BUILD A HOUSE

A<sup>S</sup> our season first drew to a close it seemed to me that the mound of Nimrud had already shown sufficient promise to justify the planning of a series of expeditions. When we held the Annual General Meeting of the School in London, in November 1949, I suggested that we should try to obtain further financial support in order to continue the work, and ventured to say that: 'At Nimrud time and money alone are needed to reveal hidden stores of knowledge not only about Assyria, but about the whole of the ancient Near East.'

Already during the last days of April we had begun to make plans for our future accommodation [18]. We proposed to sleep under tents, but for our living rooms, storage quarters and laboratories we needed an expedition house, and with this in mind we began to prepare its foundations. Now that the dig was over the rain ceased suddenly and on the last day the four of us, Robert Hamilton, Mahmud, my wife and myself sat in the trenches for our midday picnic with the sun mercilessly beating down upon our backs-the nearest shade of a tree two miles away-wondering what the future held in store. There was little difficulty in choosing a site. Opposite the Governor's Palace, along the eastern wall of the mound, there was a good flat stretch of high ground unencumbered by dumps, with an easy approach, in a place which we would not need to excavate. Our foundation platform was worthy of Assur-nasir-pal himself, for it consisted of the stump of the old akropolis wall, 45 metres of solid mud brick, an ancient Assyrian bulwark that was never likely to subside. As this foundation ran along the full length of the mound we could extend the house without any difficulty, one season after another, as need be. The house was planned to consist at first of four rooms, kitchen, living-room, and antiquities room, with a small dark-room at the end of it. Later on we added a small office for myself and the epigraphist, a room with lighting so arranged that it served also as an indoor photographic studio; and an extra hall, so that we now would no longer be obliged to work as well as eat in the common-room. All round the walls there were mud-brick benches faced with cement which served as tables and were a great economy in allowing us to cut down on the purchase of furniture. The roof consisted of heavy beams of poplar purchased in Mosul and of corrugated zinc sheeting; the walls were entirely of mud brick plastered over with mud; the windows were made for us by a local carpenter.

Our first task was to obtain the mud bricks which the Shaikh of Nimrud had contracted to make for us. They were big units, Assyrian



**18**. Expedition camp, looking towards the north-east. The mud-brick house was built in 1950 on the stump of the great defensive wall of Assur-nasir-pal II.

in size and in appearance; we ordered 1,800 of them at five pounds a thousand. They had to be made in the village more than a mile away, for as we had not yet discovered any well, no water was available on the mound. The bricks were carted up in an old Ford lorry belonging to the Shaikh, which was revived for the purpose. The bricks finished and carted cost us about £,100, and we paid another  $f_{300}$  to a contractor in Mosul to do the building, put in doors, windows, and roof. By the time we had added a new wing at the end of the second season the whole establishment had cost us some  $f_{600}$ , and was big enough to accommodate a staff of up to ten persons and to entertain another ten to meals. By that time we were able to make our own mud bricks very cheaply on top of the mound, for we could draw water from a recently discovered well in the N.W. Palace; the straw was available in the villages. Inside a week, with half a dozen of our labourers, we had made another 5,000 bricks [19]. When it came to brick-laying we reckoned that each of our men could do 100 bricks a day, which was the standard rate of laying in ancient Assyria.1

It may perhaps seem surprising that ancient Assyrian custom is often the wisest counsel for modern practice in the same country; but that is a truth which one is continuously learning with experience. At the end of our fifth season, for instance, when our guard asked to resign his honourable office, we had to arrange to compensate him for the small detached house which he had built largely with his own hands. A lively discussion ensued about what was a fair price, and both parties were equally exhausted when we arrived at a final figure. The

#### WE BUILD A HOUSE

quarrel however broke out afresh when he announced his intention of removing the door. Had I only remembered that in ancient Assyrian house-contracts the purchase of the door no less than the roof has to be specifically mentioned, I would not have suffered the consequences of this misunderstanding.

A guard-watchman is of course the backbone, and sometimes a thorn in the side, of every archaeological expedition. The presence of such a one is inevitable, and we had ours at Nimrud. His name was Hamad, and when at the end of the first season I caused it to be announced that the office was for open competition, he was outstanding among all who applied. Many came to the mound to ask for the job; some had a cartridge and no gun; others a gun and no cartridge; no one ever possessed a licence. But one morning Hamad turned up. He was armed to the teeth, a bandolier stuffed with ammunition seemed to encase every part of his body; he had a gun and, most astonishing, a licence; he was a widower, with none to recommend him, but he had a loud voice; he was sturdy and ready of tongue; he was ready for office; he was instantly engaged. His duties were to guard the house against unauthorized visitors by day; to protect it from robbers by night; to see that the tents in which we slept remained erect; and to keep a tally of the men's tools in the store. It was not long before he pointed out that a 24-hour shift was fatiguing even for one as energetic as he. I engaged a colleague to assist him during the season, and as we had also been supplied with two policemen by the kindness of the authorities in Mosul, he was far from lonely. For the remainder of the year, when we were not in residence, he lived by himself on the mound, at first with an aged mother of somewhat repellent aspect, from whom he frequently asked to be delivered. With the passing of the seasons, however, he grew richer, and was eventually able to afford a not unattractive wife who assisted her step-daughter, a lively girl called Hishfa, in the baking of bread, the nurture of a flock of sheep, asses, and turkeys as well as in the task of scaring birds from their barley-field in the outer town. During our absence, thanks to the goodwill of those in the villages below, there was never any tampering with the dig. Without that friendliness a hundred guards could not have sufficed; with it one was more than enough. The high state of security within Iraq, second to none in any other country, was an admirable tribute to the stability of the country at the time.

Hamad, therefore, as far as security was concerned, was a symbolic figure rather than a practical necessity, but there were no bounds to the variety of his



19. Workmen making mud-bricks for an extension to the Expedition house in 1951 (see p. 53). They drew water from a well in the N.W. Palace of Assur-nasir-pal.

#### WE BUILD A HOUSE

duties. He scoured the villages for eggs and for hens; and there were few problems of supply which his ingenuity could not solve. Among other things he had contracted to keep us supplied with water, no light task when we were at full strength and it was hot, for that involved a gallon a head per day for 200 men and another 100 gallons for ourselves. Hamad then impressed a donkey-man into his service, and in the course of time bred a small colony of donkeys on the mound. The distance to the river being nearly two miles it took the best part of an hour and a half for the water-carrier to complete the return journey; but the porterage was much easier and more rapid during the first few weeks of the season when the nearer ditches and the ancient bed of the Tigris were still full of rain-water. As the water caravans struggled up the sides of the mound and emptied their cans into the butts I used to remember the old Sumerian hymn about the Creation: 'In the beginning mankind drank ditchwater'; and so it was at the beginning of a season with us. But after a few weeks, as the ditches began to dry, it was the Babylonian legend of the worm that became more appropriate: 'When Anu made heaven, heaven made earth, earth made the rivers, rivers made the ditches, the ditches made the marsh, and the marsh made the worm.' The men were then wont to complain, and the ensuing ritual was always the same. I used to glance at the water and at the foreign bodies alleged to be within it. If there was a doubt, I would take a draught and decide whether the time had come to draw from the Tigris, or whether it was merely the carrier who was to blame for not going to the deeper ditches. In any event I would curse Hamad, Hamad would curse the donkey-man, and the donkey-man would curse the ditch.

Hamad himself was most in evidence at the beginning of the week when new men were enrolled, and at the end of it when they were paid. There seemed to be no limit to the number of his relations, or to the eloquence which he could exercise in the description of their virtues. He was punctilious in seeing that shepherds kept their flocks on the unworked parts of the mound, and indeed he had a sharp way with the unauthorized, whether human or animal: politeness was a thing unknown. His demands on our domestic staff for oil to keep the night-watch burning were incessant. He was overbearing, he was arrogant, he brawled; I never knew a man more stubborn in argument, or more generally disliked, but when my colleagues complained I used to point out that such is the nature of the true watchman. Never have I known a man, when all the dice were loaded against him, better able to win an argument against impossible odds. I think it was this that endeared him to me and compelled admiration for an indestructible fighter who night after night patrolled the house accompanied by three faithful watchdogs. One cannot think of our encampment without him and his family in their little compound nearby.

The expedition-house when it was completed was all that one could desire. It is true that the rain sometimes got the better of the slope of our roof and fell upon us within, but how luxurious was our lodging compared with that of Layard who a century back in his small room at Selamiyah had crouched for protection against the wet under a solitary table, whilst his servant shivered in a corner. Our sanitary arrangements were perhaps somewhat primitive, for there was no running water, and when retiring for the night along the battlements one had to run the gauntlet of Hamad's watchdogs. But that was compensated

#### WE BUILD A HOUSE

for by the view of the night fires from the Kirkuk oil-wells which even at a distance of 70 miles cast a red glow into the sky. Strangely enough with these oilwells and Nimrud there is a link, for just outside one of the eastern gates of the Assyrian town there are many pits ancient and modern which gurgitate bitumen. This in fact is the extreme end of the famous Kirkuk oil-field, the residue of which the Assyrians called *naptu* (naptha) and were the first to exploit. Assurnasir-pal II, 883-859 B.C., and his successors drew extensively on these wells for the bitumen which they used for the waterproofing of their palaces and temples. There is no evidence that the Assyrians burnt mineral-oil, but the use of bitumen, its residue, was the first step towards it.

# CHAPTER IV

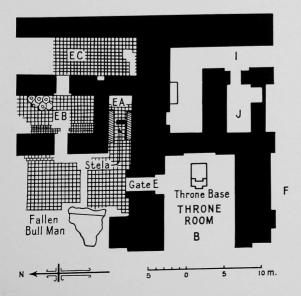
# DISCOVERY OF A STELA

NE of the pleasant aspects of our house was the view from the terrace which we had built at the back of it. There in the cool of the evening, as the days grew warmer, we could sit and look out over the ancient Assyrian town still surrounded by its walls, now transformed into green turfed ramparts. As the work progressed we began to form a clearer picture of the day-to-day business in the city during the two centuries before the Assyrian empire came to an end in 612 B.C. The information that we had gained from digging within the akropolis about streets, quay-walls, temples and palaces was widened by the discovery of many documents, particularly of the 8th century B.C., which, as we have already seen, were concerned with what was going on within and without the town, and with the activities of its population.

It was in our second season, in the spring of 1950, that we began the attempt to discover what we might learn about the defences on the akropolis. Concurrently we continued digging the N.W. Palace of Assur-nasir-pal II in the hope of completing its plan, and also of recovering earlier documents of the 9th century B.C. I had indeed hoped to find in one of the smaller chambers of the

The notes for chapter IV will be found on p. 321.

20. Part of the N.W. Palace with throne-room exit through Gate E, location of the founder's stela, and the guard-room EB where storage jars for the cereals required in the palace were found. See p. 59.



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21. ND1082 (B). Ivory plaque, low relief, height 27 cm., depicting King Assur-nasir-pal II in full canonicals (see p. 62). He wears the Assyrian mitre and long pigtail; the outer garment is a tight fitting shawl with scalloped fringe passing over the left shoulder and leaving the right shoulder free. Under-garment is a long, shortsleeved coat decorated with engraved stellar and plant designs. Tassels trail down to the ankles; the king is shod with sandals as on the sculpture; perforations top and bottom for fixing on to a wooden back. On the tips of the fingers he carries a bowl; in his right hand the eagle-headed sickle of the god Ninurta as on the statue of the king discovered by Lavard in the 'small temple' of Belit-mati. Most of the face missing, restored in wax, together with four tassels on right hand side at bottom of skirt, and back of the mitre, by Savid Akram Shukri, in the laboratories of the Iraq Museum, Baghdad. Note how this differs in style from the more detailed carving and rounded modelling of figures on the panels in room sw7 of Fort Shalmaneser, which were made about 150 years later; the details of this figure are less precise and regular, the poise of the body reflects that of the king on the contemporary basreliefs. Here he is represented as pontiff; on the stela as commanderin-chief. Possibly made to celebrate the completion of the N.W. Palace in 879 B.C. Found with the sphinx ND1083, at the same level, behind the stela, embedded in ash and mud, under a fallen mudbrick wall, room EA of the N.W. Palace. The detail shows the birdheaded ceremonial sickle of Ninurta, perhaps the instrument with which the king cut the first sheaves of corn at the harvest, cf. the B.M. statue of Assur-nasir-pal II. The blade is backed with decorative hoops. Scale c. 3/4





22. ND1083 (Met. Mus. N.Y.). Ivory winged sphinx, open-work, height 14 cm., originally perhaps fitted between the arms of a chair or throne (see p. 62). One leg of the sphinx rests against the volutes of a stylized tree, the other against sheaves of wheat (?). The dressing of the hair is similar in style to that on female figures found in the Burnt Palace [168] (ch. XIII); treatment of forelegs compares closely with that of the ivory lions, ND7910 (ch. XVII). The figure probably derives from a north Syrian prototype, e.g. on the Herald's wall at Carchemish. Found in debris over the pavement of Assur-nasir-pal, behind his stela, in room EA. Date probably last quarter of 9th century B.C., but the tree with triple volutes also occurs on sculpture from Sakcha-Gözü, last quarter of the 8th century B.C. cf. Bossert, Alt-Anatolien no. 885. Scale c. 3/4

palace a collection of clay tablets which would have told us something about the merchants and the ordinary family life of that period, for strangely enough that aspect of 9th century Assyria was still a closed book. But in this particular search we were disappointed, and I suspect that these tablets, which must once have numbered many thousands, were discarded when no longer required in order to make space for newer documents in the archive rooms. It is not unlikely that they were cast into the river, an obvious dumping-ground, near at hand. However, in our third season, 1951, we did find a wonderful stone memorial which gave us not only an unequalled picture of the newly built city in the year 879 B.C., but also a vivid description of how Nimrud, the ancient Calah, had risen from the ground.

This fortunate discovery was made at a time when we were re-examining the external façade of the king's throne-room in order to see how much of the sculpture which Layard had reburied might still be salvaged. When we exposed the fallen bull colossus outside Gate E [20] it occurred to me that this figure should have been gazing at something: if so, what was it? We therefore set to work on the eastern side of the great paved courtyard which confronted the palace and soon succeeded in exposing two spacious chambers, EB, which contained a number of large storage jars doubtless once intended to hold supplies of grain for the royal household, and EC, another great brick-paved chamber behind it. Between these two rooms there was a recess, EA, which consisted of a solid mass





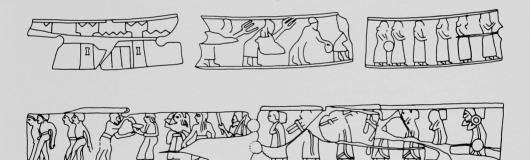
23. ND1055(B) (above). Height 2.4 cm. Ivory strip, procession of mules with muleteers urging them on and holding their tails (see p. 62). The pack-animals carry heavy loads. The sparseness of detail and lack of rigidity is typical of the early 9th century style. Found on the floor of the courtyard, outside Gate F, one of the entrances to the throne-room of the N.W. Palace. Slightly enlarged



24. ND1715(b) (B). Fragments of engraved ivory panels (slightly enlarged), see p. 62. The top fragment depicts a bearded hero or warrior stripped to the waist and wearing a short leather apron with a castellated (?) design on it. He is represented in the act of felling a tree and for that purpose wields a heavy, socketed axe backed with three prongs, a type reminiscent of the Luristan bronzes. It is clearly part of a scene once included with the longer strip below. The longer strips must have represented the king himself, engaged in the same ceremonial, and here the trees appear to be growing in the mountains as the hemispheres at their base conventionally signified. Courtiers, elaborately robed, are in attendance. Soldiers felling palm-trees are represented on the bronze reliefs from the gates of Balawat, (cf. L. W. King, pl. VIII), after the victorious campaign of Shalmaneser III in Armenia in 860 B.C., and this scene also may be symbolic of a similar conquest. In the neo-Babylonian period Nebuchadrezzar II was represented on a rock-cut relief in the Wadi Brisa in some ceremonial art also connected with trees. Note the sketchy free-hand drawing and irregularity of the detail, typical of the early 9th century style, altogether different from that of the succeeding century. Found in the floor of the throne-room B, at its east end. Period of Assur-nasir-pal II or Shalmaneser III.



**25.** ND1715(a) (Met. Mus. N.Y.). Fragment of engraved ivory plaque depicting an Assyrian chariot scene (slightly reduced), see p. 62. The king stands in the chariot cab, next to the driver, firing an arrow; he wears a long sword suspended from a baldrick, and a spear is fixed obliquely into a socket at the side of the cab as in the Assur-nasir-pal reliefs. Unusual is the Urartian-style, crested helmet of an enemy soldier, as on the bronze gates at Balawat, cf. L. W. King, op. cit, pl. IV. An upper register, now missing, must also have depicted a war-scene. Typical early 9th century B.C. style. Found in the court outside entrance t to the throne-room of the N.W. Palace.



26. Four fragmentary ivory plaques in the style of the 9th century B.C. in low relief similar to [23]. All were found in debris in the pavement, near the stela, outside Gate E of the N.W. Palace. See p. 62. Slightly reduced

ND1057 (B) (above left) represents a fortified city with castellations.

ND1051 (B) (above centre). Procession of foreign captives.

NDI051 (B) (above right). Procession of male figures, probably Assyrians.

NDI045 (B) (*below*). Procession of bound captives, men women, and tribute bearers. The ivory was in poor condition, the surface much worn and pitted through exposure to damp.

### DISCOVERY OF A STELA

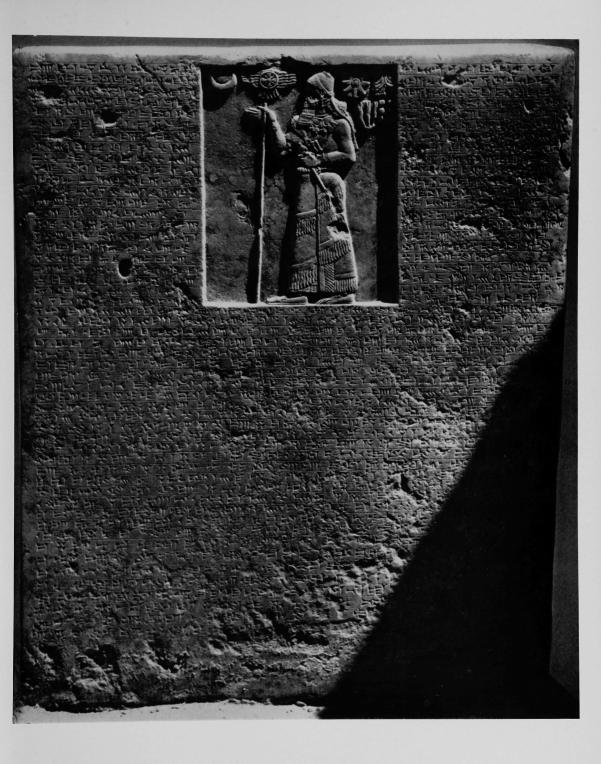
of mud-brick fallen from the adjacent walls. At a depth of about 2 feet below the surface the top of a yellow sandstone monument began to appear, and it was not long before we reached the burnt-brick pavement on which it stood. Fortunately for us the earlier diggers must have mistaken the mass of mud brick under which it was buried for a wall and had consequently left it untouched.

As we dug deeper we found the inscribed burnt-brick pavement of Assurnasir-pal, on which it had originally been placed, surmounted by a later one; this was raised about 45 centimetres above the earlier level and laid on a bed of clean clay over which was a thin layer of sand clearly intended to keep the base of the monument well drained. The bricks in the upper pavement were of a size used by Shalmaneser III. It was evident that these later repairs were needed because the seepage of damp had caused the original pavement to burst and swell. The side walls which had began to lean inwards were then heavily reinforced by two mud-brick buttresses: at this time perhaps the top of the stela was decorated with a roughly scratched rosette which was too carelessly executed to have been original.

In the debris surrounding the base of the stela there were two very finely carved ivories, the first a panel, NDI082 [21], depicting King Assur-nasir-pal himself carrying a cup on the tips of his fingers in the right hand, and in his left the bird-headed sickle of the god Ninurta which he also carries on the statue found by Layard in the temple of Ishtar-belit-mati. The second ivory was an openwork male-headed sphinx standing against a palmette tree, NDI083 [22].<sup>1</sup> Other fragments of ivory found in the vicinity also illustrate the 9th century style: NDI055 [23] is a scene in relief, depicting a procession of mules and muleteers, and NDI715 (b) [24], two strips in the engraved style, appear to illustrate a ritual scene—the felling of trees in the presence of the king—and NDI715 (a) [25], also engraved, depicts the king hunting from his chariot. Four other ivory strips illustrating a fortified city and processions [26] are in a style similar to ND1715 (b).

The memorial itself was a block of yellow sandstone which had probably been quarried from an outcrop just outside the town. It stood 1.3 metres high; we calculated that it weighed about three-quarters of a ton—a substantial block, which was intended to stand for ever outside the main gate of the king's palace. Front and back were engraved with 154 lines of text cut in the wedgeshaped Assyrian script. On the face of the stela [27], at the top, there was a recessed panel depicting the king himself, Assur-nasir-pal II, in profile, facing right, holding the long royal sceptre in his right hand and his mace in the left. He was clad in full ceremonial robes, probably those worn at the coronation and on other state occasions. The long tasselled coat open at the front may have been woven at the neighbouring town of Kurba'il which, as we have seen, held

<sup>27 (</sup>*Right*). Sandstone stela, height 4ft 2in (127 cm.) of Assur-nasir-pal II, representing the king in full canonicals, and the symbols of the gods. 154 lines of inscription celebrate the completion of the city in 879 B.C. and include an inventory of its buildings and record the number of persons who attended a banquet which was given to mark the occasion. This monument, NDITO4, found in 1951, is now in the Mosul Museum.



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that privilege. This garment was girt at the waist with a heavy belt, perhaps fastened by golden clasps, and a pair of royal daggers were sheathed within it. The high crown with a conical knob at the top, to which was attached a double pig-tail, was the formal headgear of the Assyrian king at that period. The elaborate beard may have been false, for there was a very ancient tradition derived from the Sumerians 2,000 years earlier, that the king wore a false beard, tied on to the ears. This was symbolic, perhaps, of the strength of the bull whose services were dedicated to the Sumerian god Anu, one of the principal gods in the pantheon, known as 'The Bull of Heaven'.<sup>2</sup> In the royal cemeteries of Ur, 1,600 years earlier, musical instruments buried in the royal shaft graves were decorated with bulls' heads wearing lapis lazuli beards very similar in cut to the one we see here. The Assyrian practice therefore was of great antiquity and conformed with religious theory about the celestial origin of kings. An old Sumerian text relates that after the Flood, kingship descended from heaven; and Assyrian art gave a clear expression of that concept.

The jewellery and medals were also archaic in style. On the wrist there was a rosette-bangle—the original must have been in gold—which was an equally archaic symbol of divinity. The handsome ear-ring can be matched by a fortunate discovery which we made in another place in the outer town; it consisted of a rock crystal drop pendant encased in copper [28]. The row of beads at the neck probably represented semi-precious stones such as carnelian and lapis lazuli which had a protective amuletic value; no doubt some were of gold.

The top of the royal robe was surmounted by a double-winged collar from which the royal medals, the highest orders of state worn only by the kings, were suspended. They were tokens of the gods, and in fact matched the six symbols of divinity which are rendered in bold relief at the top of the monument. These are, in order from left to right: (1) Sin, the Moon God, represented both as the crescent and as the full moon. (2) Assur, the patron god of the Assyrians, enclosing a symbol which may perhaps be intended to combine an archaic form of cross and the lightning of the Storm God Adad. (3) Shamash, the Sun God, or possibly Ishtar, (4) Enlil, Anu, or Ea. This hat or crown with ornamental fleur-de-lis top and three horns may stand for any one of these divinities; one would hesitate to say which; the first had as his sphere earth and air; the second sky; and the third the waters that flow beneath the earth. Enlil symbolized kingship especially, and it may be that this is what this object stands for in this context. It was a form of headgear particularly favoured by the later Sargonid kings, and in the reign of Adad-nirari III was worn by the attendants of Nabu, the god of science and of learning. (5) Adad, the Storm God, represented by forked lightning, a divinity much respected by peoples dwelling in the stormy northern climes of the ancient Near East-Hittites, north Syrians, Assyrians. (6) The Sibitti or Pleiades, represented by seven circles (one of them damaged and missing). This constellation would naturally find favour with a pastoral people such as the Assyrians, for to shepherds it is one of the most distinctive watches of the night sky. The monument therefore did not attempt to represent the entire Assyrian pantheon, and the reason for this choice and order is a problem to which one would much like to know the answer. The primacy of Sin, the Moon God, is surprising, and one wonders if it was to emphasize the connection of the king with a very ancient centre of moon worship, Harran in north Syria-a place associated



28. ND3293(B). Ear-ring, height 5 cm., consists of a copper ring with cylindrical socket into which a rock-crystal pendant was fixed. Similar jewellery worn by the king and his nobles figures on the reliefs of Assur-nasir-pal II. It was found in the floor of room 2 in a building known as PD.5, founded by Adad-nirari III. See *Iraq XVI*, p. 157, and Gadd, *Stones of Assyria*, pl. 3.

both with Abraham and with the Assyrian royal family. This seems to be the most probable explanation, for the next monarch, Shalmaneser III, is known to have restored the temple of the Moon God there. We may therefore assume that Assur-nasir-pal, who did so much to re-establish the authority of Assyria after two centuries of eclipse, was anxious to reaffirm the link which his country may have had with the cult of the moon at Harran, a thousand years back. It does not of course follow that the divine emblems at the top of the monument are necessarily arranged in their order of precedence. Indeed it is likely that the winged disc, Assur, immediately in front of the king's head, was in this context regarded as *primus inter pares*.

We may look with some awe at this portrait of a monarch whose personal authority and unbounded energy has left so great a mark in the annals of history. We need not expect to find a photographic likeness of the king: it is an idealized portrait executed in the style of the early 9th century B.C., but it is something more than a completely abstract representation of a monarch's head, for it differs from that of his son, and from that of his successors in the 8th century. There is indeed a sense of majesty; it is not difficult to perceive a ruthless authority; in the fleshiness of the extended right hand and heavy forearm we may discern the evidence of temporal power and good living. It is tempting to believe that we have a glimpse, however much disguised by courtly convention, of the man himself. That the Assyrians thought of it as a personal resemblance we may judge from the fact that on the stela itself he speaks of his statue in the temple of Ninurta as 'the likeness of my own face': *tamsil*, likeness, is equivalent to the Arabic *tamthil*.

The king as man speaks out boldly on the monument. The inscription begins: 'Palace of the man Assur-nasir-pal, priest of Assur, beloved of the God Enlil and of the God Ninurta. . . .' There is no need to go through the translation in detail, for this has already been done by Mr D. J. Wiseman, who published it within a few months of its discovery.<sup>3</sup> It is a tragedy of translation that a scholarly and faithful rendering is liable to contain very little of the force and

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style of the original, while a freer version in easily intelligible English may convey a false impression of fluency which is equally alien to the Assyrian. But it requires no deep knowledge of the Semitic tongues to realize that this is a powerful and dignified proclamation, not without a touch of poetic feeling, well suited to the majestic achievements which this monument was designed to commemorate. The immediate occasion was the completion of the great palace high up on the western ramparts of the akropolis, south of the Ziggurrat and as near to the sacred precincts as it could conveniently be situated. It was, however, not only the new palace that the king was celebrating, but the rebuilding of the entire town enclosed by a five-mile circuit of wall, and containing within it the akropolis, temples, official buildings, houses, orchards, farms and gardens. The inscription tells us where the labour for this gigantic task came from, how it was recruited, of what the flora and fauna in the town consisted, and finally what form of celebration was considered suitable for this glorious occasion, when the work had been done.

Although the inscription is continuous in the Assyrian, it resolves itself into twelve paragraphs which may briefly be summarized as follows:

*Paragraph 1.* Names the palace, the king, his titles, and his ancestry. Emphasis is laid as much on his character as high priest as on his kingship and his valiance as a military commander. All mankind has submitted to him. There is more than a touch of arrogance, anathema to the Greeks, who would have named it *hubris.* But this is the genuine pride of the successful man of action, conscious that nothing can be achieved without the gods' favour.

Paragraph 2. His conquests. With the help of the gods he has taken tribute and hostages in many lands. He has crossed the Tigris and abased the peoples as far as the mountains of Lebanon and the Mediterranean Sea. Lage, Suhi (on the middle Euphrates), Rapiqu, Subnat, Urartu (modern Armenia), have submitted. To the north he also claims Kirruri and Gilzani across the mountain passes. Southwards he claims to have conquered as far as the Lower Zab valley, and to have encroached on Babylonia by the conquest of two fortresses-Hirimu and Harutu-the exact locations of which are still unknown. It is clear that the Assyrians were still largely preoccupied with the north, and not yet prepared to attempt a big-scale invasion of the south, although in fact Babylonia must have been politically weak at the time. Equally significant is the mention of his eastern conquests through the passes of Babite as far as Hashmar. That must refer to what is today known as the Bazian pass, leading to the Sulaimanivah plain and the Kurdish mountains-a country which has seen many a desperate campaign as late as the 20th century. Indeed, when in 1926 an armistice was agreed between the Iraqi commander of the day and the Kurdish Shaikh Mahmud el Barzani, a rock at the entrance to that very pass was chosen as a place for parley before ratification of that agreement. No government, whether based on Mosul or Baghdad, Nineveh or Babylon, would be secure unless that pass were under their control. The Assyrians were just as much aware of its importance as the governments of our own times.

Paragraph 3. The king affirms his faith in the god Assur, and acknowledges the intelligence with which he has been endowed by the god Ea. These were the gods who prompted him to make Calah a new residence, and to alter the aspect of its ancient mound. The word for mound is *tilu*, which is exactly the modern Arabic *tell* still in use today. The king dug down to water level and built a solid foundation platform 120 courses (of brick) in thickness. This is no exaggeration—wherever Assur-nasir-pal's buildings have been found this gigantic substructure exists.

*Paragraph 4.* Description of his palace. It had eight wings, seven of them named after the different kinds of wood used as fittings; they include box, mulberry, cedar, cypress, pistachio, tamarisk, poplar. It is interesting that specimens of mulberry and pine have been found in the dig, and we may assume that most of the other kinds of timber were also used, although there is still doubt about the translation of one or two of the Assyrian names for trees. In one of the wells of the N.W. Palace we found boards of walnut (the word for which is not known in the inscriptions) which had been made in the 8th century B.C. There is some description of the doors which, like the great gates of Balawat, were fitted with bronze bands and bolts or pins (*sikkat karri*). The walls were decorated with paintings to illustrate his conquests and there were blue glazed bricks above the doors.

Paragraph 5. Mention of the principal peoples who were forcibly settled in the town. They included : people of Suhi (middle Euphrates) and from Sirgu (a crossing point of the river in the same locality, near Mari); Kirrure (between Erbil and Rowanduz); Zamua (a district in the Kurdish hills near Sulaimaniyah where, as another inscription tells us, the men had high-pitched squeaky voices); Bit-zamani (capital Amedi or modern Diarbekir, situated on the upper reaches of the Tigris in eastern Turkey); and a multitude of Lageans described as 'of the Hittite country and of Lubarna the Hattinean': this district was north of Suhi and included a part of the Euphrates valley and of the lower Habur river. It is interesting that this is described as 'Hittite' country. In fact the Hittite empire had long been extinct, and the name was now applied by the Assyrians to the part of north central Syria which included a number of citystates such as Carchemish where neo-Hittite hieroglyphs were still used. The name of the prince 'Lubarna' is also a traditional Hittite title reminiscent of the more ancient 'Labarnash'. The contents of this paragraph thus inform us that the outer town of Calah was planned as a resettlement scheme and was mainly populated with captives from the direction of northern and eastern Syria, eastern Turkey and western Iran.

*Paragraph* 6. Digging of a canal through sheer rock on the upper Zab, for the purpose of irrigating the land between that river and Calah as well as the meadows between it and the Tigris. The topography of this canal can still be determined from an examination of the lie of the land south of the akropolis. As we follow the old line of the canal between Nimrud and the Zab we can see that it was deliberately cut as far east as possible from the Tigris, thus extracting the maximum width of ground for cultivation between the river and the higher

lying terrain further to the east. The irrigable strip today is in places as much as 2 miles wide, but must have been rather less in antiquity: the river has shifted out of its Assyrian bed, since 612 B.C., towards the west. The king specifically mentions the name of the canal, *Pati Hegalli*, literally 'ditch of abundance', and says that he abundantly irrigated the meadow-land by the Tigris and planted gardens there. The choice crops were reserved for the god Assur and the temples, which doubtless means that this newly cultivated area was largely considered to be ecclesiastical property.

Paragraph 7. A list of the trees, seedlings and plants which the king had observed and gathered in the course of his military campaigns abroad. In addition to the trees and shrubs already mentioned they include pine, juniper, oak, date-palm, willow, bitter almonds, laurel, pomegranate, medlar, fir, loquat (?), pear, quince, fig, vine, plum, Persian lilac, aloes, sycamore-fig, and frankincense. Various other trees are named but their identification is less certain. The list shows that the majority of the timber was soft wood; there was a fair variety of fruit, much of which grows happily in the same district today. especially quince (supurgilu), identical with the Arabic safarjil; but figs and vines more readily bear fruit in the foothills some miles away. The Assyrians, a people of exceptional intelligence, had long appreciated the importance of treeplanting-afforestation perhaps would be an exaggeration-for Tiglath-pileser I, C.IIOO B.C.,<sup>4</sup> had initiated this kind of record in a royal inscription, though his range of flora was much more restricted. It seems that Assur-nasir-pal took as much pride in this as in any other of his activities. The importations represent very distant travel; frankincense must have come from south Arabia, and though there is no evidence that the king himself ever went there, trade had been conducted between that country and Palestine since the reign of Solomon a century earlier. In this passage there is a poetic touch; it is as if there was 'a star of heaven in the garden of flowers (?) . . . the garden of delight'.

*Paragraph 8.* List of the temples in 'Kalhu, my royal capital'. It is claimed that these are new: they were dedicated to: (1) Ea and his consort Damkina (Sciences, Magic and Irrigation); (2) Adad and his consort Shala (Storm and Tempest); (3) Gula (a goddess attended by a dog seated on its haunches); (4) Sin (Moon); (5) Nabu (Writing and the Arts); (6) Ishtar belit mati (Ishtar the lady of (many) lands—Venus); (7) The Sibitti (Pleiades); (8) Ishtar Kidmurri (another aspect of Venus); (9) Ninurta (god of War and the Chase).

Apart from the temple of Nabu which lay at the south-east end of the akropolis most of the buildings were probably situated within the precincts of the Ziggurrat; and the whereabouts of four of them, nos 5, 6, 8, and 9, were already known from excavations conducted in the 19th century. Traces of a small building, much damaged, east of (6), partially excavated by us in 1951, perhaps accounts for a fifth, but to which god it was dedicated we do not know. At least four more temples thus remain to be discovered and identified. It is doubtful whether there is sufficient room for them on the Ziggurrat terrace, and it may be that some are to be found on its north side, or possibly elsewhere, on the southeast end of the mound. What is most surprising in this inscription is the absence of any direct mention of the great temple-tower or Ziggurrat; this perhaps

means that it had not yet been completed. Indeed we know that hundreds of the Ziggurrat bricks were inscribed with the name of the king's son and successor, Shalmaneser III, who made them as a casing (risiptu) to contain its mud-brick core; others refer to his preparation of bricks for the same building and explicitly connect it with the god Ninurta.<sup>5</sup> It can however hardly be doubted that Assur-nasir-pal himself planned the Ziggurrat which his son evidently regarded as an essential part of the temple of Ninurta itself. Brief mention is also made in this section of the temple fittings which include cedar-wood beams and doors; shining bronze statues; golden objects captured during the Assyrian campaigns; and in the temple of Ninurta, who was really the patron saint of Nimrud, inlays of gold and lapis lazuli; golden images of raging serpents, and the statue of the king himself, made of red gold and semi-precious stones. A gypsum statue of the king was found by Lavard and is now in the British Museum. Finally we are told that two festivals were appointed in two separate months for Ninurta at which offerings accompanied by libations and incense were to be made.

*Paragraph 9.* Restoration of derelict cities, and resettlement schemes. Reconstruction and renovations of palaces throughout Assyria. Arrangements for their maintenance and provisioning: '. . . and I stored barley and straw within them.'

Paragraph 10. The king's prowess in the chase. His zoological gardens at Calah. He is given power over wild animals by the god Ninurta and his consort Palil. Record of the hunt: he slays 450 lions and 390 wild bulls from his chariots; cuts down 200 ostriches; traps alive 30 elephants, 50 wild bulls, 140 ostriches and 20 lions. He receives five wild elephants from the Governor of Suhi on the middle Euphrates and from the Governor of Lubda, another district in the same region: '... they went along with me on my march.' The mention of these large mammals is of much interest. This part of the Euphrates had long been a home of the wild elephant and had attracted the Pharaohs on hunting expeditions five centuries earlier. Shalmaneser III depicted one on the 'Black Obelisk' and there are frequent references to ivory and to elephant hides in the records of successive kings of Assyria as late as the reign of Esarhaddon. But overhunting caused their virtual extinction in this part of the Near East by the end of the 8th century B.C. Lions have been observed both in Syria and in Iraq within living memory, as also wild bulls. I have seen the ostrich in the desert east of Amman. The king states that besides collecting herds of bulls, lions and ostriches, apes male and female, he bred them and caused them to multiply; and he claims to have added more land and more people to Assyria.

*Paragraph 11.* The palace is his 'heart's delight' (*hud libbi*); all the skill of Calah is embodied within it. Its completion called for a great feast to which all the gods were invited: the god Assur was the guest of honour. There follows a long list of the quantities of food and drink supplied on that occasion for the entertainment of the multitude. Meat and game are listed in quantities of 1,000 or 500 head: cattle, sheep and oxen of various qualities including fattened beasts

from the herds of Ishtar. As it is stated that 1,000 lambs were supplied we may assume that this great entertainment was held at the spring festival. Beside large quantities of deer and gazelle, a great variety of fowl and 10,000 fish are also mentioned. There follow 10,000 eggs, loaves of bread, measures of beer and skins of wine, and 100 measures of fine mixed beer. Milk and butter were supplied in good measure. Vegetables include lentils, onions, aubergines and garlic. There are various kinds of grain and barley cakes; spices are not forgotten: they include cummin and aniseed; there is a sufficiency of cooking fat and of fine oil, pepper and salt. A variety of fruit comprises pomegranates, figs, dates; there are also pistachio nuts and bitter almonds. It is pleasant to find that 100 measures of barley cakes occur in the list-under the name of gubibate, which is exactly rendered in the modern Arabic kubbeh, still the most favoured dish in the district today, and always supplied in profusion by the present Shaikh of Nimrud whenever we partook of his hospitality. We need have no doubt that this magnificent feast, so characteristic of the lavish hospitality still practised in the same land, was a joyful occasion for all. We must suppose that a few thousand guests of honour may have been entertained within the palace itself; some of the remainder would have spread out over the open campus east of the palace in the centre of the akropolis, while tens of thousands doubtless awaited their turn in the outer town.

Paragraph 12. List of the guests. The census. Those who participated in the feast were made up as follows:

47,074 able-bodied men (*sabe*) and women 'summoned from all the districts of my land'. The men were those available for all kinds of public service, military or civil.

5,000 high officers, *ameluti seruti*, who included the envoys (*amel*) *shaprate*, from Suhi, Hindan, Hattina, Hittites, men of Tyre and Sidon, Gurgum, Malatia, also Hubushkeans, Gilzaneans, Kumeans, men of Musasir (from the mountains north-east of Erbil). The geography is interesting. It indicates that Assur-nasir-pal had already asserted his authority in a great tract of northern territory including north Syria and the south-eastern confines of Cappadocia; the middle Euphrates is represented and so are the two principal cities of Phoenicia.

1,500 '*zariqu*—officials of all my palaces'. These would appear to be all the high officers in the administrative service. There is a doubt about their function. The word *zaraqu* is used of pouring out a libation, and it may therefore be that these are the priests responsible for the maintenance of the religious cult; but, as they are mentioned in connection with the palaces, Wiseman, following Landsberger, believes that they were men concerned with the commissariat. It may be assumed that they were responsible for the organization of this great festival.

16,000 person (souls), *napshati*, of Kalhu (they are the equivalent of the modern Arabic *nefs* or *anfus*), the ordinary peoples who formed the original population of the city before it was transformed into a metropolis by Assurnasir-pal. We know that there had been a city on the spot since the reign of Shalmaneser I, and it may be suspected that the older buildings belonging to these local inhabitants were partly concentrated on the high-lying mound at the

south-east corner of the akropolis which had been occupied since prehistoric times. Traces of the remains of the older city have also been found on the eastern side of the akropolis, north of the Governor's Palace.

69,574 was the total. 'The happy peoples of all the lands together with the people of Kalhu for ten days I feasted, wined, bathed, anointed and honoured them and thereafter sent them back to their lands in peace and joy.'

This, the closing paragraph of a memorable inscription is in many ways the most important of all, for it is the best evidence we have for the population of an Assyrian city in the early 9th century B.C., and must ultimately form a basis for an estimate of the entire population of Assyria. These figures cannot be uncritically accepted as representing the actual number of inhabitants in Calah, but with some discrimination they may be used as a guide to that enquiry. It will be noted that the grand total is an accurate addition of the individual categories, and we are probably safe in reckoning that the 5,000 high officers, envoys from abroad, and perhaps most of the 1,500 zariku-officials were visitors for the occasion. They were the ones who went back to their own lands. That leaves 47,074 men and women, the displaced persons forcibly introduced into Assyria, no doubt the able-bodied who had done the heavy manual labour of building, plus 16,000 indigenous to Calah, a total of 63,074, as the basic population. No children are mentioned, so that we must probably make some allowance for a substantial addition to the total. The 'Harran Census' conducted more than two centuries later suggests that Assyrian families were small; no doubt infant mortality was very high, but even so we can hardly allow for an average of less than one child per family, on a reckoning that the 47,074 ablebodied men and women represented half that number of families. It looks therefore as if we might accept 47,000 foreigners plus 23,000, their children, plus 16,000 local population, say 86,000 as the absolute minimum settled in the town at that time. The area within the walls as surveyed by Felix Jones and clearly visible within the five-mile circuit amounts to approximately 884 acres. The minimum figure which we have calculated therefore gives a population of slightly less than 100 persons per acre. But this figure should not be taken to mean that all of those persons lived within the walls in spite of the fact that our estimate is low in comparison with relatively modern reckonings for Damascus and Aleppo at 160 persons per acre. Indeed the architectural evidence suggests that the populace of Calah was not so cramped as that of modern towns, for much of the space was occupied by enormous royal and public buildings, and even within the walls some land must have been available for orchards and gardens. The population figure recorded on the stela therefore probably applied to the district, which doubtless included all the irrigable land down to the upper Zab and other tracts of territory at least as distant as Balawat. The sum total of persons at the feast (apart from the visitors) may be taken to represent those who in war might seek refuge within the walls, and in peace would be liable to taxation.

We have moreover to reckon that the population fluctuated considerably, and allowance has to be made for the army, a mobile force; for many thousands of troops must have been stationed at times in barracks, both in and around Fort Shalmaneser, at the south-east end of the town. Nor need we doubt that the manpower involved was great, for a document, NDI0082, found within that

fortress recorded the inspection of no less than 36,242 bows—possibly in the 8th century B.C.<sup>6</sup>

It may be, therefore, that we can regard 86,000 persons as a minimum figure, in the fifth year of Assur-nasir-pal; but when troops were preparing for a campaign, and in later years, when he had introduced still more displaced persons, as we learn from other inscriptions, it would hardly be surprising if about 100,000 were then in residence. Indeed I believe that to be a more likely estimate, partly on the grounds of the Harran census<sup>7</sup> which gives 103 sons and daughters to 166 parents, that is to say roughly five children to eight adults: the same proportion for Calah would mean an addition of about 29,000 to the figure of 47,000, making 76,000 plus 16,000, minimum total 92,000.

The figure estimated for Calah is interesting when compared with that quoted for Nineveh in the Old Testament (Ionah iv, verse 11) at 120,000: 'And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than six score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle.' That figure was applied to the time near to its destruction, at least 270 years later, and can hardly be more than a traditional Judaic notion of what that town might have housed in the days of its decline, but even so it is considerably in excess of what we have calculated for Calah. That is as it should be, for Nineveh was considerably larger in area, in fact a trifle over double, estimated at about 1,800 acres by Felix Jones (that is to say nearly 3 square miles), as against 890 acres by him for Nimrud-Calah. It is curious that Assurnasir-pal's calculation for Calah at just over 63,000 is approximately the proper ratio, by acreage, in relation to the 120,000 of the Old Testament for Nineveh. That however is probably no more than a coincidence which arises from the fact that the figures on the stela are not a complete census, but mainly an estimate of the able-bodied, for no children are mentioned. On other grounds I am inclined to believe that in the 7th century B.C. the population of inner Assyria was probably not less than a quarter of a million nor more than half a million in number.8 That was a very considerable mass of people, but even so the populations of the Near East were probably smaller than those of the present day.

As we have already explained, the figures recorded in the stela were not merely a census of the city; they were probably elicited for a special purpose. No doubt the king of Assyria and his administrative officers were fully aware of the fact that the best way of estimating the heads of those liable for the corvée the *sabē*—men and women, was to invite them to a banquet. In fact about 47,000 turned up, a respectable number. Anyone who has had experience of trying to estimate a rural population in the Near East during a war will know that an enquiry for the number of persons wanting rations will produce a maximum, whereas a demand for the number liable for taxation will produce a minimum estimate. The method adopted by the Assyrians was therefore both realistic and practical.

The last paragraph in the inscription makes it clear that an invitation to the feast was also extended to 5,000 officers who came from distant territory which ranged between the mountains of Iran and Anatolia and as far as the Mediterranean coast. These 'very important persons' as they would have been called today were thus to be impressed by the new and glorious capital where they could see many of their subjects held as serfs with adequate allotments of land. It

therefore appears that the policy of inviting these leaders was a display of bold and imaginative diplomacy. The king had perhaps calculated that his hospitality would result in a modicum of respect and of goodwill, especially from those leaders who themselves were not exiled and were allowed to remain autonomous provided that their subjects remained docile both at home and abroad. Moreover a population of serfs living in alien country such as Assyria would be less likely to rebel in the absence of the influential heads of their own tribes. How far this policy proved successful, and whether on balance it paid, we may now attempt to decide from the evidence of our subsequent discoveries.

## CHAPTER V

# THE CITY AND TOWN OF ASSUR-NASIR-PAL

ALL the great monarchs of Assyria were builders, and as a rule their architectural remains are a measure of their greatness. On these grounds alone Assur-nasir-pal may be judged as one of the most powerful and imaginative rulers who occupied the throne. The character of the man comes out in his determination to build a new capital, his vision in the way he adorned it.

We have already seen from the memorial stela that at the time when this king set to work Calah must have been a relatively small community of 16,000 souls. It is probable that at first their most important houses were concentrated in the south-east corner of the akropolis where, as we know from the evidence of certain primitive relics, there had been a succession of hamlets since 3000 B.C. This we can deduce also from the bits of painted pottery, of a type known as Ninevite V, as well as from flint arrows attributable to the same period. Deep in that part of the mound, moreover, there was a richly equipped stone tomb which had contained the body of a chieftain who was buried about 1750 B.C.<sup>1</sup> Before Assur-nasir-pal's time, then, while the headmen of the peasant community must have lived on this quarter of the mound, the remaining houses were probably scattered over the rest of it; some may have been situated in the fields below. A community of that size may have occupied at least 100 acres of ground.

We can only guess at the reasons which prompted the king to select the site of Calah for a new capital, but there is evidence which can help to explain his choice. It is hardly rash to surmise that as a young man he would have hunted in the district, for the scrub on the Tigris banks and down as far as the Zab was a natural home for lion and for boar. Here too he must often have crossed and recrossed the river, especially in summer when the water was low, for there are at least two points above Nimrud where old stone blocks still indicate the location of a ford: it must have been a very important consideration to have an easy crossing point for the Assyrian army, within a day's reach of Nineveh, and not more than two days' march upstream from Assur.<sup>2</sup>

Moreover the place must have been an ancestral domain, for we learn from the 'Standard Inscription' so frequently repeated on the walls that the former

city of Calah, built by Shalmaneser I, had fallen into decay and lay prostrate.<sup>3</sup> The record of that monarch's occupation, about 1274–1245 B.C., must therefore have been known to Assur-nasir-pal when he contemplated rebuilding the place 400 years later. The truth of this historical tradition was substantiated by us when in 1951 we made deep soundings on the eastern side of the akropolis and exposed mud-brick walls of that older period.<sup>4</sup>

It must also have been reckoned that this was good agricultural as well as pastoral land and that the countryside was eminently suitable for horsebreeding, a fact attested in the ancient records as well as in modern times. Further, the country was obviously adapted to irrigation, thanks to the proximity of two rivers—the Zab and the Tigris.

But perhaps what weighed most with a young monarch of outstanding ambition and creative energy was the attraction of planning a new capital in which he could conduct the affairs of state unfettered by the political cliques of Nineveh or the ecclesiastical dominance of Assur. One suspects that it was the existence of tiresome urban factions which more than once prompted a new monarch to shift his residence from one capital to another: Sargon's move to Khorsabad and Sennacherib's to Nineveh are other examples. However that may be, Assur-nasir-pal in the first year of his reign set about erecting a new and glorious city where he was to perpetuate the memory of his greatness in brick and in stone.

The five-year plan was a gigantic task to which he must have given close personal attention in spite of the fact that he was fully occupied with his annual military campaigns directed towards Syria, Armenia and Iran. Indeed the architectural and the military operations were interdependent, for a large



29. Section through east wall of akropolis exposing mud-brick core and footings on external face. Thickness 37 metres. See p. 76.

proportion of captive labour was required for building the walls, and the purpose of the new city was partly to house the army which had to conduct these campaigns, and partly to contain the booty which was the reward of victory.

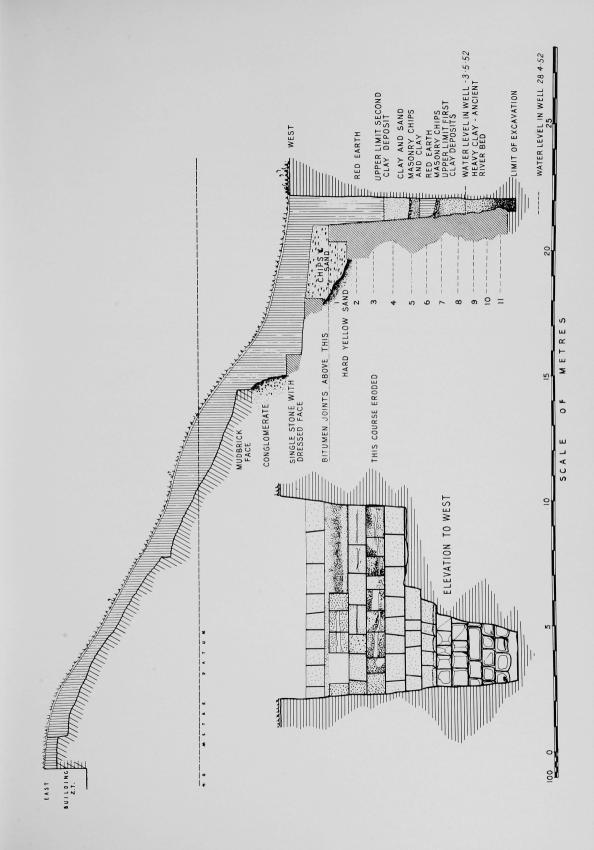
The main tasks which the king set himself at Calah were the rebuilding of what we now know as the akropolis area, and the enclosure of the town by a strong defensive wall. These plans also involved the laying out of gardens and orchards, the digging of a great canal between the city and the Zab, and probably the erection of stone quays which gave access to the Tigris.

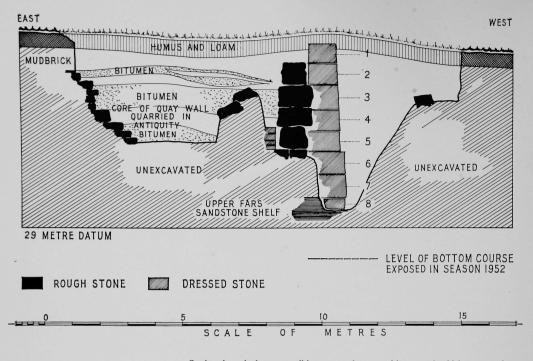
A lesser man would have been daunted by the tremendous labour of building the defensive wall. The circuit of Calah is nearly 5 miles, a mile less than was computed by Xenophon when he passed by in 401 B.C. We cannot prove that Assur-nasir-pal himself completed the perimeter, but he was certainly proud of that part of his work which he commemorated by a number of beautifully inscribed stone tablets. 'This memorial tablet have I inscribed, and in the wall thereof have I set it.'<sup>5</sup>

Until 1950 no systematic excavation of the walls had ever been attempted, although their line is clearly marked by the high ramparts which in the spring are green banks of grass. At a spot on the eastern side of the akropolis we exposed a section of this great wall brick by brick [29]; it was built of mud brick throughout and still stands no less than 13 metres (about 43 ft high) and 37 metres (120 ft) wide. On the outside, although the upper part of the wall was vertical, the lower portion, to about one-third of the total height, was built at a battered slope. At the top of this slope there was a broad platform which may have served as a base for towers which would have been built at intervals: but further digging is needed before we can discover the mechanics of the external defences. At the foot of the outside face we were however able to lay bare a broad carriage-way made of a cement which consisted of pebbles and gypsum. The inner face of the wall was vertical, and private houses occupied by city merchants and officials abutted on it. In [29] we see a picture of this huge bulwark as it was dug; here we see only the denuded core of the wall, for except at the bottom and on the inside, the face has been eroded away by the action of wind and rain; but we have once again exposed the square mud bricks of which the wall itself was constituted. As the top of the wall has disappeared we must add at least another 4 metres in reckoning the original height, and we are probably quite safe in computing a total of not less than 17 metres (nearly 56 ft). This, the eastern wall of the akropolis, was however an internal defence, overlooking the outer town. The external western walls which enclosed the N.W. Palace were erected to an even greater height.

On the western side of the mound, in the Ziggurrat area, the town planners

<sup>30 (</sup>*Right*). Section and elevation of stone quay-wall which gave access to the river Tigris, see p. 78. The two lower courses founded on the old bed of the river were of rusticated ashlar masonry. Top of the quay was in places about  $6\frac{1}{2}$  metres wide and backed on to the natural conglomerate. Behind the quay and overlooking it there was a mud-brick wall over  $14\frac{1}{2}$  metres thick and about  $6\frac{1}{2}$  metres high, which formed the western boundary wall of the N.W. Palace. For location of this cutting, see square K.5 on the plan of the akropolis [1], p. 32.





31. Section through the quay-wall in square K.6 excavated in a stretch which was traced at intervals to a distance extending over 200 metres south of the cutting shown on [1] and [30].

took advantage of a natural escarpment of conglomerate rock, and this fact probably accounts for the marked lack of parallelism between the eastern and western walls. As the western side of the akropolis was flanked by a broad stone quay which served as a base for the mud-brick superstructure, the labour involved there was even greater than elsewhere.

The discovery of this quay-wall was a difficult operation, first achieved in 1952, at the foot of the eroded ravine which now defines the great north court of the N.W. Palace. This task, which occupied a gang of 60 workmen for nearly three weeks, was however well worth the labour, and when the quay had been excavated down to bedrock it was an impressive spectacle. A year later we dug another stretch further to the south, and in 1955, with the loan of machinery from the Iraq Petroleum Company, we were able to trace its line for a distance of 220 metres [30].

The methods of construction used in the waterfront were not uniform; but in one typical sector the stone quay was found to be about  $6\frac{1}{2}$  metres wide, and rose to a height of about 10 metres above the Fars sandstone bedrock which here formed the river bank. Originally there had been thirteen courses of great white limestone blocks, carefully dressed, but not more than eleven remained intact, in addition to fragments of the top two which seem to have been stepped [31].

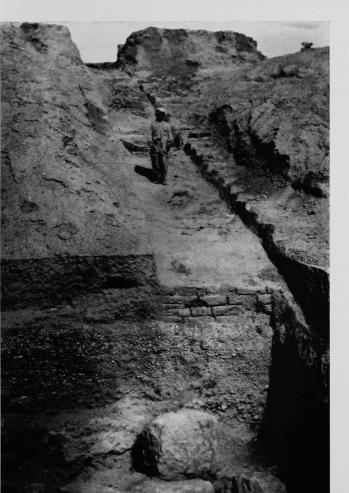
The back of the quay was built up against a natural bed of conglomerate which had been cut away to receive it, and was surmounted by a mud-brick

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wall which in places still survived up to a height of about  $6\frac{1}{2}$  metres, that is up to the level of the floors in the N.W. Palace which here overlooked the river [32]. Thus the threshold leading into the throne-room stood about 16.8 metres above the Tigris bed, and if we add to that a\*conjectured height of 13.7 metres up to the top of the battlements we may agree with Xenophon that the walls were 30.5 metres (100 ft) high, which is exactly in accord with a calculation made by Tiglath-pileser III. Xenophon's estimate<sup>6</sup> for the width, 7.6 metres (25 ft) obviously refers to that of the quay, and tallies well enough with our own measurement of 6.4 metres, but in addition the mud-brick wall at the back of the quay was just over 14.6 metres thick. A measurement taken from the front of the quay to the inner face of the wall behind it is therefore a little over 21 metres, or nearly 16 metres less than the thickness of the eastern wall of the akropolis; on this side however, the Assyrians could well afford to economize in breadth, if economy it can be called when so large an undertaking is involved, because the river itself formed an extra defence.

The technique of construction was evidence of high skill and long experience in this kind of work which, at Assur, had already been undertaken about 800 years earlier.<sup>7</sup> The individual blocks were of massive but manageable

32. Section of mud-brick wall resting on conglomerate behind top of quay.





33. Excavation of quay-wall, workmen sitting on top. Note the wellfitted blocks of ashlar masonry.



34. Workman standing on the old bed of the river in front of the stone quay.

masonry; the larger ones were as much as 1.52 metres (5 ft) in length and 0.78 metres (2 ft 7 in.) high. On the front of the quay the top two courses were given waterproof, bitumened joints: these and the six courses below them had carefully trimmed faces, but the bottom five courses were rusticated, that is to say their faces were left rough. The reason for this was clear: it was these lower courses which at the time the quay was built must normally have been under water, and had to withstand abrasion from heavy detritus which was swept along the river bed. Furthermore, the face of the quay sloped slightly inwards; this gave it greater strength in resisting the force of the river, and resulted in a much more powerful retaining wall [33, 34].

The core of the wall consisted of massive blocks which were left undressed and set in thick lumps of bitumen; after the river receded this had formed a rich quarry for later builders and was for the most part gutted.

Two periods of construction could be detected in the quay. The earlier face consisted of rather smaller, but very carefully dressed blocks; these were later reinforced by a revetment which consisted of a course of rough boulders faced with another course of dressed masonry. Unfortunately there was no inscription to identify the author of this work, but it seems most likely that the original quay was built contemporaneously with the palace by Assur-nasir-pal who on the stela says that he 'dug down as far as water-level and from the water-level upwards for 120 courses filled in its base terrace'.<sup>8</sup> From the character of the later masonry, which agrees with that found in the temple of Nabu, I am inclined to think that a part of the massive revetment was the work of Adad-nirari III (810–782 B.C.). It is however certain that a later monarch, Tiglath-pileser III (745–727 B.C.), must also have repaired the quays, for in one of his inscriptions he says: 'All the skilled craftsmen I employed to the best advantage . . . from a depth of 20 great cubits below the raging waters (of the Tigris) I piled up mighty limestone boulders.'<sup>9</sup>

While we were digging out this tremendous river-wall we could not help remembering that the last man to write about it had been Xenophon, who marched dry-shod along the old bed of the Tigris as he led the 10,000 Greeks on their heroic journey to the Black Sea, and jotted down for posterity notes, substantially accurate, to which we were able to add our own more than 2,000 years later.

We have less information about the character of the walls on the remaining sides of the akropolis, but we know that in the outer town Esarhaddon reconstructed the original 9th century walls by building up against them a mud-brick perimeter on stone foundations of ashlar masonry (see ch. XVI). Moreover, it is clear that the river swung round and protected the southern flanks of the akropolis and a part of the south external wall in the course of its journey to the Zab. Some protection on this side may also have been afforded by the old *Pati Hegalli* canal. The lines of these ancient water-courses near the walls are clearly defined in wet weather when the heavy rains find their way into the ancient beds. The external face of the huge southern town wall was exposed accidentally by a bulldozer in 1955 when a new canal was being cut along the bed of the old one. Seven years later the line of these defences was recovered by excavation conducted in the high mounds known as Tulul el 'Azar (Fort Shalmaneser) at the south-east corner of the town. It was here that Esarhaddon reinforced with

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ashlar the powerful defences which had been instituted in the 9th century B.C.

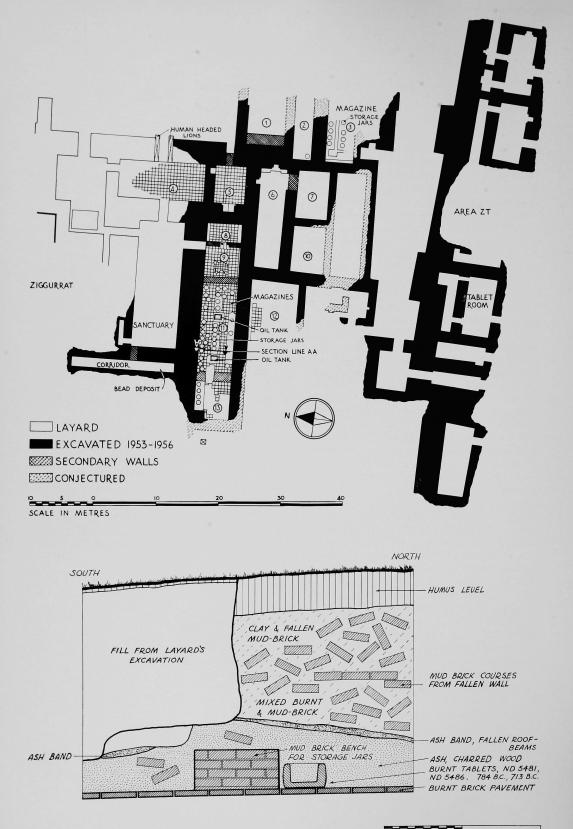
Equally impressive as a spectacle is the eastern boundary wall of the outer town; it runs straight as a plumb-line, and the rounded hummocks which occur at regular intervals show that it was strongly defended by watchtowers like the similarly constructed northern wall.

Felix Jones,<sup>10</sup> who surveyed the site in 1855, estimated the area of Nimrud at 7,000 by 5,500 feet. Our own measurements made in 1957 yield a total of approximately  $4\frac{3}{4}$  miles for the four walls which formed the perimeter. How much excavation remains to be done may be gauged from the fact that only four large buildings have so far been dug in the outer town. The remainder of the work has been confined to the akropolis, which encloses an area amounting to no more than about one-fifteenth part of the whole town.

These dimensions will perhaps have conveyed some idea of the magnitude of the work undertaken on the walls alone by Assur-nasir-pal, and it is more than likely that a part of it had to be completed by his son Shalmaneser III. The number of mud bricks required for the circuit of so formidable a town must run into some millions. Nor is it difficult to picture the scene in the late spring and early summer for the first five years of the king's reign. Row upon row of flat square bricks, laid out to dry, must have stretched over the countryside, and for months on end forced labour, composed at least in part of foreign captives, was constrained to carry loads to the allotted sector of wall. No more practical method of building has ever been devised, for the only material required is clay mixed with straw, water for the puddling, and an open box for use as a mould. A large amount of manpower was available for the job, for in a part of the world where every village house is made of mud, every family has its own bricklaver. Those who have practical experience of building in the Near East will know that one man can comfortably lay 100 bricks in one day; this is what we reckoned when we built one of our expedition houses in Syria. And it is remarkable that a Babylonian letter of the 7th century B.C. reveals that this was the accepted rate of bricklaying in Assyrian times, for the letter complains that a rate in excess of that is too much. 'We are doing the work on the weir, the work here is difficult. The daily quota of bricks is severe upon us. One man per day and one hundred and ten bricks !'11 It follows on this basis that 100 men can lay a million bricks in 100 days, and that in fact prodigies of building can be and were effected with these units of clay. It was therefore well within the capacity of the Assyrians to build the bare walls of Calah within five years. For the remainder of the work the limiting factor was not manpower, but the amount of skilled labour available: smiths, carpenters, stonemasons and sculptors; for there was a limit to the number of craftsmen who could economically be trained for that purpose, and both Assyrian and Babylonian letters betray the fact that the demand for these craftsmen usually exceeded the supply. One other considerable advantage was enjoyed by the Assyrian city-builders of ancient times. The menial labour employed was accustomed to a simple diet; bread and onions, beans or lentils, and milk were probably the daily fare, supplemented at most by meat not more than once a week. This diet was probably sufficient to keep a labourer in reasonable health, and the reward at the end of five years was a share of that magnificent banquet which we have described in the previous chapter.

Not very much is yet known about the topography of the ancient thorough-

fares, but we discovered in the eastern wall of the akropolis a broad, cobbled road which climbed up into the city from the outer town. At the top of the incline there was a double gateway flanked by lions, now mostly demolished, inscribed with the name of King Shalmaneser III. Shalmaneser Street, as we called it, was flanked by the Nabu Temple on the one side and the Governor's Palace on the other. It was in places about 6.1 metres in width and one could still mark the ruts made by the Assyrian chariots which seem to have had axles about 1.8 metres in length [6]. The appearance of the cobbled street is remarkably like that of the country towns which existed in north Syria and Anatolia in the time of the Ottoman empire. Shalmaneser Street was traced over a distance of more than 50 metres; it ran towards the middle of the inner city and probably turned into the open campus which flanked the eastern side of the king's palaces; from it a branch road passed between Ezida (the Nabu Temple) and the Burnt Palace. How many other means of entry there were to the inner city is uncertain, for not all of the present breaks in the ramparts correspond to ancient gates. It now seems likely that the main approach on the western side lay just to the south of the N.W. palace of Assur-nasir-pal. That street is marked by a gentle slope and a number of stone blocks which still protrude to the surface: if we are right in surmising that this is the site of an ancient thoroughfare, then it would have given direct access to the quays on the river side of Calah [1]. But this is one of many problems which can only solved by further extensive digging.



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## CHAPTER VI

## THE NINURTA TEMPLE AND The Ziggurrat

NE of the first tasks undertaken by Assur-nasir-pal was to build a temple for the old Sumerian god Ninurta or Nimurta, whose name perhaps lingers in the modern form Nimrud by which the ruins are known today. For the gods he reserved a sacred area at the northern end of the akropolis, next to his personal residence, the N.W. Palace. The greater part of all this work was probably completed in the fifth year of his reign, 879 B.C.

The Ninurta Temple stood at the foot of the staged tower or Ziggurrat which according to classical tradition was believed to be the tomb of Sardanapalus. But we may assume that in fact this was the tower from the top of which the celestial observations were taken, perhaps by the priests of Ninurta who would then have ascended a staircase long ago vanished, on its eastern side [35].

Layard, who spent much time and labour on the excavation of the Ziggurrat, calculated its existing height at 140 feet (about 43 metres), and was probably right in computing that it had originally been 60 feet higher.<sup>1</sup> Only the mud-brick core remained, together with two courses of dressed stone at its base which on

The notes for chapter VI will be found on pp. 323-4.

35 (Above left). Plan of Ninurta Temple in relation to ZT, the northern wing of the N.W. Palace.

36 (Below left). Section AA through Ninurta Temple, room 11. See pp. 87-90 and [41].

37 (*Below*). View of the akropolis looking south from the top of the ziggurrat, below which, in the foreground, is the Ninurta Temple with its long magazines. In the middle foreground on the right is the site of the N.W. Palace; old bed of the Tigris clearly defined on the right-hand side. The modern car track (*lefi*) leads up to the expedition camp in the far background. See p. 53 [18].

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the northern side was surmounted by a pilastered burnt-brick façade, the work of Shalmaneser III.

A further clearance of the Ziggurrat would still produce architectural information of considerable interest; but this would involve the removal of thousands of tons of fallen mud-brick debris. Our expeditions have therefore had to concentrate on other more pressing tasks which have yielded a greater variety of evidence than could be obtained by a confined activity here.

Nonetheless, two interesting architectural conclusions resulted from our operations against its southern and eastern faces in 1956. First, it is now evident that only on the eastern face of the Ziggurrat, that is against the north wall of the Ninurta Temple, could there have been room for a stairway, which must have been very steep. Secondly, it seems probable that the Ninurta Temple as originally planned by Assur-nasir-pal was modified by his son Shalmaneser. Indeed, we discovered on the floor of room 1 of the temple a number of fragments, some of them inscribed, of a burnt white limestone statue of Shalmaneser III, in the round. The text refers to a campaign against Ellipi, and probably pertains to the king's sixteenth year.<sup>2</sup>

The writing on these fragments, although slightly larger, is identical in style with that on the Shalmaneser statue later found in fragments by a ploughman in fields in the outer town near the foot of the south-east corner of the akropolis [38]. The statue was probably smashed at the sack of Calah in 614-612 B.C., and perhaps had originally stood in the Ninurta Temple itself. The king is dressed in full canonicals and wears the high knobbed turban (probably a felt hat covered with a soft material) appropriate to his office as shangu, high priest of the god Ninurta: as suppliant to the god he is barefoot and his hands are clasped in token of reverence. The dress consists of a long under-tunic draped with fringed and tasselled shawls held in position by a waistband, as on the statue of Assur-nasir-pal in the British Museum. Pendent from the back of the headdress are the lappets (called *infulae* in the medieval Christian Church) and there is a counterweight for holding down the two broad ribbons which are worn over the shoulders and the trunk. An inscription which must once have run to over 200 lines is partly preserved on front, sides, and back of the statue, and since the events recorded in it include a reference to the king's thirty-first campaign, the statue itself was probably made in the year 827 or 826 B.C. The text opens with his titles and ancestry and besides recounting his campaign in Syria, Cilicia, Phoenicia and Asia Minor, mentions the climbing of Mount Amanus, the setting up of his statue there, and the ascent of Mount Tunni, the silver mountain.3

In the northern administrative wing of the N.W. Palace there are traces of an older courtyard pavement which has a similar orientation to that of the temple and Ziggurrat. It therefore seems that these two buildings were originally intended to face directly across a paved court which would have given access to a similarly orientated throne-room. But a change of plan must have occurred, perhaps soon after the completion of the Ninurta Temple: the design of the state apartments of the N.W. Palace was then set at a different angle and its axis turned some degrees in a north-easterly direction [1].

The north extension to the palace, marked on the map as zr, is partly similar in organization to a palace built by Shalmaneser III at the city of Til-

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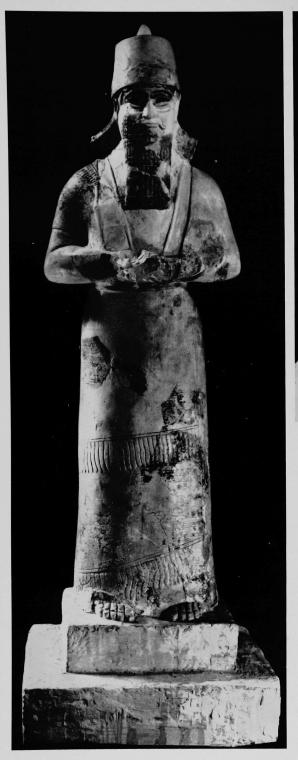
Barsip on the Euphrates in northern Syria. We are therefore justified in concluding that the administrative wing of the palace, now separated from the Ninurta Temple by a corridor, was a later addition by the son of the founder.

The fact that temple and ziggurrat are differently orientated from the palace is of particular interest. Unlike other temples in Assyria they face approximately east and west, and there can be little doubt that this bearing has a conjunction with the astral character of Ninurta, which was reflected in his architecture, as has been well demonstrated by C. J. Gadd.<sup>4</sup> Assur-nasir-pal, when he built the temple, ordained feasts for the gods in the sixth and eleventh months of the year when Sirius the Dogstar, or the Arrowstar as the Assyrians called him, would have stood immediately in the south; at sunrise in the sixth, at sunset in the eleventh month. This, as astronomers explain, was the last rising of Sirius at sunset, which was then at the time of the winter solstice. The allusions to Ninurta in the royal annals and hymns clearly identify the god who gleams redly in the firmament with the famous Caniculae rubor. However that may be, this god of war and of the chase was obviously congenial to Assur-nasir-pal, a great warrior and hunter. As the Assyrian equivalent of Mars, Sargon later on referred on to him as 'Lord of the month appointed for the gathering of armies and the formation of camps'.5

We now come to our excavations in the temple of Ninurta itself. The purpose of this work was an attempt to define the architectural relationship of the temple both to the ziggurrat and to the palace more clearly than had been possible for Layard. The results proved to be both of historical and of architectural interest, for as well as adding many rooms to the plan we were able to recover documentary evidence concerning the last period of occupation and a number of small finds which were not without importance.

Layard himself had discovered the three principal rooms which appear to have comprised a main and a subsidiary sanctuary. The latter was at the extreme north end of the temple; it was adorned with reliefs of magical figures which appear to represent beneficent powers driving out evil ones; at the end of this room there were fragments of an inscribed stone slab. It was outside the north entrance that Layard found a round-topped limestone relief of King Assurnasir-pal II, 8 feet 8 inches (about 2·6 metres) high, confronted by a three-footed, stone altar.<sup>6</sup> There was nothing to be gained by re-excavating this room, which we therefore left untouched. But in the adjacent chamber 4, to the south, we once again dug out the entrance where Layard had found and reburied two human-headed gypsum lions<sup>7</sup>  $16\frac{1}{2}$  feet high and 15 feet long (about  $5 \times 4^{\circ}6$ metres). These we wished to photograph as there was no other pictorial record of them beyond Layard's drawings. The exceptional merit of this 9th century sculpture, a megalithic art in which the craftsmen of Assur-nasir-pal excelled, is shown by the powerfully carved head on [**39**].

In the main sanctuary we re-dug the western end and caught sight of the great stone paving slab, now badly broken, on which the king in 325 lines had recorded the principal events of his reign, and his dedication of the temple to Ninurta, 'master of the gods'. Here we penetrated further than Layard and proceeded to examine the back of the sanctuary where we had detected a blocked door in the end wall. In a long and narrow corridor we made a most interesting discovery: a sealed deposit under the floor. At the point marked 'bead deposit'

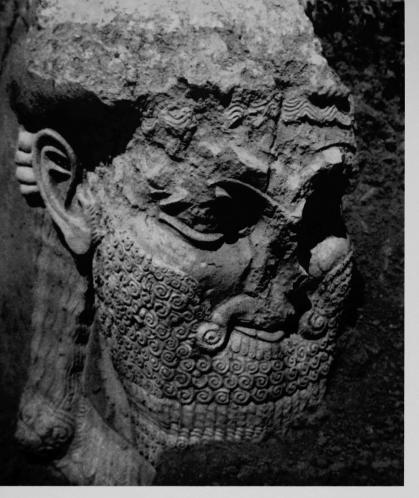




38. ND5500(B). White limestone statue in the round of Shalmaneser III, see p. 86. Height as restored 1.4 metres, and of pedestal 35 cm. Reconstructed from fragments which were recovered by a ploughman in the outer town near the south-east foot of the akropolis. The king is dressed in full canonicals appropriate to his office as High Priest of the god Ninurta, to whose temple this statue had probably originally been dedicated. The inscription of over 200 lines is partly preserved both on the front and on the back, and as the events recorded include a reference to the king's 31st campaign, the statue itself was probably made in the year 827-826 B.C.







39. Human-headed colossus with lion's body which lies buried below it. This was one of a pair dedicated to the god Ninurta by Assur-nasir-pal who set them up at the entrance to room 4 of the temple. Discovered by Layard in 1850, they measured 15 ft in length and were 16½ ft high. The carving represents the 9th century style at its best. See p. 87.

in the plan [35] we found a cache consisting of many hundreds of beads which included specimens in glass paste, faience, rock crystal, carnelian, soapstone and other varieties of semi-precious stones. In addition there were over two dozen cylinder seals, some of them well engraved with scenes typical of glyptic art of the 8th and 7th centuries B.C., including animals in procession, winged monsters (lamassu), and archers shooting stags and lions. But the most interesting feature of this deposit was that some of the seals were of an archaic type which could be dated to the end of the first dynasty of Babylon or the early Kassite period, that is, to the early 16th century B.C. The finest of these is a quartz seal, ND5374 [40], with five lines of inscription; it depicts two standing figures, probably gods; one of them carries a straight club, the other the bent club of the Syrian Amorite God Martu; between the two figures is a bird and the sign DUG, 'good', and behind one of them a plant (?), a lozenge and a gazelle. Professor Gadd, who has examined the inscription, describes it as in mixed Sumerian and Akkadian which in translation may be read: 'Goddess my mother, merciful goddess, of Shamash-damig the worshipper, have mercy (?) (on) the slave worshipping thee.' At least two other seals in the hoard are of the same

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period, that is to say nearly 1,000 years earlier than the remainder of the collection. The intention had evidently been to dedicate both contemporary material and antiquities to the god; a practice well known long before this time. One wonders whether the ancient seals were heirlooms or possibly treasure trove which the Assyrians regarded as magical relics of a much earlier Calah and so dedicated them in perpetuity to their patron god. Much later on, in the Hellenistic period, the inhabitants buried archaic objects in their graves. An ancient cylinder seal of the Agade period, more than 2,000 years older than the burial with which it was deposited, is an instance of a similar practice.<sup>8</sup>

It was possible to determine from the stratification that this deposit was laid down when the postern gate of the sanctuary was being blocked and sealed off from the corridor. This must have occurred either late in the 8th or early in the 7th century B.C. when the sanctuary was renovated.

The remainder of the rooms south of the sanctuary were magazines, the largest of which, 8, 9, 11, and 13, were originally planned as a single chamber 32 metres in length and about  $5\frac{1}{2}$  metres wide. Here a series of large terracotta jars was arranged in four rows, down the length of the room. Each jar was supported by a mud-brick bench and stood on a drip-stone which had once contained a bung at the bottom [41]. The average capacity of each was about 300 litres (66 gallons); in the middle of the chamber there were two stone (gypsum) tanks inscribed with the name of the king. It is probable that all these receptacles were intended for the storage of olive oil, a commodity which was mentioned in a tablet from the adjacent area  $zT^9$ ; some of them were inscribed with their capacity in terms of the *homer* and its subordinate measures the *sutu* and the *qa*. In another magazine (room 3) the jars were arranged at either side of a central mud-brick bench.

In the last period of the temple's lifetime this long room was subdivided into four chambers with relatively thin partition walls. One of them (room 11) [36] contained two documents: a clay bulla or docket which must originally have been tied to a sack, dated to the year 713 B.C.; and near to it a tablet which was a register of cloth or garments, written in 784 B.C.<sup>10</sup> Another document (K.382) possibly found by Layard in the same building, is a letter from Nineveh which proves that this temple was receiving gifts in the time of a high official named Assur-gimil-tirri who held office as *limmu*, probably in the year 641 B.C.<sup>11</sup> That the temple had been in a flourishing state some 25 years earlier we know from an anxious letter written by an official to King Esarhaddon reporting the arrest of the night watchman, a priest, and other accomplices after some gold had been stolen from the roof beams;<sup>12</sup> this we are told was not the first occasion on which the temple had been burgled.

40. ND5374. Cylinder seal (height 2·7 cm.) of rock-crystal, date c.1600 B.C. Inscribed with a supplicant's prayer 'to the merciful goddess'; it appears to depict two gods, the one with the bent club is the Syrian Martu. Deposited together with other cylinders and a large collection of beads in a corridor behind the sanctuary abutting on the ziggurrat when the Ninurta Temple was repaired, shortly after 700 B.C.



## NINURTA TEMPLE AND ZIGGURRAT

Many traces of the fire which had consumed this building had been observed by Layard. In the long oil magazines we had important evidence for the date of the destruction, since the thin partition walls built in the last period of occupation were also burnt. The two 8th century tablets were lying in the ash [36]; but this final destruction must have taken place either in 614 B.C., or in 612 B.C. when the capital was sacked by the Medes and the Babylonians; indeed, in the contemporary administrative wing of the palace adjacent to it, tablets were found which belonged to the final years of the Assyrian empire (see also ch. XVI for the chronological evidence).

The enemy must have reaped a rich reward, for many small objects of value were found in the debris; small gold cylindrical beads, seals, mutilated fragments of ivories, stone amulets, gold foil, copper buttons, pieces of armour plating, a copper chisel, a glazed faience receptacle, and two banana-shaped objects made of frit were all that survived in what must have once been the most richly endowed temple in the city.

No further excavations were made in this sacrosanct quarter around the Ziggurrat, for Layard and others after him had thoroughly examined the ground and left little untouched. But we uncovered and photographed a magnificently carved statue of a roaring lion, one of a pair which had stood at the entrance to the temple of *Ishtar belit-mati* which Layard had found about 91 metres east of the Ninurta Temple in 1850. Its twin is in the British Museum, and this one, in a severely damaged condition, has been reburied until such time as it may be repaired and once again shown *in situ*. It is probable that a third temple once existed not far to the east again, but hardly any traces of it have survived, while only a hollow in the ground and some mutilated stone remnants are left of the temple of *Ishtar kidmurri* which Rassam excavated to the south of it in 1878.



41. Ninurta Temple, the long magazine room 11, looking east. The big pottery oil-jars set in parallel rows were encased in mud-brick benches which gave them stability. Average capacity of each jar was about 66 gallons. Circular drip-stones on which the jars had once rested appear in the foreground. The chamber in which these vessels stood was filled with ash and fallen mud-brick debris from the burning of the building when the city was sacked in 614 B.C. See p. 91.

## CHAPTER VII

# THE N.W. PALACE OF ASSUR-NASIR-PAL: CONSTRUCTION AND DECORATION

E now come to the greatest of Assur-nasir-pal's achievements within the akropolis: the celebrated N.W. Palace which, as a glance at the map [folder I] will show, stretched its length over about one third of the river front on the western side of Nimrud. This was the king's crowning architectural triumph—majestically planned and powerfully adorned.<sup>1</sup>

The nucleus of the palace was excavated by Layard in 1845–51 [42] and the discoveries which he made within it have been vividly described by him in *Nineveh and Its Remains*, as well as in other works.<sup>2</sup> Gifted with a pen which his more pedantic successors must envy, he has painted for us an unforgettable picture of the land and its people as he saw them at that time.

The principal finds were the carved bas-reliefs in gypsum which adorned the mud-brick walls and are now distributed, mostly in the British Museum, but many in other parts of the world. Some of the reliefs, which had been reburied shortly after their discovery, were again exposed by us in 1951–2, and we were able to photograph them for the first time, since although photography had just been invented in Layard's day, the camera had not yet come into his hands.

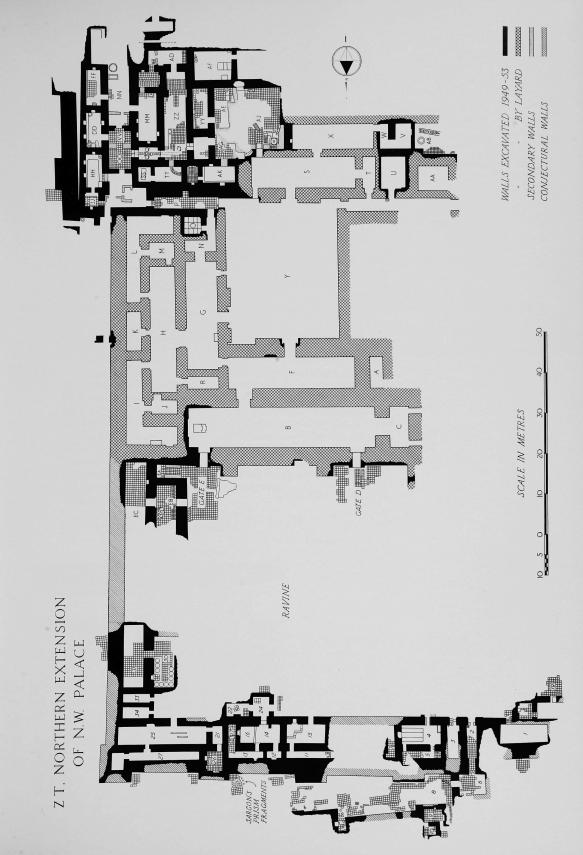
To Layard indeed belongs the credit of having discovered the nucleus or central portion of the building which includes the principal apartments of state and reception halls. The rooms lettered A to AB represent his work; the part of the plan marked in black [42] indicates our additions to the plan a century later in 1950-3.<sup>3</sup> It will be seen that we re-examined the east end of the throne-room B, its external wall face and two gates, and reopened a part of room F, the whole of room O, as well as rooms U, V, W, and AB. All the remainder of the blackened chambers represent our additions to the plan, of which the most notable are the domestic quarters to the south of passage P including rooms AD-VV; the two guard chambers EB and EC outside the entrance to the throne-room; and the recessed chamber EA which abuts on the two of them where the king's memorial [27] described in ch. IV was found; and finally the northern administrative wing ZT.

## THE N.W. PALACE—CONSTRUCTION AND DECORATION

We owe a debt of gratitude to Layard for the careful plans and records of his discoveries, and for salvaging the cream of the sculpture. It has therefore been easy to identify his tracks which have led us to break new and no less valuable ground. From an architectural point of view, the most significant result of following Lavard has been the realization that the palace extends far beyond the confines of the king's official apartments which are centrally placed between two wings: the northern, flanks the edge of the Ziggurrat terrace about 60 metres beyond the entrance to the throne-room B, from which it is separated by a great paved courtyard; the southern wing, still only partially dug, extends at least 46 metres south of the passage P which separates it from the central block. If we regard these three adjacent but distinctive units as part of a single palace we may reckon that the frontage from north to south originally covered a distance of not less than 200 metres, and as the width of the building must once have been about 120 metres, the area of the whole amounted at one time to about 2.4 hectares, or nearly 6 acres of ground. It is however to be reckoned that some of these extensions are the work of Assur-nasir-pal's successors: most of the southern or domestic wing as it stands is perhaps the work of his son, and the northern wing in its present form may be even later. Nonetheless this great complex represents the consolidated work of the dynasty which organized the division of the building into three parts: the administration in the north, royal offices, reception halls, and treasuries in the centre, and residency in the south. Here in fact was housed the government and authority of Assyria during the greater part of the oth century B.C. The central block was probably used as a royal residence for three generations, by the founder of the dynasty, his son and his grandson: Shalmaneser III, however, built himself a new throne-room on the lines of the one in the N.W. Palace, in the outer town within the great building which we have named Fort Shalmaneser, but this was not ready for occupation before the thirteenth year of his reign.<sup>4</sup> Thereafter the succeeding kings built palaces of their own elsewhere in Calah and in the 7th century moved back to Nineveh. Let us now examine the functional aspect of the palace and see to what extent the arrangements of the various rooms gives us a clue to the purposes for which they were used.

The core of the palace, essentially royal in character, is, as we have seen, the great central block which contains rooms A-Y, AA and AB, twenty-three in all; many of them are halls built on a vast scale. The plan radiates about a great open court Y with maximum cross dimensions of  $32 \times 27$  metres; it was thus capable of holding comfortably a crowd of 1,000 persons,<sup>5</sup> almost twice as large as the great court of the Governor's Palace described in ch. II. About it on three sides the great halls are symmetrically planned, in pairs; the grouping of the smaller chambers, especially on the eastern side, is also neatly balanced. On paper this

<sup>42 (</sup>*Right*). Plan of the N.W. Palace which originally covered nearly six acres of ground. Northern, central and southern wings. The largest of all the chambers was the great hall B, or throne-room, first excavated by Layard. Outline of the throne-base is shown at the east end of it. Other important rooms are: the archive rooms  $1_3-16$  in the administrative wing ZT; the niche outside Gate E where the stela of Assur-nasir-pal II was found; rooms NN and AB in the southern or domestic wing, each with a well which contained valuable treasure. See chs. IX, X.



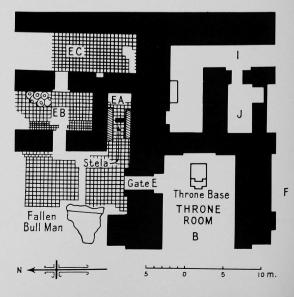
## THE N.W. PALACE—CONSTRUCTION AND DECORATION

is a most attractive plan, a harmonious and well articulated design. The pairing of so many of the main chambers, B and F, G and H, I and L, J and M, S and x is a striking feature of the building, and is done on a grand scale. One suspects that this duplication reflects an ever present consciousness in the Assyrian mind of the visible and invisible powers which at all times were present in the ordering of the realm, the king and his protective genii being shown in constant juxtaposition on the reliefs. At all events it was a very ancient traditional design which has its prototype in the great palace at Mari on the middle Euphrates 900 years earlier,<sup>6</sup> though the pairing of chambers at that period was confined to the central portion of the building.

Most of the rooms when decorated were, it is true, predominantly adorned with 'magical' reliefs, but an exception to this was the great throne-room B where many were secular in character, a striking contrast to the adjoining hall F which was exclusively decorated with the monstrous Nisroch eagle and the heavenly tree.

The great hall B, or throne room, was, as might be expected, the largest and most elaborate in the building [42, 42b]; it measured internally  $47 \times 10$  metres,<sup>7</sup> and was obviously planned to hold a large concourse of persons in the presence of the king whose throne-base consisted of a huge inscribed gypsum slab measuring  $3 \times 2.4$  metres, which weighed over 15 tons. This was rediscovered by us in 1951 and moved by the Iraq Antiquities Department to the Mosul Museum. At the same time we observed part of a grooved stone slab in the centre of the room, to the west of the throne base, and some authorities have suggested that this was intended to serve as a kind of railway line along which a mobile car supporting a hearth would have been wheeled up to the king.<sup>8</sup> Traces of just such a car were discovered in a north Syrian palace at Tell Halaf, and grooved 'tram-lines' have appeared in the throne-rooms of Assyrian palaces elsewhere. Nevertheless I think it is more probable that in most cases these 'lines' were intended to mark the emplacement for some heavy ceremonial object which had to be carried into the room and exactly placed in front of the

42b. Detail of plan showing part of the N.W. Palace with throne-room exit through Gate E, location of the founder's stela and the guard-room EB where storage jars for the cereals required in the palace were found.



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**43.** Gypsum relief, height of the recess 1.7 metres (5 ft 8 in) now in the B.M., discovered by Layard. This was situated in a niche behind the king's throne, eastern end of room B. The scene illustrates Assur-nasir-pal, twice represented, on either side of the sacred tree, receiving the authority of kingship from the god Assur in the winged disc. At each end is the winged genius, the king's protector, holding bucket and cone.

king; we cannot assume that these portable objects were always on wheels, for in some places such as the throne-room in Ezida<sup>9</sup> the lines were ungrooved, nor did they ever run for any considerable distance.

The sculpture discovered here and elsewhere in the palace has been described in detail by Lavard and learnedly discussed by many others; we need therefore only consider how it was related to the building, and in what way the principal subjects are a guide to the purpose for which each room was used. Behind the king's throne-base in the eastern wall there was a recess which contained a great sculptured panel depicting two crowned figures in regal attire on either side of the sacred tree, each attended by a winged genius, bucket in left hand, and in the right a conical fruit which is held up against the back of the royal head [43]. Above the tree we see the god Assur in the winged disc handing down from the sky the circlet of authority to the figure on the right of the tree. The most probable explanation of this dramatic scene is that the king is being invested by the god with the royal power. On the left of the tree the king with upraised hand and mace at the trail is supplicating the god; on the right the god grants the fulfilment of his prayer; the royal mace is now held erect instead of parallel with the ground. The two winged genii-the good shedu as the Assyrians called them-are engaged in what is generally known as the 'conesmearing ceremony'. The fruit is plucked from the sacred tree and endowed

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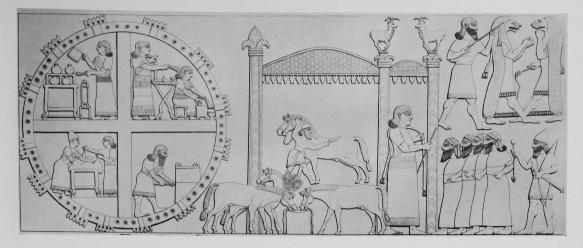
## THE N.W. PALACE—CONSTRUCTION AND DECORATION

with a mystical virtue which gives life and strength to the king. How important this was deemed to be we may judge from the many representations throughout the palace of the symbolic tree with its twisted branches and palmette fronds, and of the genius who bears its fruit.

This then was the scene which confronted the assembled company in the focal point of the room, and no doubt it was intended to emphasize in the minds of those present that Assur-nasir-pal was king by divine right, delegated by the god in heaven to exercize authority on earth.

On the long north and south walls the reliefs were arranged from ground level in two tiers, with a band of the 'Standard Inscription' between them a little over 2 feet (0.61 metres) in height. The more important scenes in the lower tier were about 6 feet 6 inches (1.98 metres) high, and were elevated from the floor by a plinth; the subsidiary ones at the top were about 2 feet 10 inches (0.86 metres), so that these stone carvings rose not less than 12 feet (3.66 metres) above the pavement.<sup>10</sup>

Against the southern wall of the room, starting from the western end, the stone reliefs depicted in two registers the king's victories during the first five years of his reign. The difficulties with which he had to contend and his skill in overcoming them are vividly portrayed. We see him in his chariot being ferried across a river, his horses swimming in the swift torrent, soldiers borne on inflated skins, and the standard-bearers who accompany him as he proceeds to invest and set fire to heavily defended towns. One amusing scene depicts a device which is the Assyrian substitute for the modern helicopter. A soldier who has managed to scale a town-wall suspends a pair of chains to his comrade below and hauls him up on to the battlements. We are not spared the brutal side of warfare, for which the Assvrians have earned an evil reputation. In passing it may at least be said that they were not indiscriminately cruel; but an aspect of savagery was a part of the propaganda by which they hoped to exact submission from those of their subjects who might be contemplating rebellion. We are not therefore surprised to see desolate women and children led captive, or the picture of a rebellious Assyrian kissing the king's feet. But there are also some charming sketches of more intimate scenes, notably the tending of the king's horses and the cooking of the king's meal in the royal tent at night. Here we see the earliest picture of a cook wearing a chef's hat: like all true chefs he is also a butcher [44]. In the same scene a pair of masked dancers dressed in lions' skins are performing their steps outside, to the accompaniment of plectrum, rattle and whip, and finger-snapping.11 Later come the fruits of victory, which include bullion and a magnificent pair of elephant's tusks. Glorious as these war scenes must have appeared, it is significant that they did not occupy the most important position in the frieze; they led up to a succession of reliefs which depict the king killing first two lions, then two wild bulls. Finally as a headpiece and nearest to the king's throne on the same wall there comes a richly composed scene in which the king, bow in one hand, ritual cup in the other, is about to pour a libation over the prostrate bull: he is attended by his vizier, while harpists make music for him. Thus we see that the climax of the story is the triumph of the king as a hunter, which shows the deep significance of the lion-hunt in Assyria. Both from the written records and from the pictures we learn that from the earliest times victory in the chase was regarded



44. Gypsum relief from throne-room B of N.W. Palace; domestic scenes including king's butcher, royal horses, soldiers before an officer and masked figures dancing to music. (Reproduced from Layard, *Monuments of Nineveh*, old series, pl. 30.)

as a necessary accomplishment of the king, an activity directly supervised by the gods.

On the opposite, northern wall, only a few of the reliefs had survived, but here again one beautifully carved slab displays a winged figure of royal appearance carrying a spotted deer in one hand and a plant in the other. In this we may recognize a symbol of the king in his role as stock-breeder and husbandman, the creator of royal parks and gardens, who scoured all lands for new trees, plants, and beasts of the field.

Until recently it had seemed most surprising that what was so obviously the throne-room apparently opened directly on to a courtyard which according to Layard had been one of the principal thoroughfares into the city. In 1953 however we discovered that the ravine outside chamber B had only been eroded in relatively modern times, and that in fact this courtyard connected it with another wing of the palace further to the north, and was confined by subsidiary chambers including EB which must have been a guardroom, EC, and others [42, 42b]. Indeed outside EB we found many links of iron plate-armour, probably the relics of an attack to which the palace eventually succumbed.

Our rather lengthy examination of the throne-room has perhaps given some insight into the ideas which animated its architect, and here the secular is seen competing with the religious. In the adjoining hall F, on the contrary, the reliefs were wholly given over to magic, and with the exception of a great figure of the king on the east wall, the remainder are larger than life-size figures of the monstrous winged 'Nisroch', bucket in one hand, touching the tree of life with the other. We do not know what these figures aptly named Nisroch by Layard are, for although Isaiah and Kings<sup>12</sup> refer to the murder of Senacherib in the house of Nisroch at Nineveh, there is no word corresponding to it in Assyrian. It seems clear however that these are human figures wearing masks; they are in fact dressed and armed like the king. Some would interpret them as priests, or even as the king himself performing a prescribed ritual; others would see in them purely magical monsters. I have the impression that the personality



45 and 46. Detail of two figures in the gypsum reliefs which formed part of a scene on the outside face of the north wall to the throne-room B. See p. 103. The long frieze which ran between gates D and E depicted the king receiving a procession headed by his general who led in captives bearing tribute. Discovered and subsequently reburied by Layard, these and other slabs which are more than life-size have been erected in situ by the Iraq Antiquities Department. The bearded figure (left) wears the fashionable type of ear-ring worn by Assyrian nobles at this period. He is accompanied by his youthful squire (below) bearing staff of office, hands clasped in token of respect to the king. At the bottom of the photograph across forearm and skirt is the 'Standard Inscription' in cuneiform characters which related the king's triumphs and achievements. Assyrian sculpture was narrative and the written record went appropriately with it. The account of the king's activities were dedicated to the gods in perpetuity, and some of the slabs were therefore inscribed on the back as well as on the front. In the frieze the young attendant followed immediately behind his master.

47. The relief from the north façade of the palace at the foot of the page illustrates an attendant who bears on his head a tray loaded with tribute for the king including bowls, ingots, and a crescentic ornament for the cult. See p. 103.







48 (Above). Three figures in the same procession on the north façade of the throne-room. The 'Standard Inscription' is clearly visible across the centre of the slab. At the foot of the page is detail of two tributaries depicted in this procession. They appear to be holding up their hands in an attitude of submission to the king and are perhaps dependent princes from north Syria. Pupil and iris of the eye still bear traces of black and white incrustation. See p. ro3.

**49.** Two Assyrians in the procession (*right*), master followed by his squire who wears a collar with fillets pendent from it. The 'Standard Inscription' is well preserved here. See p. 103.





## THE N.W. PALACE—CONSTRUCTION AND DECORATION

of the king was projected through all these weird images and that they represented him as the supreme magician of Assyria.

Some light is thrown on the magical properties of such figures by a series of tablets from Nineveh which describe the ritual for the making of winged birdheaded figures, bucket in hand, in wood and clay,<sup>13</sup> the purpose of which was to expel sickness and evil spirits from the house. Indeed there is a hint in a late Babylonian psalm that one of their functions was to purify the house in perpetuity, for the text avers that the figures that appeared in a dream were sent for that purpose.<sup>14</sup> Models of such figures were actually found by us buried under the floors of the Burnt Palace, and there can be little doubt therefore as to the magical intention of these larger stone monsters carved on the walls. It is a strange twist of fortune that examples of the weird reliefs from this particular room have eventually found their way to museums in Dresden, Bristol and Newcastle-on-Tyne.<sup>15</sup>

When we come to examine the other large halls we find that the evidence for their function is less conclusive. There is some reason to suspect that G may have been the banqueting room, for on the short wall at the north end the king is seated on his throne, gorgeously attired in embroidered robes, cup in hand. He is attended by his squires, beardless bowmen who are fanning him with flywhisks; the winged 'cone-men' are also present. Layard expressly commented on the beautiful finish of the sculpture in this room which was appropriately designed for the king in festive mood. Noticeable too is the beauty and delicacy of the engravings on the king's robe; for example, the dompting of the lion by thrusting a spiked shield straight into his mouth; the other heraldic and magical motifs are also full of life and movement. To look at these small designs is to realize that the miniature art of that period may well have been free from the stiff hierarchic attitude of the monumental sculpture. Elsewhere in the same room the king carries a cup on the tips of his fingers and is accompanied by his youthful bowmen. His sword and daggers are perhaps intended to emphasize his character as warrior. But whether the intention was to represent him as hunter, or warrior, or both simultaneously, and whether engaged in any particular ceremony, it is difficult to decide.

The adjacent hall H again depicts the king carrying a fluted cup and bow; but whereas the figures in G appeared to depict the king as a swordsman, these seem to emphasize the bow (one of the symbols of the god Ninurta), which he himself carries instead of his squire. He is accompanied by winged genii, bucket in hand, but without the cone. Thus the royal figures represented in these two adjoining rooms betray differences of treatment which may correspond with successive stages in the court ceremonial or perhaps with magical concepts. Unfortunately these subtleties escape us; but if we are to judge by the figures on the north wall, which seem to have been the focal point for these long narrow chambers, then the more public room must have been the outer one, G. Except at the entrances, where magical figures are always stationed, no carving adorned the walls of the relatively small chamber K which looks as if it might have been some kind of inner sanctum for use by the king.

There is little to be said about the third pair of great halls s and x; the latter contained no sculpture, only the 'Standard Inscription.' Chamber s, however, revealed the king in his character as a swordsman attended by squires who

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carried his arms.<sup>16</sup> Here the king holds in his right hand the royal staff which may be intended to represent him in the character of 'shepherd' of his flock, a phrase much used in the inscriptions. It is his left hand which is resting on the sword hilt.

The reliefs in the smaller chambers are either inscribed without pictures, or else contain genii, winged, unwinged, rarely four-winged. In chamber 1 there were two tiers of winged figures, barefoot, on either side of the sacred tree; one panel depicted an effeminate-looking young genius, chaplet in hand; another in the upper compartment showed severely masculine figures wearing beards; in o the king is seen carrying his own arrows; in T there is a magnificent bearded figure carrying a gazelle with one arm and a sheaf of corn with the other.

Passages and doorways were often flanked by winged monsters, part human, sometimes leonine, sometimes bovine, known as the good *shedu* and *lamassu*, defenders of the gates. To these magical devices there was added a touch of humour in the little bronze dogs originally buried under the thresholds at the entrance; their business was to bark at the evil spirits: one of them was inscribed 'Don't stop to think, bite him'!<sup>17</sup>

We have unfortunately little idea of the external appearance of the palace except on the north façade of the throne-room where we once again unearthed in 1952 the splendid figures of tributaries first seen by Layard [45–9] and drawn by him 105 years earlier. There, outside the gates, to the accompaniment of the usual colossi, was a picture of the king receiving his general, the *turtanu*, who preceded the procession of defeated foreigners with their tray-loads of gifts. Perhaps the most captivating of them are the Anatolian (?) figures leading monkeys on a string, one of them perched on a man's back. The prostrate bullman [42b] outside gate E who when we uncovered him surveyed the scene sadly from the pavement of the courtyard, has now been re-erected.

No less imposing are the strong colossi which defend the narrow gates; in gate E the human-headed winged lionesses harnessed to the door [50] show how brilliantly the Assyrians succeeded in imparting an impression of realism to these fantastic monsters; another pair further to the west (gate D) guarded the second doorway into the throne-room; these creatures were part man (they had bearded heads), part lion and part bird; each of them carried in his right hand a kid as offering to the gods, and in his left the plant of life.

It is logical to assume that the two gates D and E [51] formed respectively the entrance and the exit of the throne-room. The entrance was the furthest removed from the throne itself and the visitor after making obeisance was ushered out from the northern door nearest to the king. The organization of the throne-room in relation to the remainder of the building thus demonstrates that the king himself was easily accessible from the main northern courtyard of the building. No doubt he was properly guarded against assassination, but the royal letters make it quite clear that he was in close personal contact with his people, and it is interesting to find architectural evidence also confirming that he was no remote and secluded figurehead.

The visitor to Nimrud now receives a splendid impression of the original appearance of the external façade and entrances to the throne-room, thanks to the well executed work of reconstruction which was achieved by the Iraq Antiquities Department [50, 51]. The great stone reliefs, the eagle-headed

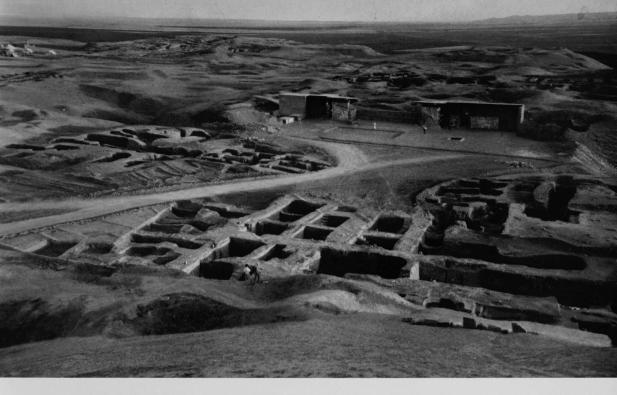
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monsters, and the stone guardians of the gates have been set up in their original position as intended by Assur-nasir-pal himself, to be seen in perpetuity. Most striking perhaps are the two great winged bull-giants, one facing outwards towards the Tigris, the other inwards towards the akropolis, at the entrance and exit to the throne-room [50]. Each of them wears a fish-hood, symbol of Ea, god of magic, and has the belly of the fish, which became immortalized in the allegorical story of the prophet Jonah. The colossi are in this respect an interesting parallel with the stone reliefs depicting bearded figures wearing long fish cloaks which Layard found in the northernmost chamber of the Ninurta Temple.<sup>18</sup>

It has become apparent from this work of reconstruction that some protection in the form of roofing must once have been given to these reliefs which adorned an external façade, for otherwise they would have been exposed to the rain which can work havoc on the soft gypsum in which they were carved. The solution adopted today for their protection has been to erect a projecting roof which provides them with an adequate cover against the elements. Layard himself recognized that this series of sculpture [45–9], which he was obliged to re-bury, must have been roofed in some way.<sup>19</sup> It is possible that they were

**50.** Gate E to the throne-room of the N.W. Palace as re-erected by the Iraq Antiquities Department. Human-headed lions flank either side of the entrance; on the right stands a great winged monster in gypsum, part man, part bull, with belly of a fish, facing the chamber which contained the stela of Assur-nasir-pal II. See p. 103.





**51**. View looking south from top of ziggurrat, showing part of Ninurta Temple, chambers in administrative wing of the N.W. Palace, and beyond, courtyard in front of the throne-room, and the two reconstructed doorways, D and E. See p. 103.

once sheltered by a columned portico in which mud brick might have been used for the piers, but any evidence thereof has been obliterated in antiquity. The objection to that solution is that piers or columns would have concealed parts of the sculpture and so would have obstructed the continuous view of the processional scenes which confront us without interruption today. Freestanding columns and piers were indeed used by the Assyrians, but rarely, and there is no evidence of them in the time of Assur-nasir-pal.<sup>20</sup>

Elsewhere the external façades are sadly ruined. The east side seems to have been unadorned; the west overlooked the river which washed the huge stone quays that formed an embankment to the palace.

It is not easy to visualize the carved reliefs as they must have appeared in their pristine state. We know that colour was used, but sparingly; red on the sandals, touches of black on the hair and beards, white on the irises of the eyes, and black on the pupils. But economically as colour had been applied to the stone reliefs, there can be no doubt that, higher up, the plaster on the mudbrick walls had been adorned with brilliant paintings in the simplest colours; red, black, blue and white. In the throne-room, for example, we found some splendid painted fragments of horses' heads and eight-spoked chariot wheels, which showed that the secular scenes had been repeated or continued in paint overhead, at what height we do not know. No less interesting was the discovery of part of a blue, red, and white geometrical design which depicted a coffered

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ceiling to which were attached traces of the decayed roof beams. It seems possible therefore that the throne-room was roofed with beams of cedar or pine the under-sides of which were brilliantly painted.<sup>21</sup> It is clear that the width of the immensely long and proportionately narrow halls was dictated by the maximum lengths of timber which the kings could obtain and 'stretch' across them, *tarasu*, as their inscriptions say. The maximum width is about 10 metres which must have involved the felling of the finest trees in the Lebanon or the Amanus mountains.

4

It may seem surprising, but the conclusion is inevitable, that this lavish collection of sculpture was ill-lit, and seen in comparative obscurity. The walls were originally very high, some of them probably as much as 11 or 12 metres,<sup>22</sup> as we may judge from their thickness, which occasionally amounts to nearly 5 metres; we have already seen how Xenophon's observations<sup>23</sup> about the height of the walls tallies with the archaeological evidence. The courtyards, however large, could not have cast much light through the comparatively narrow doorways, and as glass windows were not yet known, the principal lighting must have come from openings in the tops of the walls, or occasionally through clerestory lighting under the roof: openings which had to be sealed when the weather was inclement. Nor would the small and smoky lamps which have been found in some of the niches have provided effective illumination.

There is no need to exaggerate; it is possible by these means to obtain a modicum of light, but without a doubt we should have found these chambers very dark, accustomed as we are to big low windows and artificial lighting. But the ancients must usually have lived in a comparative obscurity to which their eyes were well attuned. Indeed, even today, many of the peasant houses in the modern Near East are almost pitch dark; I have sat in almost total darkness in the halls of Yezidi chiefs in the Jebel Sinjar; and in Iran the Achaemenian palaces with their forests of columns must have been no less gloomy. It is known that from habitual confinement man becomes keen-eyed in the darkness, and it may well be that he saw far more than we could imagine possible under conditions which we should consider extraordinarily ill-lit.

The problem of ventilation is of course closely connected with that of lighting, but in this respect the Assyrian palaces were fairly well organized. Most of the larger rooms had one or two vertical shafts, and these, which started in the roof, served as air-vents or wind-doors (as they were described by the Assyrians) and could be sealed at the top when the weather was inclement. The same method of ventilation is still used in the peasant houses of the Mosul district today; their modern name is *bargila*. These shafts served a double purpose, for their base, which was often about head high, was used as a cupboard, and water pots were put on the bottom shelf to be cooled.

Of the remaining rooms in the central block, the smaller chambers such as o, T, U, V, W, and AA [42] may well have been treasuries. Indeed we have proof that later on chamber V was used for precisely this purpose, since an inscription on the door-jamb of King Sargon, 722–705 B.C., surmounting that of Assur-nasirpal, tells us that it was intended to hold the treasure captured from Pisiris, king of Carchemish. The beautiful little ivory cow suckling a calf found by us, and a larger collection found by Layard, were probably, as we have already seen, a

### THE N.W. PALACE—CONSTRUCTION AND DECORATION

part of that treasure.<sup>24</sup> Lastly the room AB, re-dug by us in 1953 with astonishing results,<sup>25</sup> was a well-room and was perhaps so situated because it had access to a corridor on the edge of the mound, which enabled the drawers of water to carry it without difficulty wherever required in the western wing of the building.

The distribution of subjects on the reliefs throughout this central block of the palace is an illuminating commentary on Assyrian psychology. Two themes dominate the friezes: protective figures which betray a superstitious fear of the unknown and imply a constant effort to overcome the forces of evil by magic; and martial figures and illustrations of triumphs in the hunt which express the reverence for manly valour and a preoccupation with war. These scenes on the reliefs were complementary to a brutal ruthlessness of character, which, however, was not commonly portraved until the 7th century, although in his written texts Assur-nasir-pal did not shrink for propaganda purposes from perpetuating the record of the tortures which he practised against the stubbornest of his enemies. Alongside these characteristics there is an intense vitality, a joy of living, expressed through powerfully drawn and admirably spaced human figures. These scenes were moreover enriched by a compact variety of ornament : sacred trees, weapons, jewellery and a beautifully drawn series of animals. The entire work was dedicated to the gods, for many of the inscriptions were carved not only on the face of the stone but at the back, still legible to the unseen powers which guided the forces of destiny.

# CHAPTER VIII

# THE N.W. PALACE OF ASSUR-NASIR-PAL: DISCOVERIES IN THE DOMESTIC WING

**E** XACTLY how long the N.W. Palace enjoyed an uninterrupted occupation we do not know. But it was certainly in its full splendour throughout the reigns of Assur-nasir-pal and his son Shalmaneser III,<sup>1</sup> and was probably also the royal seat of the founder's grandson, Shamshi-Adad V. That implies a continuous run of 70 years, which is a long span, for care and maintenance of fabric has never been the main preoccupation of western Asiatic monarchs, who have in times of prosperity inclined to celebrate their accession to the throne by the erection of a new rather than the preservation of an old abode. It is certain that thereafter the building was used for other purposes, because the fourth in this line of monarchs, Adad-nirari III, built a new residence immediately to the south of it.

Thus in the third generation the N.W. Palace was on the decline, and its occupant Shamshi-Adad V (824-810 B.C.) must have sat uneasily in his father's house, for Nineveh, Assur, and the principals towns of Assyria rebelled against him and contested the succession.<sup>2</sup> That he survived this crisis shows how firmly the real power of Assyria had become entrenched within the district of Calah where the royal bodyguard, no doubt an efficient and mobile striking force, was stationed. In the course of over ten years' hard fighting he gradually retrieved the fortunes of Assyria, on the Euphrates as far north as Carchemish; in southern Armenia; in the hills of north-west Iran; and in Babylonia. Nevertheless it is evident that he was unable to exercise any control in western Syria, for he was only able to visit the Mediterranean coast on two occasions in the course of his hard-won victories. Indeed he was so much preoccupied with matters concerning the security of his kingdom that he did not undertake the building of any new palace, nor, so far as we can judge, did he extend or renovate that in which his father and grandfather had lived. A splendid stela found in the Nabu Temple, to which it had perhaps been removed from that of Ninurta, is the only notable monument of his troubled reign.<sup>3</sup> There is no evidence that he did anything to embellish the N.W. Palace which was then no longer the most important royal building in Calah.<sup>4</sup> After his death it may have

#### THE N.W. PALACE—THE DOMESTIC WING

been the powerful Queen Sammuramat who urged Adad-nirari-III to build the new residences for himself in the city and in the outer town.<sup>5</sup>

We are consequently faced with the problem as to what then happened to the palace and who lived there afterwards. We can only rely on negative evidence and balance the probabilities. But as there is no sign of any great conflagration or radical destruction of the walls, nor of any general dismantling, one is led to believe that the central wing may from then onwards have been neglected, except in so far as it served as a storehouse and as a pious memorial to the founder of the city. The upkeep of these huge apartments of state would have been a formidable task, and we may guess that while housing certain officers of the crown and lesser members of the royal family, the palace may have become increasingly dilapidated.

After 745 B.C., when Tiglath-pileser III built a new palace apparently overlooking the river on the western side of the mound,<sup>6</sup> it is probable that the central block of the N.W. Palace was becoming partly derelict, and it may be that some of the 9th century sculpture had begun to be dismantled, although the northern wing (ZT) was being used to store the king's archives, and was serving as a chancery. There is nothing surprising in this evidence of the palace's fluctuating fortunes.

Assyrian palaces, like Assyrian towns, enjoyed alternating periods of prosperity and neglect. It is exactly in keeping with the functional division of the building, that the smaller and more manageable chancery and domestic quarters should have enjoyed a longer continuous occupation than the central ceremonial block, which lost its original *raison d'être* as soon as one of the kings elected to build a structure of his own elsewhe: e.

Between 782 and 745 B.C. there was a decline in the fortunes of Assyria, and the four successive monarchs of that period probably lived in Adad-nirari's building; we know that the last of these, Assur-nirari V, was murdered in the palace.7 The central block of the N.W. Palace was probably in a neglected condition at this period, and the state apartments must have been superseded by others which had been constructed in more recent palaces, but Tiglath-pileser III was apparently still using the northern wing as a chancery.8 Moreover it seems that the throne-room, partly shorn of its former glory, was maintained, although not as an audience-hall, as late as the 7th century B.C. The evidence for this is that Layard found underneath a fallen bull in the doorway of its southern wall a set of sixteen bronze weights, beautifully cast. Some of these were inscribed with the name of Shalmaneser, probably the fifth (727-722 B.C.); others recorded the names of Tiglath-pileser III (745-727 B.C.), Sargon (722-705 B.C.) and Sennacherib (705-681 B.C.).9 Layard expressly states that to his surprise he found them under the bull when he lifted its body; there is no need to assume that they had been buried and it is therefore not unreasonable to conclude that this and perhaps the adjacent hall F were used as a depot for the standard weights and measures of Assyria as late as the time of the lastmentioned monarch. Evidently both in the 8th and in the 7th centuries these standards were housed in this part of the city, for stone duck-weights and a bronze lion-weight<sup>10</sup> were still kept in the chancery up to the last decade of the Assyrian empire, at a time when the N.W. Palace was probably no longer a residence for the king.

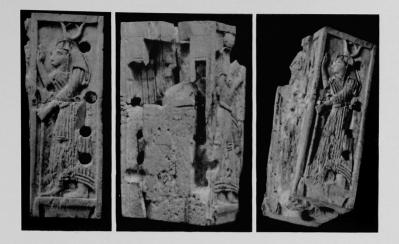


52. ND765. Ivory head of a female, height 8 cm., chryselephantine, the hair originally overlaid with gold foil, eyes, eyebrows and curls once incrusted with paste. See p. 113. Back of the head is flat. Fillet and rosettes are comparable with a head from Toprak-kale, Van [55] and with that on a stone statue of a king discovered at Malatya—perhaps Mutallu, a contemporary of Sargon. See ch. xvI, note 18 to p. 383. Found in room 00 of the N.W. Palaee, see *Iraq* XIII, pl. vI no. 1 for further details. Contemporary with [55] and probably a part of Sargon's collection.

53. ND762 (B). Ivory bull, length 22 cm., part of a hoard of ivories found in room HH of the N.W. Palace, see p. 113. Legs, horns and ear, which were separately fitted, are missing. Vigorous modelling, part of Sargon's collection. The back shows the dowel holes by means of which the figure was mortised to a wooden backing. Originally it may have been fitted to the sides of a chair or throne. Scale c. 2/3







54. ND768. Four-sided ivory object  $7 \times 3.8 \times 2.5$  cm., the back mortised for fixing to furniture. See p. 113. On three sides, figure of a standing female figure, barefoot, wearing long robe, head surmounted by cow's horns and sundisc, probably the Phoenician goddess Astarte. Dowel holes perforate the carving. Probably part of Sargon's treasure. From floor of room FF, N.W. Palace. See *Iraq* XIII, pl. VII and pp. 17–18. Scale c. 1/1

55. ND763. Ivory head, height 5 cm., front, back, and profile, from room HH, in the N.W. Palace, found in a hoard of other broken ivories attributable to the reign of Sargon, 722–705 B.C. See p. 113. Forceful carving; thick, fleshy nose, strongly modelled chin, and high cheek-bones. Technique of the eyes is unusual for the pupils, instead of being incrusted, stand out in relief. A fitters' sign—a roughly drawn Phoenician *aleph*—is scratched on the back. A closely comparable contemporary head has been found at Toprak-kale, Van, cf. *Iraq* XII, pl. XII no. 5 and pl. XIV no. 1 for comparison with [52]. Scale c. 1/1









56. ND1714(AM) (*left*). Ivory disc, diameter 3.5 cm., engraved with a stellar design, found with [57] above.

ND1714 (*helow left*). Ivory disc, diameter 3-6 cm., engraved with two interlaced curvilinear foursided figures terminating in palmettes and scrolls. See p. 114.

57. ND1714(AM) (*above*). Shell, length about 7 cm., engraved with figure of a scorpion, a symbol familiar to Babylonian astrologers, see p. 114. Part of a large collection of trinkets, the property of a lady, including shells, beads, ivory discs and strips of gold foil in a scaled niche which served as a cupboard, in the east wall of room HH in the N. W. Palace.

It was Sargon II, 722-705 B.C., who once again revived the building, though for a special purpose. We have already seen (p. 37) that in room U[42] he carved an inscription above that of the founder, and stated that the chamber was used as a treasury for storing the booty which he had won from the city of Carchemish.<sup>11</sup> Since tusks and a few apparently unfinished ivories were also found here, we may hazard the guess that he used some of the rooms in the central block as workshops for the craftsmen who were preparing the precious ornaments destined for the new palace which he was building at Dur-Sharrukin (Khorsabad). Such a use of the precincts would have been eminently practical, since here the treasure was readily available for inspection by the king and his officials, securely locked and guarded. This theory depends not only on the discovery of tusks and unfinished pieces, but also on the fact that an inscribed ivory board found in room AB expressly stated that it was designed for the palace in his new capital. But there were in addition many other purposes to which these strongly built chambers could have been put, and it is equally possible that the palace, once it had ceased to be ceremonial, could have survived as a prison. We find an illuminating mention of this practice in Assyria in a passage from the great monolith of Assur-nasir-pal, in which he prays that in future times his palace may not be dishonoured in this way.12 'For his treasure house he shall not take it, nor shall he consign it to be a house of bondage. Men and women, who are captives, therein he shall not confine in darkness and solitude.' It was not difficult for Assur-nasir-pal, scion of a long line of kings, to predict what might one day happen to his own edifice. Further proof of Sargon's reoccupation of the building was also furnished by Lavard's discoveries at the north-east end of the central block, room I, which contained a glass vase and an alabaster vessel inscribed with that king's name together with potsherds inscribed in Aramaic, iron scale armour, arrow-heads, helmets, and an incantation text K.2353.13 Similar evidence was found by our expedition a century later, in 1950, when we came to excavate



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the southern or domestic wing, where we made a number of remarkable discoveries, particularly in rooms FF, DD, HH, JJ, and OO. Room HH contained a hoard of ivories which lay in the mud, on the once brick-paved floor in the centre of the room. They were part of a collection of furniture which had been smashed and thrown into a heap when the palace was wrecked by the mob. The ivory was mostly shorn of the gold which had once adorned it; but part of the blue glass incrustation survived. Some of them had been of exceedingly fine workmanship, and we may single out for special commendation half of a chryselephantine head [52], and a beautifully carved bull [53], as large a piece of ivory as could be conveniently cut from a single tusk; also ND766, an ivory forearm and hand once dowelled to a statuette [167]. A four-sided ivory with panels carved in Phoenician style and decorated with a delicately carved figure of the goddess Astarte [54] was found in FF, which belonged to the same suite of rooms. Two ivory masks [55] are splendid examples of carved heads in three-quarter relief, and represent parts of statuary which must once have been lavishly adorned with gold as well as with glass incrustation.<sup>14</sup> Some of these pieces were strikingly reminiscent of a set of ivories discovered at Toprak Kale, Van (ancient Armenia) in the ruins of a temple which was probably already in existence in about 700 B.C. and appears to have been flourishing in the early half of the 7th century.<sup>15</sup> It may well be that there are certain classes of ivory which can be specifically described us Urartian, for example certain types of mask which have been found at Nimrud, at Toprak Kale and, more recently, at Altintepe.16

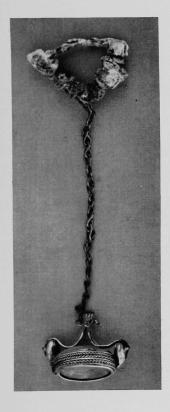
Fortunately, in the same room of the N.W. Palace, two clay dockets dated to the years 715 B.C. and 717 B.C. (ND486, 805), about the middle of Sargon's reign, provided decisive proof of the time at which this treasure had been hoarded, thus confirming the written evidence of his occupation which was also observed in rooms I, U and AB. The king's death marked the end of a period, and although the N.W. Palace was subsequently partly reoccupied it survived as no more than a shadow of its former self.

What was found in the domestic wing, however, has given us an unusually intimate glimpse of life in a part of the building which must have served as the Assyrian king's harem and perhaps continued to house royal princesses as late as the reign of Sargon, possibly even later. One of the little clay dockets (ND805) in HH was a record of a herd of 37 camels which belonged to the palace and were at its disposal. The other (ND486) recorded the consignment of an unusually large number of bales of wool,<sup>17</sup> weighing over a ton and a half, and the two accounts were appropriately found together-a note of the commodity and of the means for its transport. The list of camels is also an interesting sidelight on the trade with Arabia which the Assyrians are known to have been pursuing at the time; we have several records of the tribes with whom Sargon came into contact. The Arabs could supply spices, frankincense and myrrh, and in the camel a form of desert transport which the tribes were now employing in warfare. Indeed, more than a century earlier Shalmaneser III had been opposed at the battle of Karkar, 853 B.C., by an Arab camel corps 1,000 strong when he fought against the powerful coalition led by the king of Damascus.

Perhaps one of the most intriguing discoveries at this end of the building was a collection of small personal belongings, the property of some princess who had



58. ND785 (B). The 'Nimrud jewel' found in the grave of a princess, room DD of the N.W. Palace, domestic wing. The oval pendant of pale mauve chalcedony ( $22 \times 12$  mm.) is engraved with two figures playing the pipes on either side of the sacred tree. To the left of the detail of the face of the pendant is an impression of the engraving on plaster. The golden chain is attached to a link on a swivel; the pear-shaped drops on either side of the ogival holder are soldered to the heavy wire binding. This is a triumph of the goldsmith's art.



kept them on a shelf in the east wall of her chamber HH. This consisted of a set of mixed beads, a few strips of gold foil, and four ivory disc beads, two of which were beautifully engraved, one with a stellar design and the other with a geometric figure consisting of two four-sided interlaced palmettes [56]. There was also an assortment of coloured shells, a mixed bag of oddments such as I have watched fortune tellers using when they prognosticate childbirth before enquiring women outside the gates of Aleppo. Among these trinkets in the palace cupboard there were in addition cockle-shells intended to hold kohl paint for the eyebrows; one of them, ND1714[57], was decorated with a spirited engraving of a scorpion. Can it be a mere coincidence that one of the Babylonian astrologers noted that 'when a halo surrounds the Moon and Scorpio stands in it . . . men will marry princesses'18 or that the scorpion was the personal symbol of Sennacherib's queen? For some reason unknown to us this little collection of feminine belongings was deliberately hidden: the cupboard in the wall was masked with brickwork and plaster. Perhaps the harem had been obliged to fly elsewhere for safety; but the ladies never returned. The last evidence of occupation was a stack of a dozen iron spears and a great pottery grain-bin in opposite corners of the room left there by the palace guards after they too had fled or been killed.

The wealth and status of the occupants of this wing were however most strikingly revealed by the contents of a grave which was dug under the floor of the north-east corner of the adjacent room DD. This consisted of a baked clay bath-shaped coffin sunk 5 feet below the floor. The burial spot seems to have been marked by little brick boxes which no doubt had once held votive offerings of some kind; but these had long since been removed from them. The coffin itself was sealed by three slabs, the one in the middle of terracotta, the two end ones of stone, each of the latter beautifully inscribed on both sides as well as on the edges. These stone covers proved to be foundation slabs of Assur-nasir-pal (883-859 B.C.) and recorded his building of the town wall of Calah. As the level from which the grave had been dug and its contents were not earlier than the

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end of the 8th century, it is clear that the inscribed stones were already antiquities at the time. They therefore served as pious memorials on the occasion of some royal burial, and thus atoned for the act of removing them from their original setting: no doubt a part of the old town wall had fallen down, and these had been exposed when it was repaired. The discovery of similar sets of stone tablets which had been preserved as relics in Fort Shalmaneser, see ch. XVI [p. 395], suggests that they were removed by order of Esarhaddon at a time when he was repairing the town gates, and rebuilding a part of that fortress. If so, the treasures in this grave, which included the now famous 'Nimrud jewel' [58] should be dated to the period 681-669 B.C.<sup>19</sup>

The skeleton, that of a woman, had been placed on its left side, and the head had slumped against the north end of the coffin. The body had originally been laid in a sitting or leaning position. Around the neck was a set of beads in variegated semi-precious stones which included amethystine quartz, lapis lazuli, carnelian, and some glass. These, however, were of minor importance in comparison with the magnificent fastening which had tied the shroud at the shoulder. This consisted of a bronze fibula, or safety pin, attached to a heavy golden chain composed of thick double links for extra strength. At the end of the chain was a pale mauve chalcedony gem, ovate, engraved with a magical scene, and encased in a heavy golden holder. The mount and the pendant itself were a triumph of the goldsmith's art, as will be seen from the photograph [58]. On either side of the mount pear-shaped drops had been soldered, and served as the base for the ogival holder which was surmounted by a looped swivel and suspended from the chain. So valuable and precious a jewel could only have belonged to royalty, and indeed in the 6th century B.C. we have a description by the last king of Babylon, Nabonidus, of the golden chains and gems which he placed in his mother's tomb at her funeral.20

The cutting on the gem itself is crude in comparison with the fine workmanship of the gold, but the engraving of fine lines on chalcedony must have been of extreme difficulty on so small a surface. The scene consists of two figures making music on either side of a stylized tree; they are blowing pipes. The most obvious interpretation is that they are helping the tree to grow: this use of ritual music to encourage vegetation is still practised by the Christian peasantry in the district of Mosul.

There is some doubt about the exact date of this burial, which cannot have been earlier than Sargon's reign, though it could conceivably have been contemporary with him and have preceded the time when he moved to Dur-Shurrukin. But it seems more probable that it belonged to a later stage of the palace's occupation, when the domestic wing was perhaps reserved for minor royalty. The palace was probably altogether neglected in the time of Sennacherib, but the domestic wing may perhaps have been refurbished by Esarhaddon at a time when he was building the S.W. Palace. Since, as we have seen above, we may attribute the ancient relic which covered the grave to the period of his demolition of the old town wall, it seems reasonable to attribute the contents to his reign—perhaps the early part of it. There are several interesting parallels to the Nimrud jewel, from Byblos, Zinjirli and Khorsabad; none of them are exactly datable, but all may fall within the latter part of the 8th and the earlier part of the 7th centuries B.C.<sup>21</sup>



59. ND775(AM). Copper (?) bowl, diameter 15.8 cm., found in a clay larnax grave dug beneath the floor under south-east corner of room DD in the N.W. Palace. Decorated in the centre with a *reponssé* rosette. An almost identical Syrian vessel of the same size was found at Zinjirli, the ancient Sam'al, cf. *A.I.S.* V, pl. 56, and p. 118. Comparable bowl in a brick grave at Assur *WVDOG.*, 65, pl. 25. Date probably last quarter of the 8th century B.C.

A similar problem of date applies to another, obviously contemporary, terracotta grave which was found at the opposite end of the same room DD. This contained a beautifully engraved bronze bowl, ND775 [59], decorated with a centre-piece in the form of a repoussé rosette. The palace-ware pottery bowls of the time exactly match this form of metalwork and are obviously imitated from it. Once again an almost identical vessel was found at Zinjirli,<sup>22</sup> a city which enjoyed its period of greatest prosperity between about 850 and 730 B.C., and we cannot exclude the possibility that this grave may have been older than the other one found in the same room; it may have belonged to the latter part of the 8th century B.C.

The difficulty of determining the chronology is due to the fact that the evidence of successive Assyrian occupations is tightly compressed into no more than a 3-foot rise of accumulated debris over the original floor, and that the good burnt-brick pavements had for the most part been removed by later buildings.<sup>23</sup> Traces of the original tenancy of Shalmaneser III had been almost entirely obliterated, but inscribed bricks in passage P overlying those of Assur-nasir-pal, the drainage system, and a few scraps of pavement in various rooms, in addition to the inscribed bricks which formed the lining of the three wells in NN, AJ and AB, [42] provide the main evidence of his workmanship. In dissecting successive floors of at least three of the rooms we found many examples of miniature pots, some very rough, others quite well finished, side by side with sheep bones. These seem to have been votive deposits, libations of wine and meat offerings, part of the ritual when a new floor was laid.

After the destruction of the ivories in room HH, its western door was blocked, and the only access was through chamber JJ to the north of it. There was evidence of repatching and replastering, and of further rough votive deposits beneath the



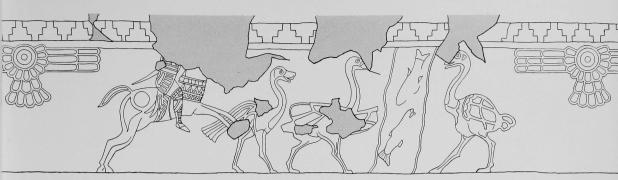
60. ND484 (Left obverse, right reverse). Limestone plaque, fawn colour, about 12.5×9.6 cm., part of top of plaque missing, found smashed, part in room oo and part in QQ of the N.W. Palace. The plaque was inscribed and surmounted with the head of the horned demon Pazuzu whose winged, scaly body, bird legs and snake-head cover the back in bold relief. Pazuzu, an evil spirit, associated with the south wind, brought fever in his wake and doubtless malaria was attributed to him. The purpose of this plaque was to expel the evil spirits which had possessed the sick man who is seen in his bed; he appears as a small figure on the right hand side of the plaque in front of two grisly demons who, in the style familiar to these enraged figures, are gnashing their teeth. In the centre is the figure of a female monster, Lamashtu, who has a lion's head, human hands, feathered body and bird's feet. She is strangling two snakes and suckling a pig and a hound. In order to be assuaged she has, in accordance with the magical prescriptions in the texts, to be placed on the back of an ass which will carry her across the desert to the boat (seen at the bottom of the picture) floating on the waters which surround the earth. She will carry away with her the various objects depicted in the background including pots, wheat-sheaves, cakes, a lamp, a comb, a shoe, a bundle of linen, a fibula, comb, the distaff and a leg of mutton. In the upper register there is a row of seven ashipu priests wearing lions' masks and reciting the spells through which these devils are finally exorcised. See p. 118.

#### THE N.W. PALACE—THE DOMESTIC WING

floors. A big pottery grain bin, and a nest of iron spears stacked against the east wall where they had been abandoned after the sack at the end of the 7th century, were covered by debris underlying the much higher floor level of the next period. The latest occupation of all, at  $1\cdot 2$  metres (about 4 ft) above the original floor, was marked by a thin line of sand and was a squatter's occupation commonly noted elsewhere both in the city and the outer town, the last sad flicker of life after Calah had been sacked, together with Nineveh and Assur, about 612 B.C.

Although most of the domestic rooms were disappointingly bare of objects apart from the fragments of ivories, the graves, and what was found in the wells, there were none the less one or two significant finds. Scattered throughout oo and QQ were fragments of a carved plaque of pink limestone surmounted at the top by the head of the horned devil PA.ZU.ZU. the son of HAN.PA.<sup>24</sup> an evil genius who brought fever and sickness; he was sometimes referred to as the son of the South Wind, a hot, feverish blast which brings depression in its wake. The feathered, winged body of this horrible creature occupies the back of the plaque [60]; below the waist it is composed of the tail of a scorpion, a phallus in the shape of a snake's head, and the feet of a bird of prev. The surround consists of an inscription, partly in Sumerian, naming the demon and his consort. Most of the front of the plaque [60] is illustrated with a scene in which the figure of Lamashtu, his wife, plays the principal part. In the upper portion of the lower register we see the raison d'être for the plaque itself: the sick man lying on his bed; he is there to be cured and for this purpose the line of masked ashipu, incantation-priests, in the top row are reciting their spells. In the rest of the plaque, Lamashtu, who has to be exorcized, is seen with her attendant demons; she has a lion's head, human hands, a feathered body and bird's feet; she is strangling two snakes and suckling a pig and a hound. In the background is a series of the objects with which she has to be assuaged; they include pots, wheat-sheaves, cakes, a lamp, a bundle of linen, a fibula or safety pin, a comb, a shoe, the distaff, and a leg of mutton. These objects and her attitude are described and explained in magical texts which have been found at Assur; she is kneeling upon the back of an ass who has been summoned to carry her across the desert and embark her on a ship which is to carry her away from the proximity of man. The ship itself, surmounted at prow and stern with a figurehead of a crested lion and a bull, floats gently on the river beyond the world's end; the water teems with fish, and on the banks trees and reeds are growing in profusion.

This weird composition is an intensely vivid illustration of the things seen by the fevered imagination of a sick man in his delirium; indeed it is recognized in psychological diagnosis that snakes and feathered monsters are apparitions normal to the visions of a man suffering from *delirium tremens* in the last stages of a sickness which verges on madness. In Assyrian medicine the physician prescribed that a plaque of this kind should be hung up on the wall at the back of the sick man's bed whilst the exorcists recited their incantations, and consequently it was found in the proximity of apartments which must have served as bedrooms. This gruesome object had been deliberately smashed by the mob at the time of the looting of the palace. There were many foreigners living in the outer town at the time, and to their barbarous hands we may perhaps ascribe this particular act of vandalism, for it is hardly conceivable that an Assyrian



61. NDI355 (BM). Glazed vase, part of rim missing. Diameter 29 cm., height 27.5 cm. Soft, greenish-buff ware, glazed blue-green inside and out. Decorated with a hunting scene. Found in room ZZ of the N.W. Palace. See p. 120.

would have dared, or wished, to destroy what he would have recognized as a magical emblem of the utmost potency. To a barbarian on the other hand, this would have appeared as a standard of hated royal authority and the evil genius of Assyria. All but a relatively small portion of the top of the plaque was recovered, the fragments scattered in the mud and thereafter buried under the subsequent reoccupation. The finely cast bronze head of a horned demon (ND884), similar to the one that surmounted this plaque, with a suspension loop or topknot by which to hang it on the wall, was found in room AH on the south side of the long hall MM.

Every room in the northern range of this wing produced something of quality: in FF there was a beautifully carved rectangular stamp-seal in black limestone; it was engraved with the design of a cow over its calf, a plough, and two circles; the obverse, bevelled and faceted, depicts the standard with tassels surmounted by a crescent, perhaps symbolic of the god Sin.<sup>25</sup>

The soil in room oo had been much disturbed, and near to some fragments of the Lamashtu plaque we found a small piece of a finely inscribed baked clay prism of Assur-bani-pal, recording his campaign against Elam in 649 B.C. and the expulsion of the hostile king by Indabigash, a vassal of Assyria.26 This is much the latest inscription so far recovered at this end of the palace, although the northern wing, ZT, was being used for traffic in all kinds of merchandise at that time. We must therefore, allow for the possibility that the magical plaque and the two graves just described were deposited about this time, though as we have seen, they may well be some 50 years older. At the end of the 7th century most of the rooms in this wing of the palace were derelict and served as a rubbish dump; indeed we found evidence south of the room AD that the place was being used as a burial ground by remnants of the population who had returned to the city after the sack. Sherds of Hellenistic ware and graves found by Layard just below the surface indicate that early in the 2nd century B.C. the ruins of the N.W. Palace were used as a graveyard for villagers whose houses have been found at the south-east end of the mound (cf. ch. xv).

The evidence was insufficient to enable us to decide with any confidence the



62. Skeleton of a gazelle (?) as found lying under the top course of the burnt-brick pavement in passage P which separated the domestic wing from the state apartments in the N.W. Palace. The ritual deposit must have been made at the time when the palace was being renovated, perhaps in the reign of Sargon. On the reliefs deer and ibex are frequently represented as offerings required by the gods.

particular function of each room in this wing, but some appreciation of the general arrangement is possible. The three big chambers on the eastern side HH, DD, FF, are relatively secluded [42], and one or more of them may for a time have been the women's apartments. IJ was perhaps a guard-room, NN contained a well and a tank, and was conveniently disposed for supplying this end of the palace with water. oo and vv provided the connecting link between the relatively secluded chambers to the east of them and the huge hall zz which at one stage of its existence, apparently after 700 B.C., served as a kitchen, for it contained brick benches, water and cooking pots, and a bread oven. Here was found a big glazed vase, ND1355[61] decorated with a spirited hunting scene whereon mounted horsemen are depicted running down ostriches and in so doing are obliged to cross a river in which fish are swimming. The leggings and costume worn by the rider are in a fashion which first appears in the reign of Sennacherib, and it is probable that this vase was made in the 7th century B.C.; it lay on the floor next to a drain-hole which had perhaps served as a latrine in a partitioned section of the room against the east wall. zz in its turn could have served MM, a very well constructed and spacious apartment which, we may guess, could have been the queen's banqueting-hall and official reception-room. Water pots were found in the cupboard of the east wall where they had been left to cool. The big courtyard AJ with its well and tethering block was obviously a reception centre for stores brought into the palace; yy, another spacious hall, may have been intended for the chamberlain and other officials; AF, with its stone strip-paving, was perhaps a room for the cult. AH was a bathroom attached to the hall AK and formed part of a two-roomed suite similar in character to ss and TT. This arrangement was often repeated in Fort Shalmaneser. These chambers had been verv well built.

Finally, we came to the passage P which was the link between the state apartments and the domestic. Its impressive appearance on excavation may be judged from the photograph [62]. This corridor was brick-paved, the lowest course inscribed with the name of Assur-nasir-pal, the one above it with the name of his son Shalmaneser; and directly above that again were uninscribed **63.** ND770(AM). Miniature gold plaque,  $23 \times 10$  mm., depicting a warrior carrying on his back a spiked shield. This offensive and defensive weapon is frequently depicted on Assyrian reliefs of Assur-nasir-pal; it was suspended on the back of the chariot and sometimes used to fend off attacking lions. See Layard *Monuments of Nineveh*, pls. 8, 18, 31, 50. Found on the threshold of a niche in the south wall of passage P in the N.W. Palace together with a second golden miniature plaque ND760 depicting an archer carrying bow and quiver.



bricks which were probably laid some time in the 8th century B.C., and must certainly have been used by Sargon, whose inscribed dockets lay at precisely the same level in HH and, as we have already seen, accompanied his treasure, a part of which lay on the same burnt-brick pavement in II. It is possible that the deep niche or recess seen on the plan in the south side of the passage had once housed a stela or some kind of memorial. Here were found two miniature chased gold plaques, ND769, ND770, one a weapon bearer, the other an archer carrying a spiked shield [63], both of them types familiar to the 9th century bas-reliefs. But the most dramatic discovery in this passage was the skeleton of a gazelle which was found lying beneath the topmost course of pavement against the south wall, towards the eastern end [62]. This must have been deposited as an act of ritual purification at some time when the pavement was raised, perhaps during the reign of Sargon himself. On the reliefs we frequently see pictures of attendants carrying deer or ibex into the palace, for such offerings were required by the gods from time to time. Rarely have the relics of a ritual act been found in such perfect preservation on the spot.

Some poorly built mud-brick walls beyond the south gate of the passage in the irregularly shaped open space opposite JJ again represented the last vestiges of the squatters' occupation after 612 B.C. At this time the western end of the wing was for the most part buried, the level of the well in AJ was raised by 2 metres, and the whole of the west side of the N.W. Palace had become an open thoroughfare at this much higher level. Evidently, between 700 and 600 B.C. this end of the palace, although still used, had considerably declined in importance. The event which brought about that decline may have been the death of Sargon in 705 B.C., whose successor Sennacherib, moved the court to Nineveh and neglected Calah. But from Sargon's reign a few splendid relics survived, and they were contained at the bottom of two wells in rooms NN and AB. This treasure trove, the finest yet recovered in a single hoard from Assyria, marks an important chapter in the history of the dig, and must now come before us for examination.

# CHAPTER IX

# TREASURE-TROVE IN WELL NN OF THE N.W. PALACE

OWARDS the middle of April 1951, while clearing the chambers on the east side of the domestic wing, we lighted upon a stone tank, and next to it a well, at the southern end of room NN. It was more than a year before we could touch well-bottom, for the work was fraught with difficulty and not without danger, but the rewards for the descent were prizes beyond our dreams.

The head of the well stood to a height of about a metre above the mud-brick floor of the room, and the lining of burnt brick throughout was a beautiful piece of construction. The bricks had been specially manufactured for the purpose and appropriately curved. At intervals, down to 150 courses from the top, many of the bricks were inscribed with the name of Assur-nasir-pal, and the well itself must have been planned as an integral part of the huge platform when the western side of the mound was being prepared for the N.W. Palace. The filling consisted of earth thrown down in antiquity; there was no sign that anyone had attempted an excavation of it since Calah became a ruin.

Before very long we had to set up a steel tripod and the necessary tackle for lowering our well-diggers in a bucket. There was room for two men to operate comfortably, for the internal diameter was 1.7 metres ( $5\frac{1}{2}$  ft); and as the burnt brick lining was 80 centimetes  $(2\frac{1}{2}$  ft) thick and most of the bricks were in fairly good condition we judged the descent, at all events at the upper levels, to be reasonably safe. About half-way down, the well took a slight corkscrew turn, the sight of which caused me some uneasiness, especially as a well expert whom I consulted was unable to say whether this had been originally planned or was due to a subsidence. Nonetheless we continued to go down, facilis descensus Averno, until at 15.15 metres (about 50 ft), 205 courses below the well-head, water first appeared. This was the season at which the level of the Tigris begins to rise rapidly and with it the water-table in the plain; consequently we were now in a belt of sludge, and this we continued to excavate to a depth of about 18 metres (60 ft), 245 courses down; the brick-lining, tenacious as ever, showed no sign of stopping. Towards the end of April 1951, however, work had to be abandoned, for we had no pumps and the water was coming up into the well



**64.** Cast of a head of Assyrian barley left in the mud after the original plant tissue had rotted away. This surprising discovery gives us the appearance of the original living organism which has been described by Dr Hans Helbaek in Appendix I. Found in well NN of the N.W. Palace.

faster than we could take it away. The appearance of the debris extracted from the well was encouraging, for as we descended, in the lower levels we began to find pottery, mostly ordinary water-jars which had been thrown down in antiquity, parts of oak beams which had fallen from the derrick, some pieces of string, and part of a human skull and of a leather shoe. Most surprising was a lump of mud which when dried revealed a cast of Assyrian barley embedded within it [64]. This unexpected survival of an ancient cereal was due to the fact that liquid mud had seeped into the hollow mould left by the decay of the planttissue in antiquity, and had preserved the original appearance of the once living organism.<sup>1</sup> In addition there appeared two good ivories. The first was a comb made of a boar's tusk; it had two sets of teeth opposite one another and hardly differed in form from those that are sold in the bazaars and used in the countryside today. A comb is, after all, an article of toilet with a simple practical purpose which it has successfully achieved for thousands of years and there is no reason why we should expect it to have changed its appearance since Assyrian times. The second article was an open-work, or ajouré, ivory plaque in the form of a stag in relief, with flat back, represented as grazing in a meadow sprent with lotus flowers; unfortunately the head was missing. I think it is probable that these two ivories had been discarded rather later in time than those that were to appear in the deepest levels of all, and that they had been cast into what had become a convenient rubbish pit when the well was no longer in use, perhaps not before the end of the 7th century B.C.

In April 1952, after a year's tantalizing wait, we returned to the task armed by the Iraq Petroleum Company with a heavier tripod and winch; but as pumps were not available the water had to be bailed out by hand. This proved to be an extremely difficult task, for the deeper we went and the more we cleared the well, the faster the water came in as the man at the bottom scooped the sludge into the bucket. Indeed, during the last stages of this operation the rapid inflow compelled us to start at midnight, and by the light of hurricane lamps to draw water continuously for six hours until dawn. From then until sunset the men were drawing up one oil-drum full of sludge followed by 40 gallons of water in alternative succession. By this method we managed to extract all the sludge from the well, and dug down to bedrock, which was no less than 331 courses of brickwork from the top. We reached the bottom on the 27th April 1952 and by that time had dug through a total depth of 25.4 metres or 83 feet 4 inches. On that date, shortly after we had finished, the water rose to the 67-foot mark and was 5 metres or 16 feet 3 inches deep. The lowest course of brick rested on a hard brownish marl, but unfortunately when we came to bedrock the well had become undercut owing to the action of water and was in a dangerous condition. We were therefore unable to dig down more than 1.3 metres (4 ft 3 in.) below the bottom of the brickwork and there we had to stop, although it seemed that the well-eye or inlet lay deeper still. Almost on the last day we were made vividly aware of the

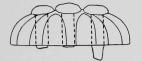
# THE N.W. PALACE-TREASURE-TROVE IN A WELL

hazards which attend this work, for the steel pulley-block which from continuous rotation had reached the breaking-point of fatigue snapped into two halves. Bucket and chain crashed to the bottom of the well, but mercifully the digger had just been hauled to the top to allow the next shift to take his place. He could hardly have come out alive had he been down below.

Below the 245th course there were signs that the depths might hold something good in store. We began first of all to find an increasing number of vases; indeed the total number between this and the bottom was 70, some of them still tightly bound with frayed rope round their necks, and there were also many pieces of the broken cord by which they had been suspended. Since the same sludge also contained, as we have already mentioned, fragments of the wooden derrick from the well-head, and at least three pulley-wheels made of mulberry wood, we may attribute the finding of these pots to the same kind of accident that had overtaken our own apparatus. It seems therefore that the pots had fallen into the water while still in use. If some of them had been lowered in clusters (as they now are in neighbouring villages) the weight of the loaded pots would have imposed a severe strain and caused the rope to part or the pulley wheel to snap after continuous friction.

The pots found in the well were standard types of Assyrian water jars, mostly with high necks and bulbous bodies; a few, more elaborate, were decorated with handles in the shape of ducks' heads, and there were some amphorae, much the same in appearance as those used in the villages of the neighbourhood today. It is not unlikely that this collection of pottery represents a lapse of a considerable number of years, perhaps even as much as a century, for no doubt the well itself continued to be used for some time after the palace had ceased to be a royal residence. Thus while there is nothing against some of the pots being of the 8th century, others, indeed the majority, are types frequently found elsewhere, for instance in the northern wing, in contexts which can be dated to about 630 B.C.

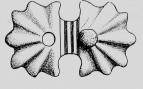








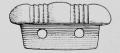












65. ND2238. Shell ornaments and studs originally fixed on leather harness. Part of a set of horses' harness found in the well NN of the N.W. Palace.



**66**. ND2240. Part of a set of 18 shell objects decorated with concentric circles and one with a guilloche pattern. They were fixed on to a wooden backing by means of a copper nail driven through a perforation in the centre of the convex face. Dimensions varied from 11 to 5 cm. across. From the well NN.

Many other articles were found in the deeper levels. Especially common were small ornaments made of shell, and buttons or studs, ND2238[65], in the shape of figures of eight and double palmettes; the former appear on horse-trappings depicted in Sargon's palace at Khorsabad.<sup>2</sup> This particular form of stud never appears before Sargon's reign and is thus one of the links in a chain of evidence for dating the ivories found in the well not earlier than this period; they are also depicted on the monuments of his son Sennacherib. Since, however, in the well AB exactly similar shell studs were in the debris which contained the ivory board inscribed with the name of Sargon, there is a better case for attributing them, as well as the ivories and associated objects, to the reign of this monarch.

Most striking was a series of roughly circular convex ornaments made of shell, decorated with incised, concentric circles and a central boss which was in fact the head of a nail driven through a perforation [66]. Another set of shells, also perforated but lacking the nails, was found in Fort Shalmaneser (see p.452); they were inscribed on the inside with the name of a king of Hamath who was a contemporary of Shalmaneser III (see note 6 below). Most of the latter shells were however undecorated, only a few bore concentric circles and none the elaborate guilloche, and it is therefore possible that the more elaborate set found in the well NN is later, of the 8th rather than the 9th century B.C.: we cannot be certain. Barnett's ingenious suggestion that they served as clappers seems unlikely, because they would have been awkward to manipulate and showed no signs of abrasion. Similar shells have been found in Iran and at two places in Anatolia.3 Their intention must have been decorative, but to what they were applied is uncertain. It is curious that some of the Assyrian battering-rams appear to have been overlaid with a similar form of ornament, but although strong and cut from thick conch cores, these shells seem hardly suitable to such a purpose. It is however possible that they may have decorated some part of the king's chariot.4

The presence of horse-trappings and harness studs in the well was however

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most strikingly demonstrated by the discovery of a pair of horse's cheekpieces in ivory, one of which, ND2243, is now in the Iraq Museum, Baghdad; the other, ND2244[67], in the Metropolitan Museum, New York. Here we see a kind of escutcheon with an elegantly waisted handle, perforated in four places for attachment to a leather mounting. These ivories had mellowed to a warm brown colour and were still partly covered with a black stain which may have been due to the proximity of decayed wood, but it is possible that they had been deliberately tinted. Each panel, as may be seen from the photograph, was decorated with the image of a seated sphinx in relief, the head surmounted by a sun-disc; trailing from the front of the Phoenician apron-skirt was a winged uraeus or cobra. On the handle there is a papyrus surmounted by a cartouche and a pair of ostrich feathers. The name within the cartouche may be read Janen or Jejanen and is otherwise unknown. This Phoenician adaptation of the Egyptian sphinx can be matched on some of the ivories discovered at Arslan-Tash<sup>5</sup> in northern Syria, some of which may have been contemporary, although others were perhaps over a century older; see the discussion in ch. XVII, p. 473.6 The smooth and rounded form of the Nimrud figure and its fluid lines appear to be characteristic of developments which occurred in the 8th century B.C.

Fortunately, it is clear from a basalt carving of a horse's head from Zinjirli that these cheek-pieces were worn on both sides.<sup>7</sup> Such pieces must have caused much discomfort to the heavily caparisoned horses of Assyria; there is, for example, in the British Museum a weighty ivory triangle decorated with the figure of a nude goddess which had overlaid the horse's forehead and had been suspended in front of the ears.<sup>8</sup> Indeed with their bronze bells, heavily tasselled cloths, plumed crests, flanking-armour and collars, the

67. ND2244 (Met. Mus. N.Y.). Ivory check-piece, one of a pair, length 18.5 cm. or 7<sup>‡</sup> in. Decorated with winged sphinx surmounted by sun-disc and *uraeus*. Phoenician apron with winged *uraeus* attached. Part of one wing, face, body of sphinx and parts of the lower *uraeus* restored in wax. On the handle a cartouche with name *Janen* or *Jejanen* on top of papyrus plant and surmounted by ostrich feathers. The ivory is perforated with four holes for attachment to a leather (?) backing. From well NN.





68 (*Left*). ND2244(AM). Miniature ivory sphinx wearing gold collar incrusted with paste. Embedded in the mud which had encased the check-piece.

Scale c. 1/1

**69** (*Right*). ND8040(AM). Ivory plaque,  $5.7 \times 5.3$  cm., depicting a winged sphinx confronting a voluted tree. Closely comparable to [68] (*left*) and probably of the same date. Found in Fort Shalmaneser, room sw37. Scale c. 1/1.



royal procession of chariots, a magnificent spectacle for the populace, was no equine holiday.

In the sludge which had encased the cheek-piece ND2244 we found the remarkable little ivory sphinx ND2244A shown on [68]; it was wearing a golden collar with a series of pear-shaped depressions representing pendants, which had probably once been incrusted with coloured paste or frit.9 Whether ND2244A had also been a part of the horse's harness we do not know. Here we illustrate for comparison ND8040 [69], a small winged sphinx of 'cloisonné' work discovered in Fort Shalmaneser, wearing a necklace of similar drop pendants; the latter figure is discussed in ch. XVII in the section on 'cloisonné' and incrustation (p. 558). There are other cheek-pieces comparable in form, from sites beyond Assyria. From Lachish, we have a similar object of bronze undecorated and datable to shortly before 700 B.C.<sup>10</sup> There is a remarkable parallel from Cyprus, also in bronze and depicting a sphinx, though on the Cypriot cheek-piece the sphinx is striding forward, not squatting; it is inscribed with four Phoenician characters which give grounds for suggesting that this whole series of objects originated in Phoenicia itself.<sup>11</sup> The occurrence of Phoenician letters both on ivories and on bronzes is not surprising, for at Nimrud Phoenician figures of the aproned sphinx and the winged uraeus have been frequently found in the private houses on the akropolis,12 in the Burnt and N.W. Palaces, and in Fort Shalmaneser which eventually yielded many other specimens of ivory cheek-pieces upon which designs in the Egyptian style were prominent.

Also to be numbered among the horse-trappings was the side-piece of a bronze bit, ND2180 [70], a plaque in the shape of a galloping horse; a hole

70. ND2180 (B). Bronze side-piece to a bit. Length, 105 cm., representing a galloping horse, originally one of a pair. The mouthpiece, to which the reins were attached, ran through the lowest hole. The bit was attached to the bridle by means of three straps running through the other three holes. Details of mane and dappling crudely scored on the body. A similar plaque is shown as part of the horse's equipment on a chariot relief of Sennacherib from Nineveh. From the well NN. Seep. 128.



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through the middle of the body was intended for the insertion of the bit. The animal was surmounted by three rings through which the cheek-straps passed. Again, this side-piece of a bit is also illustrated on the monuments, this time in Assyria itself, on one of Sennacherib's reliefs at Nineveh.<sup>13</sup>

These horse-trappings were but the outriders to a splendid procession of treasures that lay below them. Day after day the men went on fighting against the water as it gurgitated upwards from the bowels of the earth, and we used to shout down words of superfluous encouragement, knowing full well that the diggers were on the tip-toe of expectation, though that can hardly be an appropriate description of men who were stripped save for a loin-cloth and waist-deep in a viscous mud. They worked on in the semi-darkness and shouted up as each drumful of precious sludge was ready to be hauled to the surface. Any load might now hold a king's ransom. At last it happened. One fine morning in April, the foreman, breathless with excitement, announced that 'a lady had been found'. Such moments obliterate all memories of toil, difficulty or discouragement, which are instantly forgotten in the unmatched joy of discovery. Before our eyes at the well-side we saw this lady emerge from the deep waters where she had lain immersed in mud for more than 2,600 years. Carefully we wiped away the thick coat of slime that still partly concealed her face, her hair and her crown. What we beheld was a thing of beauty still radiant with life. The warm brown tones of the natural ivory set against the dark black tresses of hair that framed the head combined with the soft rounded curves of the face to give an extraordinary impression of life [71]. The slightly parted lips appeared to have a light reddish tint; the black pupils of the eyes were framed in dark lids; the crown, fillets and stand were of a rather darker brown than the face. Originally crown and base must have been decorated with ivory studs of which only two now remained. Good use had been made of the laminations of the ivory which showed to advantage on the crown, and the cheeks were cleverly contrived to display a concentric graining where they were fullest. This was the kind of effect which many a carpenter or cabinet-maker has striven to achieve in ovster-shell walnut to enhance the mastery of his craftsmanship. Large lumps of sludge which had turned to the consistency of a cement imprisoned the head from the back and at the sides, and had thus prevented a number of vertical cracks from causing the face to disintegrate. This was the fortunate circumstance which had saved for us the largest, and the finest, carved ivory head that has yet been found in the ancient Near East.

The elephant's tusk from which this head had been carved must have been an exceptionally big one, for its height was no less than 16 centimetres  $(6\frac{5}{16} \text{ in.})$ ; at the top it was 13.2 centimetres  $(5\frac{3}{16} \text{ in.})$  wide; it tapered slightly towards the bottom.

So large a piece of ivory had of course been cut as a longitudinal section of the tusk; it was in fact a mask, concave at the back, with a slight thickening in the centre to give it added strength. As no attempt had been made to obliterate the tool marks at the back (they had apparently been left by a fine-bladed chisel), it is clear that the lady was only intended to be seen from the front and consequently must have been set either directly against a wall, or perhaps in a niche. The polychrome effect which we see today is partly due to the passage of time, partly to the original design. The warm mellow brown has been the result of a





II ND2250(B) Mona Lisa. 16×13.2 cm. From well in N.W. Palace. See p. 128.





71. ND2250 (B). Ivory head, height 16 cm. or  $G_{1.6}^{\pm}$  in, known as the 'Mona Lisa of Nimrud', found encased in sludge, deep under water at the bottom of a well in room NN of the N.W-Palace. It was cut from a longitudinal section of an abnormally large elephant's tusk of which the curve is clearly shown in the side view on the opposite page. The dark black tresses of hair are a perfect setting for the face: the crown and stand were originally fitted with ivory studs. The nose has been restored by Sayid Akram Shukri, photograph by Antran. This is the second largest ivory head to have survived from antiquity; it was perhaps made to the order of Sargon II. See pp. 128–32. Scale c.1/1



## THE N.W. PALACE—TREASURE-TROVE IN A WELL

long maturing in contact with the damp clay of the well. Whether the face was once of a brilliant ivory white we cannot tell; it is possible that the ivory had darkened to a more sombre tone while still in its original setting. We can however be sure that the black stain on the hair, evebrows and pupils was original, and had been applied partly to depict a dark-haired lady, partly as an effective contrast to the natural ivory. We are still uncertain how this stain was obtained and of what it consisted. At first it seemed possible that the ivory had been burnt to this colour, those parts of the head which are now brown being covered with a protective coating of clav whilst the remainder was exposed in wood-ash. This possibility had been considered because, in the building known as the Burnt Palace, most of the ivories had turned to a brilliant jet black from accidental exposure in the fire when the place was destroyed. But I think the black was in fact a pigment, and not being entirely fast had spread in one or two places for which it had not originally been intended. On the horse's ivory cheek-pieces which we have been considering the stain was altogether fugitive and was easily wiped off: it is likely that both on this head and on the cheek-pieces the composition was the same, and if so it is not impossible that the pigment was Tyrian purple, for *murex* shells have been found elsewhere at Nimrud.<sup>14</sup>

The next question that arises is whether this head was part of a statue. Those familiar with the xoana, the composite wooden statues of Greek classical art. may be inclined to think so. But I do not believe that this is the right answer. It will be seen at a glance that the head is in fact represented as resting on a curved stand, once fully decorated with ivory studs like the crown. Had there been a body attached we should have expected to find the neck appropriately curved for a conjunction; and in the well itself there was no trace whatsoever of a body. either in wood or of any other material. Moreover this concentration on the female head rather than on the body is familiar from other objets d'art found in the palaces, for example in the carved terminals which decorated fly-whisks or fans, and on ivories of the type known as 'The lady at the window'. For these reasons I suppose that like the much later Parthian heads which stood out as bosses, without bodies, high up on the walls at Hatra, this too was bodiless, though not an architectural member. It is more likely in my opinion to have stood on some high pedestal, perhaps at the back of a bed or a throne or, as we have already suggested, in a niche probably within the palace, maybe in some sanctuary. One little detail of the fitting may be noted. There is a deep hole high up in each ear, which must have been devised for the insertion of a peg by which the head was attached to a backing of ivory or wood. Another technical point of interest is that the eyes are not inlaid, although a deep incised line gives that effect. Mrs de Garis Davies, who reproduced some of these ivories in colour, noted that the surface of the ivory on either side of the pupil is lighter than that of the face, and that the laminations of the ivory follow the outlines of the chin, as well as of the cheek.

We do not know whether the tip of the nose had already been broken off before the head was cast into the well; but it is a miracle that so little else was damaged. We scoured every particle of mud for many days hoping to find the missing splinters, but they must have disintegrated and vanished long ago. Our two illustrations show the head with the nose admirably restored by Sayid Akram Shukri of the Iraq Antiquities Department. 72. ND2229 (B) Ivory ear, height 7.7 cm., perforated and dowelled; one of four, found in the well NN. See p. 132. Scale c. 3/4



At the back of the ear there is a rectangular tenon a few centimetres long, situated towards the left edge, and two dowel holes on the opposite side, neither of which penetrate to the other side of the ear. (See diagram on the left.)

Now we must inevitably ask who it was that so distinguished a head represented, and it is tantalizing to admit that we do not know, that we cannot even affirm with confidence that it is goddess, queen, or princess, or whose ideal of maidenhood it may be. Was she Assyrian, Phoenician, or Aramaean? Was she made in Calah to the order of the king, or was she looted in one of the many campaigns in the west-from Samaria, Hamath, Hadatu (Arslan-Tash), Gozan (T. Halaf), or from some other city? To pretend to know the answer would at present be an imposture. Since at this period, and for several centuries before, the Phoenician goddess Astarte was so dominant a figure among the goddesses of western Syria, and since in Assyria so much had been imported from luxurious centres such as Tyre, one may be tempted to see the head of Astarte herself. But if so it is strange that she wears no crown that we may call distinctively divine, although that in itself does not disprove identification with a goddess. The only crown at Calah which we can confidently assert was associated with a queen or high priestess is that seen on heads of the type ND2100 [150] which is the traditional one worn by the queenly lady depicted on a famous plaque from Megiddo in the 13th century B.C.<sup>15</sup> A not dissimilar turreted crown is worn by Assur-bani-pal's queen in the famous garden scene from Nineveh.<sup>16</sup> It has also to be remembered that Calah was a queenly centre famous in after time as the home of Semiramis; that the contracts and letters of the 7th century B.C. inform us of rich and powerful princesses in the city, and that the Burnt Palace alone has vielded far more representations of the female head at this period than any other city in western Asia. These feminine relics, one is tempted to think, reflect the influence of a line of powerful queens, and we therefore cannot deny the possibility, even the probability, that they would have had their own statuary either in the domestic wing of the palace where this was found, or perhaps in the temple of the goddess Ishtar. But the identity of this figure is a secret which will be retained by the lady herself until some other evidence comes to enlighten us. Sometimes one feels that the elusive search for knowledge is preferable to its attainment.

This ivory, called by some 'The Mona Lisa', perhaps because of her enigmatic smile which recalls that no less famous masterpiece, by us 'The Lady of the Well' since that was where we first met, will remain an object of unfailing wonder to the gaze of human eyes.<sup>17</sup> The face, with its smooth and ample curves, is purely Oriental in character; but the cutting of the ears, the setting of the eyes, the gently billowing hair with its tiered curls, and the rendering of the mouth





73b. Back view of [73] showing tool-marks.

with its archaic smile, proclaim it to be the ancestor of the archaic maidens carved in stone for the akropolis at Athens about a century and a half later. It is not altogether surprising that in the palace 'embodying all the skill of Calah' as Assur-nasir-pal had proclaimed, we should find this foretaste of an art that was destined to be transmitted to the service of Greek genius. Indeed, however much we may be puzzled by the gap of rather more than a century which at present divides the late masterpieces of Assyria from the early masterpieces of Hellas, one cannot doubt that the one had an influence on the other, nonetheless profound because indirectly and perhaps half consciously received.<sup>18</sup>

One of the facts which surprised us most was the size of this head, probably the largest yet known of the ancient Near Eastern ivories. But since four life-size ivory ears<sup>19</sup> [72] were also discovered in the same well it is certain that other heads must have existed, perhaps complete statues of these dimensions, early forerunners of the life-sized chryselephantine Athena Promachos in the Parthenon.

In sharp contrast with the Lady of the Well or the Mona Lisa, was another whom we nicknamed, perhaps unfairly, 'The Ugly Sister'. She was found a day or two later, in the same belt of sludge, nearer to the bottom of the well [73]. The hair is more simply portrayed, the tip of the nose had once been plugged, and perhaps had already been damaged in antiquity; the ears have vanished. The back of the head, unlike that of the Mona Lisa, is flat and has been left rough with the tool marks plainly visible [73b]. This, the largest head in the collection,  $18.8 \times 13.8$  cm.  $(7\frac{1}{2} \times 5\frac{1}{2}$  in.), is full of character, and I remember how after I had first shown it on the screen the late Professor H. Frankfort wrote an enthusiastic letter to say that he had seen it 'with great delight'. Again, the original appearance of the head before it had mellowed to a deep brown during its sojourn in the well must have been very different. We may suppose that there was once a coloured 'glass' or frit incrustation in the deeply grooved evebrows and in the pupils of the eye. A trace of the inlay survived in the beaded dog-collar with its pendants, one of which still had a circlet of gold foil embedded in a powdered 'frit'. The impression given by the head is of an elderly woman, and this is partly due to the oblique furrows below the cheeks, the thinly cut mouth with lips tightly compressed-altogether the opposite of the soft curves on the Mona Lisa—and the determined chin. The base of the neck is perfectly flat and smooth; there is no suggestion at all that it was ever joined to a body. With this head we may compare a strikingly similar miniature, ND9400 [449], found eight years later (1960) in room NE2 of Fort Shalmaneser: on the latter head an ear and the side-locks are still preserved (see ch. XVII, p. 530).

Frankfort thought that this head was more archaic in style than the Mona Lisa and compared the prominent eyes and their ridged irises with those on the few smaller ivory heads discovered at T. Halaf, as well as with some from the Burnt Palace at Nimrud.<sup>20</sup> This suggestion, one much in keeping with Frankfort's alert and speculative mind, raises a difficult and attractive problem. Were all the ivories in the well made at the same period? If not, which are the older, which the more recent, and what are our criteria for assessing their relative



73. ND2549. Ivory head of a lady  $1_3.8 \times 18.8$  cm., known as the 'Ugly Sister' in contrast to the 'Mona Lisa' [71]. Note the fine strands of hair, raised eyes with encrusted brows and pupils, thin, slit mouth and dog-collar with gold discs in the pendants. The head was sawn from a big tusk, and the marks of a fine chisel may still be seen on the back. The nose had been separately dowelled by means of a copper peg clearly visible in the photograph. The features, particularly eyes and mouth, give the impression of an elderly woman and are comparable with 9th century N. Syrian sculpture at Tell Halaf. Nevertheless this head could have been made in the 8th century B. C. Compare also ND9400 [449] from Fort Shalmaneser, ch. XVII, p. 530. Found at the bottom of the well NN. Now in the Metropolitan Museum, New York. See pp. 132–3.

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antiquity? Since the objects had been cast into a well we cannot prove that they belonged to a single collection, nor that they had been made during one king's reign, although it seems probable that they were all thrown down together when Calah was sacked, c.614 B.C. We therefore have to rely largely on stylistic considerations which depend on comparisons with other carvings found at Nimrud and elsewhere. But, as some of the objects from the well are unique, it becomes all the more difficult to date them by their style, the appreciation of which will depend on subjective judgements that vary from one critic to another.

It is thus not to be expected that we can give a confident answer to the many questions raised by the ivories from the well. But since the number of ivories discovered at Nimrud is overwhelmingly greater than that recovered from any other site we are in the main justified in seeking for comparative evidence here rather than elsewhere. Furthermore there is at Nimrud an abundance of associated material and circumstantial evidence which allows us to propose dates for certain groups with some confidence. As regards sites other than Nimrud, Khorsabad is of extraordinary importance because this was a site principally reserved for a single monarch—Sargon—and we may confidently ascribe the collection of ivories found there to the period of his reign. However that may be, at Nimrud we have two ivories which are actually inscribed with the names of an Assyrian king—Shamshi-Adad V (824–810 B.C.) and Sargon himself (722–705 B.C.).

It is evident that large collections were housed and displayed at Calah during Sargon's reign, and we can hardly avoid the conclusion that some of them were made to his order. And, as we shall see later, we have good grounds for assigning the bulk of the ivories from the wells to his reign also. It is, however, certain that some of them were antiquities in Sargon's time, for we know that every reputable king of Assyria from the 9th century B.C. onwards was an ivory collector, and numbered such trophies among his booty. We have also seen that in the 8th century stocks of ivory tusks were held in the storerooms at Nimrud and from time to time issued to workmen on the spot.<sup>21</sup>

It cannot therefore be denied that some ivories were being made at Nimrud and added to the much-prized older pieces as late as the 8th and probably during the 7th century B.C. Thus, while the 'Ugly Sister' may have been made during Sargon's reign—if that be the date of other carvings in the well—we may also admit the possibility that it had been included in his collections as an antiquity, especially if it can be proved that comparable heads from T. Halaf are older than Sargon. What then is the date of those partly similar Halaf ivories and comparable sculpture, and of what do they consist? To answer that question we have to consider briefly the chronology of that site.

T. Halaf, known in Assyria as Guzana (Gozan of the Old Testament, II Kings xvii:6), was a wealthy Aramaean kingdom on the headwaters of the river Habur in north central Syria. Its greatest period of prosperity seems to have been between about 900 and 800 B.C., and in the main we may agree with Moort-gat's well-reasoned discussion of its chronology, which has been long debated.<sup>22</sup> The two little ivory heads which Frankfort thought to be stylistically related to the 'Ugly Sister' from Nimrud may in my opinion be dated to approximately 825 B.C.; they appear to have been associated with the later of two royal graves which lay close to one another, and this one had been dug down from an occupa-

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tion level which belonged to a reigning prince named Kapara whose expensively planned palaces, ornamented partly with his own, partly with older sculpture, were apparently sacked by Adad-nirari III of Assyria in the year 808 B.C. One of Kapara's ambitious monuments, a great stone carvatid figure of a goddess which helped to support the portico of his hilani palace, has a head which in some respects bears a striking resemblance to ours; notably the nose, thin lips, heavy chin and dog-collar; this dread goddess stood upon a stone lioness.23 Moortgat may well be right in claiming that this represents the most advanced stage of Aramaean sculpture on the site, and that it falls within the last period of the city's independence before the Assyrian conquest. If that is correct, then the prototype of the 'Ugly Sister' may have existed about a century before Sargon. On this comparable statue from Tell Halaf there was a remarkably interesting inscription which invoked curses on anyone who might dare mutilate it. Indeed, it was ordained for such a one that his seven daughters should be condemned to serve as prostitutes of Ishtar, and his sons to be burnt before Adad, the Weather God. We may conclude either that the Nimrud head was already an antiquity by the time of Sargon, or that it was a copy of an antiquity.

In contrast with the 'Ugly Sister' we may compare the Mona Lisa with the ivory 'ladies at the window' discovered at Khorsabad, which were doubtless made to the order of King Sargon himself.24 The free modelling and the soft curves of the smooth features argue a stylistic change from the farouche appearance and the greater severity which is a marked tendency of oth century sculpture.25 The soft and sensuous face and mouth is also typical of 8th century heads found at Toprak Kale in Urartu, and of other similar ones attributable to the same period found in the domestic wing of the N.W. Palace at Calah.<sup>26</sup> It is this stylistic comparison with the ivories of Asia Minor, lately reinforced by the discoveries of Tahsin Özgüç at Altin Tepe27 which for the present incline me to attribute the Mona Lisa to this period, when Sargon was preparing to furnish the new palace which he never completed, at Khorsabad. We may add that the polychrome effect of this head is comparable with the polychromy of other fragments found in Fort Shalmaneser, and it is not improbable that this development coincided with the plentiful output of ivories associated with the latter half of the 8th century B.C.

Finally we have to admit that in theory there is no reason why the 'Ugly Sister' and the Mona Lisa should not have been made at the same time in different workshops, or even in the same one. The different appearance of the two heads may but reflect differing iconographic traditions. Moreover they have in common one distinctive trick of technique, the concentric graining on the salient portion of the cheek.

Before we come to describe the chryselephantine trophies, which were perhaps the greatest prizes of all, we should mention some other antiquities from the same deep levels in the well—also of great merit. No finer piece of its kind has ever been found than the ivory head of a roaring lion, ND2219 [74], with its tense and savage expression, an idealized version of the King of Beasts, a dread and terrifying figure. The detailed treatment is remarkable, and we may note how the ears are thrown back, dog-like, the meticulous care with which each hair of the mane has been rendered, the spotted tongue, the 'Oriental warts' on the forehead pierced to take the bristles, and the cavities in the face evidently





74. ND2219 (B). Ivory head of a roaring lion, height 6.7 cm., a masterpiece of vigorous, highly skilled carving. The top of the head once carried incrustations; the ears were separately attached. A pair of 'Oriental warts' on the forehead and punctuations on the whiskers were perhaps intended to carry bristles. Note also the chisel marks on the spotted tongue. Found in the wellNN.

Scale c. 1/1

intended to carry incrustations. The type made a strong impression on the lioncarvers of the time and there are comparable figures, clearly derived from this prototype, both in Samos and in Greece, approximately dated to the 7th century B.C., and in Achaemenian Iran.<sup>28</sup> This object was probably the end-piece for a chair or table of a kind figured on stone reliefs of Sargon at Khorsabad.

Another lion, perhaps almost as brilliantly executed, is the fragment ND2231 [75], now in the Metropolitan Museum, New York, the lower jaw convincingly restored under the direction of Mr Charles Wilkinson. The poise and turn of the head again show the imaginative hand of a master, who has not yet departed from a recognized Assyrian convention in the rendering of the sinews and joints of the foreleg. There is no question that this head and the one just described are truly Assyrian, and not Phoenician imports.

Only a few animal figures were found in the well, but one more ivory is no less excellent: ND2217 [76] is a fragment of an ivory staff which terminates in a gazelle's head. This might have been the end of a fly-whisk, for similarly decorated instruments are carried by the attendants of Assur-nasir-pal on the reliefs.

Complete figures in the round are of great rarity, and such is ND2546 [77], which is made of bone. This depicts a nude maiden, hands holding the breasts, perhaps dedicated to Ishtar, and appropriately found in a part of the palace which must have been inhabited by the princesses. Such figures of the dedicated maiden have rarely been found in ancient Assyria at this period, but clay models



75. ND2231 (Met. Mus. N.Y.) Ivory lion, height 9.5 cm., roaring, the lower jaw restored, obverse in the round, the back is flat. From well NN in the N.W. Palace Scale c. 1/1

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76. ND2217 (B). Ivory staff, length 8.5 cm., terminating in a gazelle's head. This might have served originally as a ceremonial fly-whisk, for similarly decorated instruments are carried by the attendants on the reliefs of Assur-nasir-pal in the N.W. Palace. From the well NN.

Slightly enlarged

of the kind were very common in Babylonia after 2000 B.C., and a millennium later were also at home in Palestine and Syria. The closest parallel and nearest contemporary to this one, however, is illustrated by three figures on a blue glass paste vessel discovered in one of the earlier buildings of the temple of Ishtar of Agade at Babylon.<sup>29</sup> The vessel in question may well have been made before the time of Nebuchadrezzar, and it is possible that this unusual maiden from Calah was the result of the close contact between the two cities, so amply illustrated by the documents, especially towards the end of the 8th century B.C. It is remarkable that a similar figurine in ivory covered in gold leaf was discovered in an Etruscan tomb which most probably is to be dated about 700 B.C., one of many articles found in Etruria which illustrate a close contact with the Orient at that time.<sup>30</sup>

Another ivory of a kind more commonly found in ancient Calah is the beautiful fragment of a pyxis, or ointment box, which has mellowed to the warm brown so characteristic of objects found in the well [78]. The box is decorated with a procession of empanelled figures in relief, maidens hurrying in procession; one of them carries a double lotus in her hand and is dressed in a long flowing short-sleeved garment, girdled at the waist and tied with a double knot. Indeed the dress and the arrangement of the hair falling down the front of the body just below the shoulders inevitably reminds us of the later Greek representations of Dionysian revellers, and again seems to be a foretaste of archaic Greek art which was steeped in ancient Oriental traditions. The first figure, which fortunately has the head intact, was even more richly attired than the second, who was probably her attendant. The framework of the pyxis is decorated with a stylized foliate design which, like the human figures, can be closely matched on fragments of boxes discovered in the Burnt Palace, and leads to the conclusion that some of the ivories in the well were contemporary with similar ones from the rich collection found in the Burnt Palace which we shall describe in a later chapter (XIII, p. 211). The damage suffered by the pieces when they were thrown into the well is also demonstrated by the discovery of



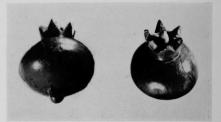
77. ND2546(AM), front and back views. Bone figurine, a miniature, height 5:8 cm.  $(2\frac{1}{4} \text{ in.})$  of a nude maiden, in the round, hands to breasts. Similar statuettes in terracotta were commonly made in Babylonia as dedications to the goddess Ishtar, in the 2nd millennium B.C., and this one appears to be Babylonian in style. From the well NN.





78. ND2232 and 2216 (Met. Mus., N.Y.), height 6.5 cm.; two fragments of an ivory pyxis or ointment box illustrating framed panels of maidens in procession, one of them carrying a lotus. They wear elaborate garments and headdress. Parts of similar boxes with empanelled scenes were found by Loftus in the Burnt Palace and must be contemporary with this one. Probably reign of Sargon. From the well NN. See p. 137. Scale c. 1/I

79. ND2233. Height 3.2 cm. Ivory pomegranate, one of a set which perhaps originally adorned figures of 'temple prostitutes', the hierodules of the goddess Ishtar. They were worn as parts of the headcloth on the forehead. From the well NN., N.W. Palace. Scale c. 1/1



two parts of this box in separate lumps of sludge at a slightly different depth; ND2216 depicting most of the skirt, shoulders, and neck of the second figure, was joined to ND2232, the remainder of the pyxis.<sup>31</sup>

Among various other small articles recovered from these depths not the least attractive were the little ivory pomegranates ND2233, 2234 [79] which at one time may have decorated the statue of a maiden. A tasselled cloth fringed with pomegranates is, as we shall see when we examine the ivories from the Burnt palace, worn by the 'temple prostitutes', and was a symbol of fecundity from the earliest times, for golden models of this fruit were worn by Queen Shubad in her death chamber at Ur, about two thousand years earlier. There is evidence that in Babylonia and Assyria this fruit was considered to be a love-charm.<sup>32</sup>

More puzzling than the ivories is ND2188, a delicately made metal object only  $6\cdot 4$  centimetres high, which could have been the terminal to a ceremonial staff or, possibly, the decorative headpiece of a royal or divine helmet [80]. It consists of a bell-shaped base with a narrow neck surmounted by a silver disc upon which is chased a rayed sun, emblem of Shamash, Ishtar or Adad. A plain gold band and a gold boss in the centre of the disc and a golden band ornamented with repoussé rosettes add to the splendour of this rare and expensive piece.<sup>33</sup>

Amongst the varia we must also recall the presence of more than two dozen

80. ND2188(AM). Ceremonial object, height 6.4 cm., of silver encased in gold, the lower band decorated with rosettes. A rayed sun on the upper disc. From well NN.

spatulae mostly in ivory, some in bone, including two or three ivory specimens with flanged heads and a longitudinal groove resembling arrowheads [96–8]. It is possible that these delicate instruments were a form of stylus perhaps used for writing Phoenician or Aramaic upon wax, rather than for writing cuneiform, which required a more square-ended or triangular-headed pen. The little arrowlike ivories may once have been dipped in ink, but if so any traces of it had long ago been washed away.<sup>34</sup>

The rich levels between course 320 and course 330 of the brickwork at the bottom of the well finally yielded two chryselephantine plaques, and the sight of them still leaves us amazed, for we can hardly believe the good fortune which has ensured their survival for posterity. They are shown on [81-4] and frontispiece, in their actual condition, unrestored. A dramatic episode unfolds itself before our eyes; a savage lioness mauling a dark 'Ethiopian' whom she holds in the embrace of death. This is the actual moment of the kill, when the victim, felled to the ground, knees still raised, leans upon his hands and proffers his neck in surrender as if in the ecstasy of sacrifice, for there is no sign of agony in his perfectly drawn features. The lioness, poised four-square and solid, gives, in its sinuous outline and the turn of its head, an impression of feline power well matched by the last tense resistance of its victim. This fearful scene takes place against a brilliant background, a meadow of Egyptian 'lilies' and papyrus flowers with golden stems, blue and red in alternate rows, bending now one way, now the other, as if swaying before the wind. The blue 'lily' consists of lapis lazuli incrustation, the alternating red of polished, dome-shaped carnelians serrated at the base to engage with the teeth of the gilt ivory calices.

One of the two plaques, ND2547, in almost perfect condition, was retained by the Iraq Antiquities Department and, after Sayid Akram Shukri had given it all possible care and skilled treatment, was exhibited in the Iraq Museum Baghdad, where it now occupies a deserved place of honour. The second of the two, ND2548, slightly damaged, was generously allocated to the expedition and was dispatched by air to London. I met it on arrival and took it as soon as possible to Dr H. J. Plenderleith of the British Museum, who handled it with the dexterity and assurance that we have come to expect of him. It is fortunate that each plaque thus found the attention of an acknowledged master, and that appropriately each of them has found a permanent lodgement in a national museum which is also an international centre for visitors from the East and from the West. Dr Plenderleith has kindly allowed me to quote an extract from the admirable technical report written immediately after the completion of the task which had been assigned to him. It is as follows:

"The miraculous preservation of this superb object after a sojourn of over 2000 years in a well was evidently due to the accretions of a fine clay that built up around the specimen, protecting it from mechanical damage and from violent change in humidity and temperature. The deep cracks in the





81. ND2548 (BM). Chryselephantine plaque depicting a lioness killing a negro in a meadow of lotus and papyrus plants, which are rendered in carnelian and lapis lazuli and overlaid in gold. See pp. 139–44. Scale c. 1/I

ivory seen in an X-ray photograph [84] had their origin at the back, or external side, of the tusk, and by good fortune were scarcely apparent on the decorated side. That the object survived the ordeal of excavation without disintegration is solely due to the care expended in controlling humidity during this crucial time, so that the change to museum conditions was accomplished with the minimum of strain. Some interesting points of technique were revealed in the course of the cleaning of the ivory. The human figure was evidently intended to represent a negroid type and an effect of crisp, curly hair was obtained by fixing gilt-topped ivory pegs into the head, which was possibly stained black beforehand. The figure of the lioness is embellished with a lapis lazuli disc on the forehead, and curved channels at either side may once have borne similar inlays. As regards the floral canopy, the gold leaf was applied before the inlays so that when these were inserted the effect was as of precious stones set in gold *cloisons*. An

82. ND2548. Top of the same plaque showing the dowel holes by means of which it was affixed at each end; the craftsman's mark, an *aleph* sign, is scratched on the surface between them. Scale c. I/I





83. ND2547 (B). Length 10.5 cm., base 9.8 cm. tapering to 6 cm. at top; thickness at bottom 2.8 cm. and at top 1 cm. One of a pair, similar to [81]. See pp. 139-44. Scale c. 1/1

interesting feature of the lapis inlays was their thinness compared with the depth of the cells which they occupied, necessitating the presence of a bedding layer to fix them in position at a level comparable with the *cloisons*<sup>3</sup>. This foundation layer was found to be a species of mortar consisting of a mixture of calcium carbonate and blue powdered frit. Lapis dust may have been present, but granular frit preponderated, and it seems probable that a lime frit putty was employed as an adhesive foundation for the lapis. The residual blue stain in the empty cells is caused by this frit and not by the decay of lapis lazuli inlays. To attach the gold to the ivory another adhesive was used, undoubtedly of organic origin, the thinnest smear remaining clearly visible, however, under the microscope as a brownish film which swelled in water. That a reversible colloid should have survived from such antiquity is remarkable and due, no doubt, to the coherent film of gold which had protected it from exposure to air and moisture throughout the ages.<sup>3</sup>

The problem which faced us when these plaques and the large ivory beads came out of the sludge was one that had to be solved then and there if they were to survive. How were we to ensure that after spending more than two millennia in wet mud they could be acclimatized to the dry and warm atmosphere in which they were once again to live? The answer was in fact one of common sense, and indeed generally speaking the principles of treatment which apply to the human body apply to materials also. If the body has to pass from one environment to another which is totally different in character, the good physician must do all he can to minimize the shock and make the transition as easy as possible. As it

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happened I had heard this effectively demonstrated by Monsieur René Huyghe, Keeper of the picture galleries in the Musée du Louvre, only a few months before. He told us that one of the old Flemish masters had been removed for cleaning, and that when that had been done it proved impossible to get it back into its frame, which was contemporary and also of great value. But one of the old Louvre craftsmen, who no doubt had seen such things happen before, gently offered to coax it, and promised that if it were to return to the climate in which it had been hanging for so many years the proper response would result, as indeed it did. For our own ivories, my wife was quick to perceive that this was the treatment needed, namely to reduce the humidity little by little. And so, for weeks on end she kept them under towels, first wet, then only damp, tending them thus day and night, till they reached the cool shelter of the laboratories. To her care and sensitive understanding, no less than to that of the other skilled hands through which they passed, their preservation is due.

The dazzling beauty of these two pieces gleams before one's eyes like a faceted polychrome jewel. The golden loin-cloth of the Ethiopian, closely moulded to his body; the golden spikelets of his hair and the vivid touches of lapis lazuli at the waist, on the arms, and on the head of the lioness are cleverly distributed to lighten the surface of the ivory. Once again the graining has been used to advantage, and on one of the plaques we see the craftsman's trick of concentrating the circles at a prominent point—in this case on the man's left shoulder. It will be seen that the two plaques are not absolutely identical in execution, but nearly so. The cutting of the Ethiopian's head on both plaques is a marvel of delicacy, and indeed an incredible lightness of touch reveals throughout the sensitive understanding of a great artist, anonymous and immortal.

Now we must ask for what purpose this pair of ivories was intended, and again we have to answer, as for the larger heads, that we do not know. That they both adorned the same object, we can hardly doubt, and as both sets of figures face the same direction it is artistically improbable that they were meant to be seen in juxtaposition. It seems not unlikely that they had been designed as insets for the top of a throne, front and back. But many other explanations are possible, and it may be that they adorned the front and back of a bed, like the fine ivory panels discovered at Ugarit a year later by Claude Schaeffer; it is conceivable that they had once decorated a ceremonial chariot. In [82] we see the dowel holes at top and bottom by which they were fixed to some other material, no doubt wood, and it will be noticed that the British Museum plaque has at the top a fitters' sign in the form of the Phoenician aleph. It is difficult to believe that it was necessary to inscribe any mnemonic to remind the craftsmen where a piece of this quality had to be fitted, but this method of marking was a part of the official routine, long practised by the royal workshops.

Finally we have to consider subject and style, and whether this can help us to determine provenance and date of the plaques. The theme is a very old one. The oldest example occurs on a proto-dynastic Egyptian slate palette in the British Museum whereon we see a negro being similarly mauled and killed, and although the posture is not identical it is sufficiently like to remind us that this kind of occurrence was vividly familiar in antiquity and no mere imaginative



84. ND2548. X-ray photograph of the chryselephantine plaque before treatment showing the cracks through the back of the ivery.

Scale c. 1/1

picture.35 The same theme was still common in Egypt in the New Kingdom as well as in later periods, and appeared to symbolize the triumph of the Pharaoh over his enemies.36 Probably therefore, the subject finally came to Assyria through the Phoenicians, who were quick to take advantage of any theme that might turn to spectacular decoration; the red papyrus flowers also suggest an Egyptian origin. The theme spread west as well as east, and it is extremely interesting to note that it occurs on an Etruscan ivory pyxis which was found in a tomb at Marsiliana. That tomb, as we shall have occasion to notice again later on, contained an inscribed wax writing board like those found in another well, AB of the N.W. Palace, a notable parallel which considerably strengthens the conclusion adopted many years ago by Randall MacIver and others that the tomb was to be dated to about 700 B.C. The Etruscan pyxis is therefore likely to be very nearly contemporary with our ivories, and the scene can also be matched on bronzes found both in Etruria and at Nimrud itself. Indeed the most obvious parallel is a figure on one of the bronze bowls discovered by Layard in the wellroom AB of the N.W. Palace.37 There the accident takes place in the course of a hunt: the lion, driven on by a beater, has felled his quarry and in turn is being shot down by a mounted bowman. Some of these bowls carried Phoenician inscriptions; they were stacked near the well within which we found the ivory tablet inscribed with Sargon's name.38 The conclusion that our ivory plaques were inspired by a popular Phoenician theme and were probably executed in Sargon's reign seems therefore well grounded.<sup>39</sup> Frankfort, who discussed the Nimrud plaques in a book which appeared posthumously, said that 'the lioness

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of the inlays is neither Egyptian nor Assyrian. The naturalness of the movement of attacker and victim surpasses the usual Phoenician renderings and resembles that of the cow and calf from Arslan-Tash'.<sup>40</sup> This statement from so discerning a critic of Oriental art only serves to emphasize that we have to suspend judgement when we come to determine the *atelier* of supreme works of art and craftsmanship which transcend contemporary standards. We must inevitably conclude that these two plaques were made to the order of a king, for they are individual pieces of unmatched mastery; and if that king was not Sargon himself, then perhaps it was either Tiglath-pileser III (745–727 B.C.), a patron of the arts in whose reign occurred the renaissance of Assyria and much rejoicing within the kingdom, or Sargon's successor, Sennacherib (705–681 B.C.).

All of the above-mentioned reigns are propositions worth consideration. There is no parallel material in the reign of Tiglath-pileser III, but a glance at his sculpture is enough to reveal that he had at his command artists and craftsmen of great skill who were also masters of detail. More probable as an alternative is Sennacherib, whose monuments portray more than one object of a kind found in the well: the figure-of-eight studs on horses' harness; horses' side-pieces similar in shape to the one found in the well NN [70]; a fragment of ivory with lilies and papyrus which must have been part of an ornament similar to the chryselephantine plaques, found in his S.W. Palace at Nineveh<sup>41</sup>; all these are remarkable points of comparison, not to be neglected. Finally, as we have already seen, a lion-weight bearing Sennacherib's name was found in the south entrance to the throne-room, in the central block of the palace. Nor is it impossible historically that there was a sack of the palace at Nimrud at the time of his death, for we know that Sennacherib was murdered, and if that alternative suggestion is adopted, then this valuable material may have been thrown down the wells at the end of his reign. But all things considered, we believe that the ivories were thrown into the wells in or about 614-612 B.C. when Calah was finally destroyed; and although there is no evidence of burning here as there was in almost every other building, this perhaps is the most probable solution, because it agrees with the evidence of a violent destruction which occurred in so many other of Calah's buildings at that date.

The actual date at which the ivories were dismantled and mutilated does not indeed have any bearing on the date at which they were made, for it is a truism that an object must be older than the date of its destruction. In the absence of decisive proof we must therefore still suggest Sargon as the owner of the collection, partly because of the inscription dated to his reign in the domestic wing; partly because Sennacherib took no interest in Nimrud and resided at Nineveh; and finally because we have the overriding evidence of Sargon's name on the writing-board in the well AB, and the knowledge that he was preparing precious objects in Nimrud for his new, unfinished capital at Khorsabad. In any case, a date of 715 B.C. for most of these ivories can hardly have a margin of error of more than thirty years earlier or later.

No less intriguing than the problem of date is another question. How did it happen that such valuable trophies were cast into the well? One particular ivory which we must now examine provided us with some unexpected evidence, and may help us to find an answer to the problem [85]. It is part of a fly-whisk with a triple volute capital, and at the top three tubes to contain the bristles; a



85. ND2218 (Met. Mus. N.Y.), 10×3·3×1 cm., front and back views, part of a fan handle or flywhisk, found imprisoned in sludge and partly encased beneath a thick coat of bitumen at the bottom of the well NN in the N.W. Palace. The scene represents a pair of kneeling figures touching the fronds and holding the fillets which bind the sacred palmette tree, perhaps reproducing a ceremonial act associated with the New Year Festival. The three cylinders at the top are hollowed to receive the hairs of the whisk, the handle is decorated with three superimposed volutes. the base is dowelled. Scale c. 1/1

partly similar instrument is held by the king's attendant on the relief of Sennacherib which commemorated the fall of Lachish, and an elaborately bound tree represented on the Nimrud ivory is comparable with one depicted on one of Sargon's tables at Khorsabad.<sup>42</sup> The most striking feature of this ivory is a panel which contains on either side of it identical scenes. Two kneeling figures touch with the right hand the palmette fronds of a sacred tree, and in their left hand hold the ends of cloth bands which have been tied round the trunk. This scene perhaps illustrates a ritual performed at the Assyrian spring festival. The remains of trees, their trunks encased in metal bands, have been found at the entrance to the forecourt of the temples of Nabu and Shamash built by Sargon at Khorsabad (Dur Sharrukin), and from the same site an ivory panel fragment depicts as its centre-piece a similar form of magical tree rising in tiers. Openwork ivory panels found in Fort Shalmaneser which may also be ascribed to Sargon's reign depict an identical tree (ch. XVII, p. 506, 562 and [411], [505]).43 In style the delicately cut heads of these figures with their fillets and curled bunches of hair hanging down to the shoulders resemble subjects which appear on stone reliefs from the time of Sargon to Assur-bani-pal44; the cubic bunching of the hair at the back of the head and resting on the shoulders is a trait which began in the time of Sargon and became invariable on Assyrian sculpture thereafter.

It is significant that the designs on the panel were almost completely concealed by lumps of bitumen. This evidence leads us to infer that before the object was thrown down the well it was in contact with hot, liquid bitumen, which in the palace can only have been used for one purpose, to effect repairs. It is therefore probable that some of the pavements were being relaid and that bitumen mortar was required to fill in the interstices between the burnt bricks. These repairs were no doubt taken in hand quite soon after the catastrophe



86. ND2214, 2182-3 (*above*) and 2185 (*opposite page*). Lengths vary between  $6\cdot 5$  and  $3\cdot 8$  cm. Bronze statuettes of dogs. Assyrian breeds with pricked-up ears, thick and pointed snouts, short bushy tail curled over the back. ND2182 (*second from left*), however, has a feline appearance. Models of dogs were deposited by the Assyrians under the palace thresholds to guard against evil spirits. From the well NN, N.W. Palace.

which, as we have seen, is most likely to have occurred in 614-612 B.C. when the remainder of the city was sacked. We may assume that the valuable rooftimbers had been stripped, and that a part of the loot had been left lying in the mud together with chunks of broken furniture, fragments of ivory heads, and all sorts of other objects. When the gangs of scavengers came along to clean and scrape the ground before the new pavements were laid they had to find a convenient rubbish dump. True, the river was the obvious place, but that meant a long carry, and what was more handy for the job than a well? Down went lumps of mud by the spadeful, and half concealed within them, the precious remains of the royal furniture and figurines. Such a reconstruction of events does not preclude a subsequent clearing of the well, which may have been re-used for a time (as it was eventually by us), a hypothesis suggested by the fact that higher up, many specimens of 7th century B.C. water jars were found. The alternative solution is that these precious ivory and metal fragments were simply cast down by the mob in the sheer joy of vandalistic destruction, and while this simpler explanation cannot be ruled out, it does not account for the bitumen-covered ivory.

Some study of mob psychology and the irrational behaviour of crowds when buildings are looted would be of much interest as an aid to understanding the strange places in which ancient treasure has been found. The discoveries both at Nimrud and at Khorsabad make one thing clear: the incendiaries must have arranged for combustible loot to be concentrated in certain selected spots—at Khorsabad it seemed that bonfires had been lit over the ivories; but what may have been intended as an organized operation with someone in charge must often have ended in a pandemonium which we should call a 'smash and grab'. It is moreover not without interest to the psychologist that a well has a magnetic attraction to the casual passer-by, once it has lost its proper function. There is, for example, in the Palais du Louvre a medieval well into which visitors continually cast small coins, chiefly for the pleasure of hearing them plop into the water. One other more useful purpose a well can also serve : as a hiding-place in time of danger, and there the treasure may for ever remain if its owners are banished or killed by the enemy against whom they took these precautions. All these

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possibilities may be borne in mind when we consider what happened at Nimrud, and, as we shall see when we come to examine the room AB, the same explanation need not necessarily account for the different discoveries. Any reconstruction of the events which led to the throwing of treasure into well NN has to take account of the fact that every ivory was already mutilated and fragmentary when it was cast down.

The fury with which the invading mob must have set about the palace is finally suggested by the discovery in the same well NN of a delightful set of little bronze dogs [86]. We have already referred to their function, which was to bark, to bite, and to scare away any evil spirits who might attempt to enter the palace.<sup>45</sup> That was the purpose for which they had once been buried under the thresholds of the doorways; but although they failed to achieve it, these little uprooted watchdogs, with their short curly tails, nevertheless survived to tell us that the 'foul fiend' had indeed got the better of them.



86. ND2185.

87. Well in the courtyard of AJ, south, domestic wing of the N.W. Palace, showing capstones, dripstone and bung. Behind the man a drainage-brick, with five perforations, probably removed from the façade of a wall. The burnt-brick steps were made waterproof with bitumen; inscribed bricks of Shalmaneser III in the pavement (*right fore*ground). See p. 149–50.



**88.** Another view of the well-head showing steps up and the burnt-brick pavement inscribed with the name of Shalmaneser III. In the right foreground is part of the mud-brick casing which surrounded the well in the Hellenistic period. The well-head was then raised by over six feet and the Assyrian palace ceased to be occupied. See p. 149–50.



## CHAPTER X

# WELLS IN COURT AJ AND ROOM AB OF THE N.W. PALACE: WRITING ON WAX

T has always seemed to me impossible to decide whether design or chance plays the greater part on the road to discovery. But whatever answer Lone may choose to give, the commodity which we call luck and what the gardener calls a green hand are indispensable. The digger after years of experience may become a shrewd judge of soil, he may acquire the eye for the kind of site which is potentially rich, and he may calculate to a nicety where to concentrate his manpower. But no one, however skilled, can predict whether the object of his search will still be there, any more than a man may know what lies in store for the morrow. It is a mark of professional ability to be able to extract information from the earth, and to that extent no site anciently occupied is ever barren to the archaeologist. But from time to time he needs some form of reward which will compensate for the more usual pedestrian rate of progress and act as a spur to further effort. It was design that led us through systematic excavation into the room NN and down to the bottom of its well; it was luck that kept death away from the work and put no stop to its continuity; design that forced us on under water in spite of the temptation to stop; luck that had saved for us the treasure in a belt of sludge under a crumbling tower of brickwork which hovered precariously upon the undercut bedrock.

One discovery however leads to another, and we were now disposed to search for other wells. The next one was found in the north-west corner of the courtyard AJ [87–8]. The top of this structure was in even better condition than that of NN for the huge capstone, although cracked in three places by the superincumbent weight of earth, had survived and hung threateningly over the abyss below it. We had great difficulty in removing these blocks with our simple tackle, and there was an anxious moment as one leg of the heavy steel tripod began to swing unexpectedly towards the well-mouth under the strain of the lift.

The courtyard was paved with bricks of Shalmaneser III which were also used for the construction of a raised platform which stood in its north-west

The notes for chapter x will be found on pp. 334-7.

corner. The platform bricks were set in waterproof bitumen mortar, and it was clear that the reason for raising the well-head was to keep the well itself unpolluted by the beasts of burden which entered the court, for close to the walls we found the stone tethering-blocks which had been used to secure the animals when their packs were being unloaded.

The great capstone which we had such difficulty in moving lay at the top of a flight of half a dozen brick steps, as can seen in the photograph [88]. Close to the top of the well we found a loose brick perforated with five holes (behind the seated workman) [87]; this was out of position, but had probably once been used in the facade of some wall through which water was liable to percolate -perhaps in a railing round the well-head-for drainage-bricks of a similar kind were found by us ten years later in situ, in the south wall of Fort Shalmaneser.1 At the foot of the well-head there was a big, square drip-stone, which could be sealed with a cylindrical cap, and at the top of it a discarded stone wellcover which consisted of a short cylinder with square head. All these details and the perfected finish show that the Assyrians had little to learn about wellconstruction. From the brick-lined casing we extracted bricks inscribed with the name of Assur-nasir-pal and dedicated to the Sibitti (the Seven Pleiades). These particular bricks may therefore have been manufactured for some other building; but it is not impossible that the Pleiades were considered to be in some way associated. At all events, it is certain that when Assur-nasir-pal built his palace the well was deliberately incorporated in the platform on which the palace was built, for when we descended the well it was seen to be an integral part of that platform. But as the bricks of his son Shalmaneser were also found in the lining it may be that he either finished or repaired it-more probably the latter. Shalmaneser's well continued in use long after the N.W. Palace was sacked, but the structure was then encased in a heavy mud-brick surround which sealed the burnt brick and elevated the well-head by nearly two metres (6 ft 6 in.). This end of the palace was now open ground, but the Assyrians continued to draw water at the already ancient well even after the final destruction in 612 B.C. By this time no attention was paid to the adjacent palace walls, for the staircase up to the latest well-head was askew to the ancient alignment.

Surprisingly enough, the well itself was not entirely filled with earth, as it had been partly protected by the fallen capstone. Nonetheless, there was a long way to go before we could hope to reach rock-bottom, and we began the descent. The brick lining however was badly worn and at a depth of about 16½ metres (54 ft) appeared to be dangerously undermined. We then called in expert advice from the village of Qara Qosh, another ancient Assyrian township about 15 miles away, and our consultant reported that although the job would be dangerous he had the necessary skill to undertake it. He had, however, wisely come to Nimrud in his best clothes; he asked leave to return home to change them and was never seen again. I then sent our driver to the same town once more, and told him to seek out the very best and oldest of the experts he could find. He returned with a veritable Noah, thick-set, bow-legged and blessed with a massive, hennaed, patriarchal beard. He had clearly spent a lifetime in cavernous places. He worked for more than an hour down at the bottom, tapping the sides with his hammer and testing the substructure before coming up for air

'Danger, great danger!' he said, but added that he had already enjoyed a long life and that the bottom of that well was an honourable place in which to die, more especially in our service. We thanked him for his generous sentiments and assured him that we should wish to share in any of the hazards, but felt that the time had not yet come for such a trial. Nevertheless, even then we did not abandon the attempt. We tried yet another descent, this time pulling away the burnt-bricks and getting back to the solid mud-brick behind them, but the bottom was found to be so badly undercut that it would have been madness to go further. Work at this well was therefore abandoned and whatever may lie within it must remain hidden from us until such time as we can secure the necessary caissons for strengthening the sides of the shaft all the way down.

The debris covering the courtyard and overtopping the well contained many small fragments of ivories, which had obviously belonged to the rest of the collection from Sargon's treasure-chamber and room HH in the domestic wing. One fragment, ND1091, represented the fringed border of a lady's skirt and was part of of an ointment box of a type found not only in the well NN but also in the Burnt Palace. There were also many small fragments of glass vessels which seem to have become common in Sargon's reign; and these scraps of evidence thus provided yet further confirmation of the date at which the collection had been formed.

The time had now come to try out the third and last of the wells located in the N.W. Palace. This had been discovered by Layard in 1851 and its excavation was the last work undertaken by him before he finally left for England.<sup>2</sup> The chamber AB [99] in which it was situated had yielded a superb collection of 150 bronze bowls elaborately decorated with human and animal figures, as well as elephants' tusks, horse-trappings, bronze bells, beads and an alabaster vase. Together with this treasure, Layard had found in one corner of the room the broken remains of what he no doubt rightly interpreted as the royal throne, made of wood, the legs partly of ivory, amply decorated with winged figures and other ornaments in bronze. While clearing the room, he also set his workmen to dig out the well, which was illustrated in a woodcut by an artist, F. C. Cooper, who was making sketches of the palace at the time. It was described as choked with earth, and Layard's workmen emptied it until they came, at a depth of nearly 60 feet, to brackish water.

We soon realized, after reading this account, that nothing was more probable than that there was yet more to come at the bottom of this one too. For we now knew, what Layard did not know, that the remunerative part of a well is that which lies under water, not above it.

The next task therefore was to find Layard's well; in theory there should have been no difficulty, for he had stated that it was in one corner of a room 'parallel to, and to the south of, the chamber marked AA in the plan of the north-west palace'.<sup>3</sup> But there was no plan of the room, and no indication of the corner in which it stood. We began looking for it on the 6th March 1953; it took us no less than 22 days to discover it, for large quantities of mud-brick walling had fallen into the chamber since Layard's time, and retracing the old wall lines proved to be a slow and painful task. The discovery at last of the ancient well-mouth was a signal for much rejoicing, and we pressed on with the highest expectations. Meanwhile we dragged our best

machinery into the chamber—a winch operated by a diesel engine, and a pump. The Iraq Petroleum Company also lent us the services of an operator, and we now considered ourselves to be a highly mechanized team. It seemed almost sacrilegious to abandon the hand-methods of the ancient Assyrians which we ourselves had found so effective; but we were cursed by the necessity of having to hurry, and the machines were indispensable. Down we went at high speed, craning up the earth that Layard's men had cast back into the well a century ago. Archaeology and the donkey engine now went hand in hand, and from the buckets we sieved out small pieces overlooked by our predecessors: bits of harness, and shell and mother of pearl buttons;<sup>4</sup> all this to the tune of clanking gears, the beating of pistons and the strident groans of the cables which were pulling out the debris from above the bedrock.

From then on, the work proceeded at a good pace and we were helped by the discovery in the same chamber of a big stone conduit and sump down which we were able to pump some of the water. The original collar of the well, which in Layard's time stood 3 feet above the level of the pavement, together with a small part of the well itself, had been dismantled; we ourselves descended 20.5 metres (a little over 67 ft) before we struck water-level, at which point the brick lining turned to bedrock. In the lowest zone, below about 18 metres, we once again encountered the rich ooze of grey sludge which to us was like the lodevein of a mine. A small piece of wood, a bell-shaped wire ornament, a wooden comb, and a bronze axe, ND3279, with a rope binding which still adhered to the socket, were the first objects to appear. Then came an altogether unexpected discovery, fragments of sixteen ivory boards, ND3557-3572. They were rectangular and consisted of panels 33.8 centimetres (about 13 in.) long, 15.6 centimetres (about 6 in.) across, and 1.4 centimetres (about  $\frac{1}{2}$  in.) thick, edged with a raised margin about half an inch wide. On all of them the sunken portion was covered with a criss-cross scratching as may be seen from the photograph [90]. Spaced out evenly on one long margin of the board were nine rectangular depressions, alternatively ribbed and plain (left hand side of q1); the corresponding depressions on the reverse are on the opposite side of the board; the five ribbed and four unribbed depressions matched four ribbed and five unribbed on the adjacent board. This complicated system was devised so that the ribbed depressions might carry hinges<sup>5</sup> which were spaced out alternatively on each board, and the arrangement also proved that the boards had once folded like the leaves of a Japanese screen<sup>6</sup> [89, 90]. Thus the whole set was a polyptych, and may have been so made in order that extra leaves could be added whenever required.

Together with these ivory boards we found others precisely similar, ND3575-3581, made of wood; and it was extremely fortunate that still adhering to the surface of some of these wooden boards there were traces of a thin yellow biscuit-like substance on some of which Assyrian cuneiform signs were still decipherable, written in a very small hand. On our return to England these fragments were analysed, and were found to be of beeswax, compounded with orpiment (sulphide of arsenic); and it was thus proved beyond all doubt that we had discovered the earliest known specimens from Western Asia of writing upon wax,<sup>7</sup> which anticipated by many centuries the first tablets of the kind used by the Greeks and Romans.<sup>8</sup> It had long been known that the Assyrians

and Babylonians had used wax as a writing material; it was called *ishkuru*, as we know from account tablets written in the city of Erech, not far from Ur, where there are records of quantities both of the wax and of the orpiment, *kalu*, required by the temple scribes.<sup>9</sup>

It is significant that in this particular context the wax was described as needed for the filling (mullu); the use of this term is explained by the fact that our ivory and wooden boards consist of panels sunken within a raised frame or margin [92]. But no one suspected that any remains would have survived of a substance so perishable; indeed the last place in which one would have expected it to turn up was from beneath the water in a well. The analysis was conducted in the British Museum laboratories, under the auspices of Dr H. J. Plenderleith, and it was fascinating to see the results contained in two little test tubes, one containing the wax, the other a fine vellow powder-the orpiment. This had been used because without it the wax remains stringy and is very difficult to manipulate; the mixture is fluid and the yellow colour makes for better legibility of the inscription. It is interesting that orpiment has long continued in use in the Near East, for in the Arabian Nights it is mentioned as a depilatory which was applied at the baths.<sup>10</sup> The knowledge, as early as Assyrian times, that it was essential to the working of the wax is also remarkable as evidence of the empirical process by which the early Asiatics made discoveries that are properly the domain of the inductive methods of science.

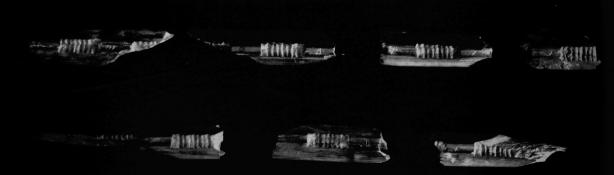
The wooden boards, when found, were somewhat larger than the ivory boards—their approximate measurements were  $45 \times 28 \times 1.77$  centimetres; they have, however, dried out from the saturated and swollen condition in which they were found, and now, although warped and shrunken, it may be estimated that originally they were approximately the same size as the ivory ones. They have proved, on examination by the Forest Products Research, Princes Risborough, to be of walnut. This identification, although not altogether surprising since the tree is at home in the foothills of Kurdistan and Syria, is interesting because, although many different kinds of trees and shrubs are mentioned in the ancient Assyrian inscriptions, the name for walnut has not yet been traced. It is probable that the name does occur in one of the many

89. Reconstruction of the top three leaves of the hinged ivory writing-boards showing their appearance when closed. Scale c. 1/3



**90.** ND3557. Three leaves of the ivory boards reconstituted to show the method of folding alternatively inwards and outwards. The sunken surfaces were originally covered with wax which carried the cuneiform inscriptions; raised margins prevented the writing from being abraded when the boards were closed. Each panel is 13 in wide by 6 in across  $(33.8 \times 15.6 \text{ cm.})$  See p. 152. Scale c. 1/3

91. Broken margins of the ivory writing boards showing the ribbed depressions which were for carrying the hinges. The ribbing alternated with smooth depressions because the boards folded inwards and outwards like the leaves of a Japanese screen and the hinges had therefore to be spaced out alternatively on opposite sides. Note the artisans' marks or signary on the smooth surfaces between the ribbing. See p. 152. Scale c. 1/I





**92.** Reverse side of the outer cover of the ivory writing-boards showing the surface of the board with criss-cross scratchings which were designed to grip the wax. The ribbed depressions for the hinges are clearly visible on one of the long margins. See p. 152. Scale c. 3/5

93. ND3557 (B). Outer cover of the ivory writing-boards with four lines of text in the Assyrian cuneiform script giving the title of the astrological text which was a compilation of omens ordered by King Sargon of Assyria 722–705 B.C. to be set up in his palace at Dur Sharrukin. See p. 153. Scale c. 3/5



Assyrian lists of wood used in the palaces, but there are not yet any etymological grounds for recognizing it. Nothing is known which corresponds either to the ancient Hebrew *egoz* or to the Arabic equivalent *joz*. It is twice recorded on clay tablets from Calah that copies have been made from texts written on *(is)binu*, and once that the original was of *(is)surmenu*, which are usually translated as tamarisk and cypress respectively.<sup>11</sup> Can *binu* in fact be walnut? Tamarisk trunks are usually rather small in dimension and not well adapted, one would think, for the manufacture of writing boards, any more than for decorating the wing of a palace, with which *binu* is also associated in the texts.<sup>12</sup>

The purpose for which the ivory boards, and probably the wooden boards too, had been made was happily recorded on the polished outer surface of one of them, ND3557 [93], which was incised with four lines of text as follows: 'Palace of Sargon, King of the world, King of Assyria. He caused [the text beginning with the words] Enuma Anu Enlil to be inscribed on an ivory tablet and set it in his palace of Dur-Sharrukin.' Enuma Anu Enlil is known to be the opening phrase of a long astrological text which comprised omens taken from celestial observations of the sun, moon, planets and fixed stars. The reading of the portents must have been of great concern to the king, in whose person was embodied the life and health of Assyria. Although we cannot prove that in the course of Sargon's reign the list of portents was actually lengthened, certainly his successors inherited a thoroughly superstitious outlook. There were in any case obvious advantages in reading omens which, if favourable, could but strengthen the irresolute, and if contrary, could absolve the government from personal responsibility, or as Shakespeare has it: 'This is the excellent foppery of the world, that, when we are sick in fortune-often the surfeit of our own behaviour-we make guilty of our disasters the sun, the moon, and the stars; . . . an admirable evasion of whoremaster man, to lay his goatish disposition to the charge of a star !'13

There is an unexpectedly personal touch to this text, for it happens that we know the name of its editor—Nabu-zuqup-kena, who was Astrologer-Royal under Sargon and Sennacherib. His name means 'O Nabu plant true', which appears to be an allusion to the *ziqpu*, a staff firmly planted in the ground and used to take bearings on the stars in astrological observations. The name therefore signifies that 'the god Nabu is prayed to plant true the staff by which the course of the days and years were observed and regulated for mankind'.<sup>14</sup>

From discoveries made in the great library of Assur-bani-pal at Nineveh it is certain that this distinguished scribe's collection of tablets had been transported there from the neighbouring city of Calah (Nimrud) in the reign of Sennacherib or in that of his successor, Esarhaddon. Indeed, as C. J. Gadd has said, 'Some have therefore looked upon these as the foundation of the whole library and thought that the head-librarian was no other than the son of Nabu-zuqup-kena, whose name was Ishtar-shum-eresh, himself head of chancery under the last of the two great Sargonids. By a curious freak of tradition we happen to know the names of no less than four members of this famous scribal family, who must have been in office intermittently over a period of more than two centuries; the earliest was vizier (*ummanu*) under the father of King Assur-nasir-pal II, c.900 B.C.'

The text of Enuma Anu Enlil itself was derived from no less than five scribal

schools—Babylon-Borsippa, Uruk and Assur, as well as Nineveh and Calah. Many hundreds of tablets bearing this text still exist, but with the exception of those found in the well at Calah, they are all inscribed upon clay. We may reasonably assume that each successive monarch provided additions to the omen lists; in that case they must have formed, by the time of Sargon, a voluminous compilation. Indeed it has been calculated from the surviving pieces of inscribed wax found in association with the wooden boards that each face carried two columns with about 125 lines apiece; that is to say, apart from the covers there were 30 faces or 'pages' with 250 lines on each, making a grand total of not less than 7,500 lines<sup>15</sup>—enough to accommodate the entire canonical series. However, a text from room zT4 of the administrative wing of the N.W. Palace, ND2653, refers to writing-boards with leaves which never exceed five in number;<sup>16</sup> and it may be that the boards we found were bound together in smaller sets, which would have made them easier to handle. But the beautiful polished outer cover [93] has the appearance of being the king's binding-de-luxe for the whole.

The expensive ivory used for these tablets is matched by an extraordinary attention to detail in the making, worthy of a master-carpenter. The hingegrooves were ribbed in order to prevent the hinges from slipping; each hinge had a double tang which was fitted into a pair of slots in the adjacent board and fastened down by fine pins, perhaps also of ivory; slots and pin-holes were drilled obliquely to the margin in order to afford extra depth and a firmer grip for the pins. The adjacent boards must have been held together by a long pin which passed through the hinges and ran along the entire length of the board, and, where exposed, fluted chamfered grooves had been cut between each hinge so that there was a continuous bed for the pin. It was only after many weeks laboriously spent in fitting together the fragments that we came to realize the meticulous care which had originally gone to their construction.<sup>17</sup> Many of the grooved margins were incised with signs which we presume to have been fitter's markings, some of which approximated to letters of the Phoenician and Aramaic alphabets; others were numerals [94].

It is not easy to decide what material was used for the hinges and for the pins which passed through them. We can eliminate copper and bronze, which would have left a stain on the boards. The most obvious material to suggest for the hinges is leather, for this could have perished without leaving a trace.<sup>18</sup> But such small pieces of pliant material would have been easily dislocated and clumsy. If the boards were constantly opened and closed, distortion of the leather would have caused them to sag, and they would no longer have fitted accurately. Since so much minute attention had been paid to their construction, it is logical to conclude that they were meant to fit perfectly and that hinges and pins might have been made of gold, a suitably expensive material which the plunderers would have wrenched off before casting the ivory down the well. This would also account for the fact that every single hinge-groove was found to be badly damaged. On the other hand, we cannot overlook the possibility that the hinges themselves may have been made of ivory also, for during a visit in 1960 to an

94. Artisan's marks which appear in the grooved margins of the writing boards. Some of the signs correspond with Aramaic, others with Phoenician letters and numerals, perhaps mnemonic guides for the fitters.

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Indian workshop in Delhi, I watched a craftsman cutting ivory hinges for a miniature Japanese screen no bigger than these boards. The work was performed by means of a chisel and file, a delicate and practised operation. If the panels of the Nimrud boards had been wrenched apart before they were cast into the well, their hinges might have been thrown away elsewhere.

It may be suspected that the boards were frequently consulted, for a Babylonian text carried an instruction that whoever brings the board before the king shall, after he has read the contents of Enuma Anu Enlil, close it again in the presence of an officer. The document was described as an Akkadian (wooden) tablet or board: (is)li'akkadu. The portion which on that occasion was read to the king comprised the omens for the fourteenth day of the month. The omens varied in character: sometimes the occasion was pronounced auspicious for some military or other undertaking; at others the portents were sinister. 'When the Moon occults Jupiter (Sagmigar), that year a king will die (or) an eclipse of the Moon and the Sun will take place. A great king will die. . . . '19 In this pronouncement, no doubt based on some previously recorded chain of observations, there may well have been a sufficient measure of ambiguity to enable the prediction to correspond with the event, as has always been the case in countries where astrology was seriously practised. In Assyria also there was a device ingeniously suited to the royal person, by which a substitute king, shar puhi, was appointed who had on occasion to be prepared to suffer death for the king. Indeed, we discovered in one of the magazines of the chancery in the N.W. Palace a tablet which proved to be an account of provisions issued to the holder of that unenviable office towards the end of the month of Tammuz.<sup>20</sup> Whether on that occasion the issue was a happy or a tragic one we have no means of knowing, but it was sound policy to be prepared for the worst.

Although nowhere else in western Asia have ivory boards of this kind been found, some coffered bronze panels from the north Syrian city of Zinjirli were identified by W. Andrae as book-covers, and small fragments of bronze ribbing found with them were thought to have been hinges; the most probable date for these pieces would be between about 800 and 745 B.C.<sup>21</sup> More or less contemporary stone monuments also provide corroborative evidence. For example, on Assyrian bas-reliefs of Tiglath-pileser III and Sennacherib the scribes are depicted in the act of recording the spoils of war on boards, stylus in hand. More clearly still we can see on a basalt stela discovered at Zinjirli a picture of King Bar-rekub, son of Panamu, c.740 B.C., seated on his throne and issuing orders to his secretary, who carried tucked under his arm an oblong book;<sup>22</sup> the ribbed markings at the edges of it are clearly intended to depict the hinges. Similar details can be observed in another neo-Hittite stela now in the Louvre, which bears the representation of a hinged diptych together with a knob, perhaps the end of a leather thong by which it was closed.<sup>23</sup>

The use of such books at an early date is also mentioned once in Homer and again in Herodotus. In the Iliad<sup>24</sup> we have the story of Bellerophon sent to Lycia by the king of Tiryns who had 'written on a folded tablet many things that should work his destruction'. The context makes it plain that the tablets were sealed, and that the bearer was unaware of their contents. It is also interesting in this connection that the word for 'to write',  $\gamma \rho \dot{a} \phi \epsilon w$ , and its compounds always appear in Homer to have the sense 'to scratch', probably because

inscriptions were for the most part on wood, stone, or wax. Then again in Herodotus we have the tale of the patriotic Spartan who was at Susa and wished to warn his countrymen of the impending invasion of Greece. 'But he was unable to make it known by any other means, for there was great danger of being detected; he therefore had recourse to the following contrivance. Having taken a folded tablet, he scraped off the wax and then wrote the king's intention on the wood of the tablet; and having done this, he melted the wax again over the writing, in order that the tablet, being carried with nothing written on it, might occasion him no trouble from the guards upon the road. When it arrived at Sparta, the Lacedaemonians were unable to comprehend it; until, as I am informed, Gorgo, daughter of Cleomenes and wife to Leonidas, made a suggestion, having considered the matter with herself, and bade them scrape off the wax, and they would find letters written on the wood. They having obeyed found and read the contents, and forwarded them to the rest of the Greeks.<sup>25</sup>

Further illustrations of the art of writing on waxed boards also occur on Greek vases. A celebrated red-figure vase by the painter Douris, c.480 B.C., shows the scene in a school, the master seated, stylus in right hand, book in left. Another Greek vase, of the 4th century B.C., depicts the entry in a waxed diptych of the treasure exacted from the Persian subjects of Darius to finance the invasion of Greece, and a vessel of the 3rd century B.C. in Leningrad has a comic scene in which a bailiff with an enormous hinged diptych threatens a farmer for bringing him an inadequate tithe, while the old mother with a rather smaller one on her lap picks her teeth with the stylus in despair.<sup>26</sup>

As to the use of wax itself, that goes back to a very early date, especially in Egypt, where the bee was one of the Old Kingdom hieroglyphs, and wax was already employed in the 3rd millennium B.C. for embalming. In western Asia this substance may have been exploited by the Hittites, whose laws exacted severe penalties for stealing from the hives; and as there was also a special class of Hittite scribe who wrote upon wood, it is probable that wax was already used on the tablets in Anatolia in the 2nd millennium B.C.

The story of Odysseus who stopped up the ears of his crew with wax against the song of the sirens also mentions that a large ball of it was kept amidshipsno doubt for the purpose of caulking ropes and ship's timbers.<sup>27</sup> Its introduction to Babylonia may have occurred comparatively late if we are to accept the claims of a man named Shamash-resh-usur who, between 782 and 745 B.C., had set himself up as an independent governor of Mari on the middle Euphrates. His stela, discovered at Babylon, was inscribed with the statement that: 'Bees which collect honey and wax, which were never known in Suhi, were brought down from the mountains of the Habha people and were placed in the gardens of Gabbari-ibni. I and my gardeners understand the preparation of the honey and also of the wax. In future days a ruler will enquire of his elders whether it is indeed true that Shamash-resh-usur introduced bees into the Suhi land."28 There is in fact reason to believe that the use of wax was understood in Mesopotamia and Babylonia even earlier<sup>29</sup>; but it may have been unfamiliar to the inhabitants of the middle Euphrates who were some distance from the mountains where bees were more at home. It is, however, appropriate that at this period, when for the first time we have evidence of writing on wax in the valley of the Tigris, we should also find a record of its use on the Euphrates.

It may seem strange that the Nimrud boards, which can be dated c.715 B.C., are older by nearly five centuries than any so far discovered in the ancient Near East, although short, almost contemporary, alphabetic inscriptions on wax are now known from the Phrygian site of Gordion in Asia Minor.<sup>30</sup> The next earliest appears to be a set which is thought to have come from the Fayyum; they are wooden, and overlaid with red wax on the one side and black on the other. Inscribed upon them were the accounts of a schoolmaster who had led a party of schoolboys on a trip to the Delta, during the summer holidays, according to Flinders Petrie.<sup>31</sup> On consideration of the style of writing they have been dated to c.250 B.C. and, prior to the discoveries at Nimrud, were the earliest waxed documents that had survived in the Orient.<sup>32</sup>

It is therefore all the more remarkable that a nearly contemporary ivory writing tablet, its surface coated in wax, was found in an Etruscan tomb at Marsiliana which has been authoritatively dated about 700 B.C. or perhaps a little later. Other offerings in an Oriental style were found with it, notably an ivory pyxis or ointment box decorated with incised figures, and covered by a lid, the knob of which consisted of a floral foliate capital of a type also represented on the ivories at Nimrud. The Oriental character of these Etruscan objects is best demonstrated by the scene which is engraved on the lid and on the body of the pyxis; the latter depicts a man lying supine, about to be devoured by a lioness, while another man who is being attacked by a lion is attempting to plunge a large dagger into its back; the lid depicts a man about to be gored by a wild bull.<sup>33</sup> The subjects of these scenes are related to the episodes so strikingly depicted on our chryselephantine plaques, and on the bronze bowls discovered by Lavard in the well-room AB. The pyxis is also decorated with an s-shaped spiral design which occurs on contemporary articles from Nimrud.<sup>34</sup> Discoveries in other Etruscan tombs, notably at Vetulonia, Marsiliana, and Praeneste, leave no shadow of doubt about the Etruscan debt to the Orient; indeed so numerous and exact are the resemblances that it is safe to infer the presence of Oriental craftsmen. Thus in Etruria we find representations of the six-foliate rosette; a bronze bell like those found in the N.W. Palace; triangular horse's head-pieces in bronze; from the Barberini tomb at Praeneste, a bronze girdle engraved with sphinxes made in separate parts and fitted together with hinges; and finally, a seal engraved with a figure seated on a high-backed, spiked chair (Marsiliana). The spiked chair on the Etruscan ivory seal recalls one depicted on a red. mottled limestone seal, ND3201 [95], which was found in ash debris in room 47 of the Burnt Palace (see p. 210).35 The resemblance between a bearded male figure on the huge Barberini cauldron and the figure of the neo-Hittite King Urpalla carved on a rock at Ivriz in 738 B.C. has been astutely noticed by R. D. Barnett.<sup>36</sup> The presence of many scaraboid seals and of low tripod bowls of Assyrian type37 in Etruscan tombs is further evidence of the connection. Finally, we may also observe in Etruria examples of cauldrons on stands resembling those known from Assyrian reliefs which depict them as booty carried away from Musasir by Sargon's soldiers.<sup>38</sup> This has encouraged the belief that when Urartu collapsed, after the Assyrian renaissance in the reign of Tiglath-pileser III, some of the displaced craftsmen may have joined themselves to Etruscan communities and placed their services at the disposal of new and well-established masters. We may thus explain the

fact that, while the art of Etruria is steeped in Oriental motifs, it is never slavishly imitative, but preserves its own individuality. The Etruscan patrons of these skilled smiths and other craftsmen, while accepting their techniques and to some extent their artistic themes, insisted on the continuance of their own traditions which were cleverly blended with invigorating inspirations from the Orient. This fusion is not likely to have happened much after the end of the 8th century B.C., for, as Mrs K. R. Maxwell-Hyslop has pointed out, there was no violent break with the older Villanovan school of craftsmanship.<sup>39</sup>

In making this excursion from the N.W. Palace at Nimrud to Etruria, we thus remain on familiar ground in spite of the great distance which separates the two territories. And perhaps one of the most striking results of the discoveries from the well and the well-room AB has been this insight into the puzzling problems of Etruscan art. No clearer proof of a relationship with the east could be provided than the little Marsiliana ivory writing-board. This is considerably smaller than the Nimrud boards but has the same raised margin to protect the wax from abrasion; inscribed on one of the margins are the 22 letters of the Etruscan alphabet—again showing how ingeniously the foreign craftsmen had persuaded their new patrons to appropriate for themselves what was in fact an Oriental, not an Occidental invention. The top of the board, it should be added, was decorated with a pair of lions' heads, familiar in Assyrian art.<sup>40</sup>

One may suspect that the use of waxed writing boards in Mesopotamia during the 1st millennium B.C. was widespread. The advantages are obvious, for folded boards are conveniently portable and can contain long texts easily available for consultation. Moreover deletions or additions could be made without difficulty. The system was therefore admirably adapted for purposes of accountancy, for lists and for nominal rolls. The clay tablet on the other hand, while it has extraordinary powers of survival provided it is not attacked by salt, may take an inconvenient amount of storage-space in proportion to what is written upon it; its chief disadvantage was that the clay had to be kept damp while the inscription was being written, for once dry no further additions could be made.<sup>41</sup>

**95.** ND3201 (B). Stamp seal, with lug horizontally perforated;  $4.5 \times 6$  cm. red, mottled limestone, from room 47 of the Burnt Palace. Found in ash debris subsequent to the final sack of Calah, i.e. post 612 B.C., but the seal itself is older. Subject: god seated on a chair with spiked back, holding a tree. The god wears a pigtail and is clad in a short tunic; he is confronted by a gazelle and a moon-standard with fillets or tassels erect on a second chair. In the field is the cressent moon of Sin. See p. 160.





96 (*Left*). ND264A, height 10·1 cm. (4 in.), a copper stylus with one end spatulate, found in the upper rubbish fill over the pavement in the courtyard of the Governor's Palace, probably Hellenistic, early 2nd century B.C., for a similar object was found deposited in a grave (G7) of that period in the same area.

97 (Below left). ND2245 (B). Height 4:4 cm. An ivory stylus from the well NN. Scale c. 1/1

How much ancient literature has been lost to posterity we shall never know but the quantity must be very great, for practically everything written on perishable materials such as wood and wax has long ago vanished.

This account of writing upon wax leads us to enquire what was used as a stylus. The boards themselves have no container or pen-case for this necessary article, but many objects which could have served that purpose have been found, made of ivory, bone, and bronze [96–8]. We noticed that many came out of the well  $NN^{42}$  and other specimens were found elsewhere. The typical stylus so convenient for writing upon wax had a point at the one end and a squared blade at the other which enabled the scribe to make erasures, indeed as a late Latin version neatly put it<sup>43</sup>:

I'm flat on top not flat below, And in my double function show That what I wrote may either stand Or be erased by sleight of hand.

The bronze stylus had a 'double function' in more than one sense, for there are a surprising number of occasions upon which history records that it served as a lethal instrument. There are grounds for thinking that Rimush, king of Agade in the 23rd century B.C., may have perished in this way.<sup>44</sup> Chosroes I, a Sassanian monarch, angered with a scribe who had ventured to criticize his new budget, ordered the court to slay him with their pen-cases or inkstands.<sup>45</sup> John Erigenes, a monk of Malmesbury, also earned an unenviable martyrdom, perforated by the pens of his own pupils: 'et apud monasterium Malmesberiense a pueris quos docebat, graphiis, ut fertur, perforatus etiam martyr aestimatus est.<sup>46</sup> Indeed Chaucer immortalized such episodes when he penned the lines:

stikede him with boydekins anoon with many a wounde, and thus they lete him lye.<sup>47</sup>

We may now ask why these objects were lying at the bottom of the well, and more puzzling still, perhaps, why was the treasure found by Layard not thrown into it also? Why should the boards and the axe have been lying at the bottom, why should 150 bronze bowls have been stacked on the chamber floor at the top?<sup>48</sup> First, as regards the inscribed boards there are two possible reasons for their location and for their mutilated condition. These were in a sense the sacred books of the king, and in them were bound the fortunes of the dynasty. Their destruction may indeed have been symbolic of a revolution which aimed at the overthrow of this particular royal line; a proper target, therefore, for a vandalistic mob. We have also suggested that they may once have been fitted with golden pins and hinges and, if so, that too would account for the fragmentary condition in which they were found, torn asunder, one from another. And who knows if



98. ND787(AM). Height 11 cm. (4 $\frac{1}{4}$  in). A bone stylus which could be used for scoring and smoothing clay. This instrument could not, however, have served to write cuneiform for which a square end is required. Found in passage P of the N.W. Palace.

the heavy bronze axe also found low down was not the instrument which had been used to destroy them? As to the treasure which lay above, I can only surmise that this had been stacked together for removal, but that something happened to thwart the intention. Indeed, the circumstances attending the survival of these objects find a close parallel in the cache of ivory bedsteads discovered in sw7, one of the chambers in Fort Shalmaneser. There, a collection of undamaged furniture which had escaped the sack of 614 B.C. appears to have been salvaged by a short-lived authority in 613 B.C., in the interval between the first and the final sack of the city in 612 B.C. (see p. 413). The most plausible explanation for this survival would be that the enemy had stripped the roof for the sake of its valuable timber, and that a heavy fall of mud brick from the upper portions of the walls had fallen and buried the lot. There may not have been time to dig the loot from under the debris; when the violence had subsided its perpetrators were probably no longer able or available to disclose where these precious objects lay buried.49 Moreover, we know that although the eastern side of the domestic wing was subsequently repaired, the western side became open ground and was considerably raised in level. Thus the pavements of these outlying chambers were never again trodden and their contents remained undisturbed.

We were very fortunate in being able to extract so much from the wellbottom, which was found to consist of a water-bearing stratum of sandstone, containing iron oxides, interbedded with marl. This water-bearing Fars sandstone was similar to that exposed in the ancient river bank at the bottom of the quay-wall; an outcrop of it is also to be seen on the south side of the town. The lowest recorded depth was 71 feet (21.6 metres) below the pavement level, but we reckon that we had reached a depth of between 73 and 75 feet when the board fragments ceased to appear; the actual bottom was probably at about 76 feet or 23.7 metres below the surface. The reason for which we are only able to give these approximate estimates for the last few feet is that the work came to a hurried end. Down at the bottom the bedrock was undercut and seamed with heavy cracks; the lowest courses of brickwork had disintegrated and our aged pickman, deep in water, suddenly found himself in mortal danger. The sides of the well began to give way and water to rush in from the feed or 'eve-opening'. The old man had the presence of mind to collect his miner's lamp, his tools and his kit before pulling at the rope which was the signal for him to be hoisted to the surface by our mechanical winch. Hardly had he stepped out of the bucket and reached safety at the top when the whole of the bottom of the well caved in with a thunderous roar: we did not feel inclined to tempt providence again. Indeed we felt we had earned a respite from our labours in this wing of the N.W. Palace; and we may now return to see what progress had been made elsewhere.



## CHAPTER XI

# THE N.W. PALACE: NORTHERN WING AND CHANCERY

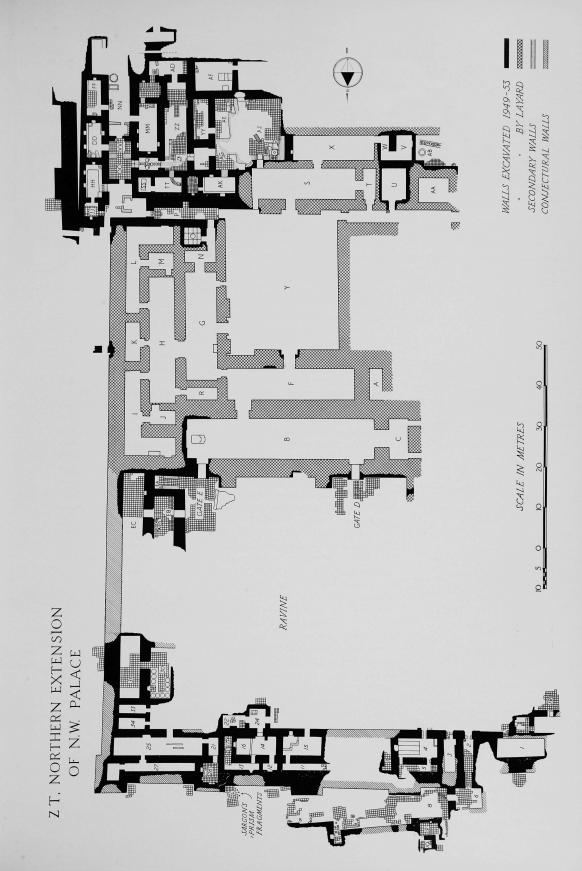
HEN Layard left Nimrud for the last time in April 1851 it was thought that the two small gates in the north wall of the throne-room must have been the main entrance to the N.W. Palace and that the long succession of stone reliefs facing the courtyard had formed the external façade. A century later, in March 1951, when we exposed a niche with the famous stela of Assur-nasir-pal, and a new chamber EB to the north of it, we realized that yet another wing of the palace must await discovery. This task we began to undertake in 1952 and in the following year, after completing our work on the wells, we were able to concentrate our men in the area most likely to yield these remains.

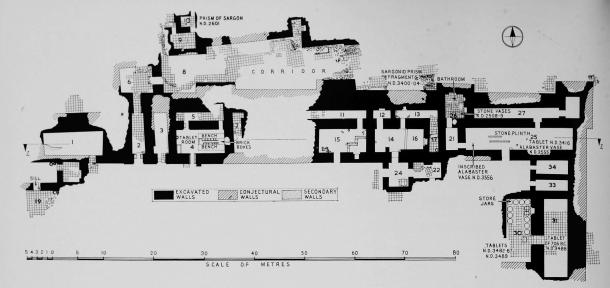
Our predecessors had been deterred from excavating in this direction by a deep ravine, which had the appearance of being an open thoroughfare, and was thought to have been the principal means of access to the palace from the river.<sup>1</sup> Appearances however were deceptive, for there was in fact no road to the river here, and we subsequently proved that the ravine had been formed after the ruin of the city. Indeed, what is now a deep hollow had originally consisted of the same huge mud-brick platform which underlay and supported the rest of the palace. This was a discovery which required skilled work with the pick, for it involved disentangling a mass of clay and fallen bricks before we could reach, deep down in the centre of the ravine, that part of the platform which had not been swept away. We then had to articulate individual mud bricks along a wide expanse up to the main façade of the throne-room on the one side, and as far as the more northerly chambers on the other. As a result of these labours, which could not be expected to yield any antiquities, we succeeded in proving that the whole of this expanse marked 'ravine' on the map [99] was in Assyrian times a courtyard paved at the same level as the palace itself, and that it must have formed the main assembly point for those entering or leaving it.

Excavations which were conducted concurrently along the quay walls on the western side also revealed, as we have already seen, that there was no access from

The notes for chapter XI will be found on pp. 337-40.

99 (Right). Plan of the N.W. Palace of Assur-nasir-pal. Northern, central and southern wings.





100. Plan of northern wing of the N.W. Palace (ZT).

the river at this point. The only approach from the Tigris must have been sited about 240 metres south of the ravine, along what is now a steep slope with traces of sandstone on either side of it, well beyond the southern extremity of the N.W. Palace, behind another palace first built by Adad-nirari, III.<sup>2</sup>

Although Layard's theory about the original function of the ravine has to be abandoned, he was right in thinking that it must have formed a place of entry but from two unsuspected directions. A glance at the plan [99] will show that two considerable gaps exist on its northern and eastern sides now measuring about 52 feet (16 metres) and 62 feet (19 metres) wide respectively. Now it is a well-recognized archaeological phenomenon in the Tigris-Euphrates valley that wherever there are ancient gateways in mud-brick buildings, flood water will find an exit through them if the incline of the ground lends itself to that purpose. This has been well demonstrated by Dr H. Lenzen at Warka, and it is possible that one of the great ravines did similar damage at Ur.<sup>3</sup> However that may be, it now appears to be certain that the main entrance to the palace was not from the west, but lay within these gaps on the north and east sides of the (ravine) courtyard—indeed, there is no other possible entrance.

It will be seen from the plan [99] that two buttresses projecting into the corridor which flanks the north wall, approximately 52½ feet (16 metres) apart, also lead one to believe that a gate was situated in this sector. Indeed this would have made an admirable control point for any visitors entering the precincts, since they would first have been obliged to pass along the paved corridor which ran between the Ninurta Temple and the palace. Almost opposite the gate on the north side of the corridor, the plan indicates a deep recess which in its time may have housed a stela. That this gate was the entrance rather than the exit is suggested by its location almost opposite the south or entrance gate (D) to the throne-room across the courtyard. In the east wall, on the contrary, it seems likely that the wide gap was the site of the main

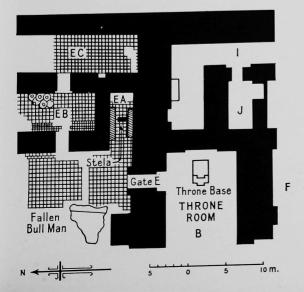
## THE N.W. PALACE-NORTHERN WING AND CHANCERY

exit, which was conveniently situated near to the east exit-gate (E) of the throne-room and led out directly on to the wide campus which lay in the centre of the akropolis.

Any attempt to reconstruct the methods of ingress and egress should allow for the fact that the original scheme proposed by the founder Assur-nasir-pal must have been different, for, as we have observed in a previous chapter, (VI, p. 86) there are, particularly in the corridor, and underlying room 31, traces of his pavement orientated not by the palace but by the Ziggurrat and the Ninurta Temple, as reference to the plan [99] will show. This modified scheme may well have been initiated by the founder's son Shalmaneser III, for a wing of a palace built by him at Til Barsip on the upper Euphrates near Carchemish, bears a certain formal resemblance to rooms 21, 25, 26, 27, 29 in the north-east angle of the courtyard, and also has a long corridor behind it.<sup>4</sup> The suggestion that the greater part of these and the other rooms in this wing of the palace goes back to the time of Shalmaneser is reinforced by copious evidence of his brick pavements in many of the rooms. No doubt many modifications to his plan occurred later on, in the 8th and 7th centuries, for some of the walls were rebuilt, and towards the end of this period certain rooms, for example 14, 16, were subdivided, while 22 and 24 were later additions [100]. Three different periods of occupation from the 9th century onwards were represented by three superimposed pavements, the topmost of which was about a metre above the original in rooms 2, 3, and 6; and higher up still, about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  metres in some places, there were remains of a high-lying level which had survived from Hellenistic times when the Assyrian rooms were completely buried. The earliest pavement, as we may judge from the stratification of a document in room 30 dated to 706 B.C., the last year but one of King Sargon's reign, was still used until his time. The two subsequent levels may with confidence be attributed to the 7th and to the earlier half of the 6th century B.C., respectively.

There are, however, two chambers which must have been built to the order of Assur-nasir-pal II himself and were therefore contemporaneous with the palace: they were beautifully paved with his own inscribed bricks. These two rooms, EB and EC [101], abutted on the alcove containing the stela, and the outer

101. Plan showing east end of throne-room in N.W. Palace, exit from gate E and situation of the founder's stela.



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one had no doubt once served as an apartment set aside for the guards who watched over the exit from the throne-room. EB and EC, although in alignment with the façade of the palace, are not a true continuation of the two big chambers 30 and 31 to the north of them; but we know that the latter represent an adjustment probably made by the founder's son. At a later period, the former guard-room EB [101] was used as a storage chamber for grain rations required by the palace officials. It contained a series of great pottery jars marked with their capacity, two *homers*, probably about 370 litres. Many fragments of debris, tokens of the final sack, were found in the court outside this room: links of iron armour, copper nails and beams from the roof, traces of mural paintings that had once decorated the walls, and fragments of strip ivory with processional scenes in a 9th century style.

The whole of this northern administrative wing was laid out on a grand scale in keeping with the dimensions of the state apartments. The courtyard, which measured about 65 yards (70 metres) across, north to south, was capable of holding a vast concourse of persons. This indeed must have been necessary, for the whole of the king's retinue and his bodyguard, as well as visitors, must on state occasions have assembled here. Correspondingly, many of the rooms were large. Thus 30 and 31 were over 40 and 49 feet (12 and 15 metres) long respectively, and the exceptionally thick partition walls which separated them,

**102.** North wing of the N.W. Palace looking towards the ziggurrat. The boy stands outside the eastern boundary wall of ZT room 31 which contained a tablet dated 706 B.C.; his feet rest on an older burnt-brick pavement of Assur-nasir-pal II. On the left is a doorway connecting 31 with room 30 which was a magazine for the storage of oil. See p. 169.



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as well as the external wall, which was over 13 feet thick (4 metres), suggest that there may have been an upper storey to these apartments.

The function of the rooms grouped around this court could be determined with some confidence from their architectural character as well as from the objects and the documents found in them. On the eastern range, as we have already seen, the two chambers EB, EC nearest to the throne-room were used as guard-rooms and store-rooms, particularly for grain. Further north, rooms 30 and 31 [100] had served for the storage of oil. In room 30 the remains of thirteen great storage jars were still preserved, partly sunken into the floor and supported by mud-brick benches built around them-the normal Assyrian method of propping up such vessels. The same well-made oth century pavement ran without a break through both rooms, which no doubt were carefully built to contain valuable supplies. In this room 30, a tablet, ND3482, contained a record of 100 jars of oil of which 98 belonged to the palace herald nagir ekalli; and other documents mention the issue of oil to various persons, receipts of grain, and distribution of various amounts of food and drink which included wine, grain and sesame-the latter to the temples of Ninurta, Nabu and Ishtar of Kidmurri. The lists of animals mention horses, donkeys, and camels. Most interesting was the record of supplies, ND3483, issued from the palace for the maintenance of a substitute king who had to do duty for the real king on two inauspicious days in the month of Tammuz. This document was dated by the name of a man who was probably a substitute-official, limmu Nabu-nasir, otherwise unknown in the royal lists. That the adjacent room 31 had served much the same purpose as room 30 [102] was proved by the discovery of a list apparently referring to the loan of a large quantity of grapes, doubtless for the purpose of making wine, vintage 706 B.C. The owners of all these commodities appear to have been officials.5

The north-east corner of this wing has a distinctive character [100]. Its great hall, room 25, about 70 feet (21 metres) long, and surprisingly narrow in proportion, was evidently designed for some important ceremonial, attended by many persons. This function is suggested by the presence of a niche built into the south wall, with a specially prepared stone slab at the foot of it, and by the inclusion of an elaborately built ablution room or bathroom, 26, in the same suite. All these rooms must once have contained treasure; the north wall was enormously thick and here again the layout suggests an upper storey. Unfortunately most of the original contents had been ransacked by treasure seekers, who had disturbed the stratification but in many places had failed to penetrate down to floor level. It is doubtful whether any of the objects lay in their original position. Nonetheless a tablet, ND3416, inscribed with a fragment of the Epic of Creation, had perhaps been used for recitation in the great hall.

The wealth and quality of the objects originally housed in this suite is attested by a set of four stone vases, two from the bathroom and two from the great hall. The latter, ND3555-6, both superb specimens, are illustrated on [103-4]; the first [103] is a great oil flask about 47 centimetres (18 in.) in height, made of a veined black, white, and yellow Egyptian alabaster; the neck and the two lug handles are both slightly damaged; between the handles there is a pseudo-hieroglyphic inscription which may perhaps be taken as a Phoenician forgery intended for the Assyrian market—certainly Egyptologists are unable to



read any meaning into it. This is a piece of rare beauty; the smooth polish and colour of the stone lend it a distinguished appearance. Another vase found close to it [104] shows how much the Assyrians cared for alabaster, for this one is of a Persian variety. Vases in a similar style have been found at Assur<sup>6</sup> where they may be dated by inscriptions to the reigns of Sennacherib and Esarhaddon. We can with some confidence ascribe the alabaster specimens found in this wing of the N.W. Palace at Nimrud to the period of the latter monarch who was the first of the Assyrian kings to set foot in Egypt. Documents of his reign were found in adjoining rooms further to the west.

At the opposite, western end of the northern range in this wing, the plan **[100]** shows the location of rooms 1, 18, 19; they represent all that remains of a large residence which commanded a broad view across the Tigris and their foundations stood over 6.4 metres (21 ft) above the stone quays which formed the embankment of the river.7 We may be sure that some high officer-of-state lived here. These rooms had been looted in antiquity, but one significant object remained in room 19-a heavy basalt weight in the shape of a duck, ND2074, not intact, but with a three-line inscription of a king who names Shalmaneser (IV) as his father and Adad-nirari (III) as his grandfather, hence Assur-dan III, 772-754 B.C., whose documents are otherwise unknown at Nimrud. Since several other weights were found elsewhere in this northern range, including a 10-mana duck-weight of Assur-nasir-pal II, we may infer that this administrative wing of the palace was long recognized as one of the official centres concerned with the control of weights and measures. We have already seen in ch. VIII, p. 109, that a bronze lion, ND2163 [105], with a roughly-sketched, indecipherable Phoenician (?) inscription lay in the debris of room 14, perhaps not later than the reign of Sennacherib,8 and that Layard had found in one of the entrances to the throne-room another set of lion-weights, the latest of which was inscribed with the name of Sennacherib, and so belonged to a time when the state apartments had been partly dismantled of their sculpture.

Immediately to the east of the large residence just described are three



**103.** ND3556(B). Phoenician stone amphora, height 47 cm. (18 in), of veined, black and white Egyptian alabaster with pseudo-hieroglyphic inscription, shown in the detail on the left, probably acquired by Esarhaddon. Found in the debris of room 25, north wing of N.W. Palace. See p. 169.

104. ND3555 (Met. Mus. N.Y.), height about 40 cm. Amphora of translucent Persian alabaster. Found together with the stone amphora shown in [103] in room 25 of the N.W. Palace.





**105.** ND2163, length 7 cm., bronze weight in the shape of a lion, with Phoenician inscription on the base (*below*). The weight is a fraction under half a mana, about 1 lb. It was found in ZT room 14, north wing of the N.W. Palace where standard weights and measures were kept, and forms an addition to a set of lion-weights found by Layard in the throne-room. See p. 170.

chambers 2, 3, 6, the function of which is unknown; their stratification bears out other evidence of three main levels of Assyrian occupation, succeeded by a fourth, much higher up, which was paved in Hellenistic times when the older rooms were buried.

Eastwards again, we come to rooms 4 and 5 which at one time must have been the chancery, concerned with the imperial administration of Assyria. Room 4 [106] contained a collection of over 350 tablets, the greatest number hitherto found in any one room at Nimrud. This chamber, now mostly stripped of its burnt-brick pavement, measured  $31 \times 14$  feet (9.5  $\times$  4.2 metres), and at its eastern end most of it was occupied by two burnt-brick benches 3 feet 2 inches wide. Between the benches there were two rows of brick boxes open at the top, seven in the northern and six in the southern row [106]. It is reasonable to surmise that these served as filing-cabinets for the different classes of documents which had to be immediately available for reference, while room 5 behind may have been used as a permanent store. An ablution slab in one corner of the room and a bread oven against the western wall showed that in the latest period this was no longer exclusively used as a scribal chamber. The tablets were found in complete disorder, piled up to a height of 4 feet in the room itself and in the doorways. It is most probable that they had been thrown back into their original archive-chamber during the Achaemenian or Hellenistic period, when later occupants of the city were tearing up the older pavements for their own use at a higher level. It may be that they found the documents stored in room 5; at all events, they threw them back into their older habitat, a practice which occurred frequently elsewhere, particularly in the library of the Nabu temple at the southeast end of the akropolis (see p. 271).

These literary records are of extraordinary interest and many years of work are still needed for a detailed examination of all of them, but already Professor C. J. Gadd and Mr H. W. F. Saggs have published several which are of historic importance. The earliest records go back to the reign of Tiglath-Pileser III, 745–727 B.C., and are followed by those of Sargon, 722–705 B.C., both of whom at various times conducted the administration of the empire from Calah itself.



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It is clear from the documents that both followed the minutiae of government with the utmost care and that no detail was too small for their ken. The security of the country depended in these times on the personal invigilation of the king, who closely supervised the actions of his hierarchy (see ch. XIV).

In general the letters contain a delightful variety of information which helps to give us a vivid picture of everyday events no less than of more important issues. We hear of postal difficulties: the messenger has been held up by snow, and a runner has been sent, no doubt to explain the delay. We can therefore understand the king's anxiety in another letter to make sure that his own transport, which had shown signs of needing overhaul, has been properly repaired. Here indeed we appear to have the first historical mention of a magon-lit, if we accept the well-founded literal translation offered by Mr Saggs: 'The coach of which the sleeping-compartment is broken goes badly." Indeed it is to be expected that the king of Assyria, so often engaged in distant military campaigns which required the utmost expedition, should have made arrangements to recline in comparative comfort, even to sleep while travelling. There is no evidence that there were built highways at this period except in the immediate vicinity of towns. It seems that the Achaemenians in the 5th century B.C. were the first to undertake the construction of extensive stretches of royal roads. But anyone familiar with the interminable flat steppe of Syria and southern Iraq knows how easily a hardened traveller may fall asleep even in the most primitive wheeled transport.

Other matters of diverse interest concern the dispatch of horses and camels, and of rations, including grain, for four of the temples within the akropolis.<sup>10</sup> Correspondingly there are receipts and lists of valuable stores consigned to the royal magazines. Thus ND3469 refers to big stocks of grain, including 3,050 *homers* from the city of Nineveh composed of contributions from eleven districts, with further entries yielding a total of 14,000 *homers*—a quantity probably amounting in all to about 85,000 bushels.<sup>11</sup> ND3480 refers to another precious deposit of 280 daggers of which 97 are made of iron and 37 have knobs on the *ushu* wood hilt mounted in silver.<sup>12</sup>

106. Scribal chamber  $zT_4$  in the north wing of the N.W. Palace. The boy is sitting on a burntbrick bench which must have been used as a seat or a table by the scribes whose 'filing cabinets' lined with burnt-bricks, once filled with diplomatic archives, are seen in the picture. About 350 tablets were found in the rubbish debris which filled this chamber.



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One group of documents from the chancery deals with the transportation and resettlement of some Aramaeans who had been moved into the direct orbit of Assyria. They were provided with food and oil, with clothes and shoes, even with wives.<sup>13</sup> Such letters show that the policy of deportation was very carefully supervised and that the Crown was careful to provide a congenial and profitable way of life for foreign settlers. The mass movements induced by the Assyrian policy of deporting repeatedly recalcitrant peoples no doubt often caused hardship, but everything possible was done to see that such potentially disloyal elements became an asset rather than a danger to the state.<sup>14</sup>

Another batch of documents from the chancery, room 4, consists of letters addressed to the king of Assyria, in particular to Tiglath-pileser III from his governors in the west. Especially interesting are the reports from an Assyrian official who was vexed by the difficulty of collecting taxes in Tyre and Sidon. One of the commodities mentioned was the wine<sup>15</sup> of Lebanon; but the real trouble was over the timber which was being brought down from the mountains for storage in warehouses where normally the tax collectors should have made their levy. His Majesty's Commissioner of Inland Revenue was killed by the populace in Tyre; a more fortunate colleague was impounded in Sidon. The Assyrian official in charge, however, reports that the Ituai contingent of police effected his rescue and that the tax-evaders had been brought to heel. 'I made the people jump around'-or, as we should say, beat them up! These events probably occurred in 736 B.C.; they reflect a trade war which was going on at the time, for the Assyrian governor had been instructed to divert the timber of Lebanon from Palestine and Egypt where it would otherwise have gone. It is clear that this and other valuable articles of commerce were to be one of the benefits reaped from the military campaigns in Phoenicia. At the same time the Assyrians were prepared in return to maintain and develop the amenities of the towns which they occupied, as is seen from reference to their work on the water supply.16

The thrust of Assyrian arms in the direction of Palestine about this time is indicated by another letter which proves that tribute was being brought by emissaries who are named as *musuraia* (Egyptians, or alternatively in this context perhaps Arabians, for Egypt itself had not yet been penetrated by Assyria), *ma'abaia* (Moabites), *ban-ammanaia* (Ammonites), *udumaia* (Edomites) and possibly *akrunaia* (men of Ekron).<sup>17</sup> Damascus and Hamath also now appear as under Assyrian control.

The widespread complications of Assyrian expansion are also reflected by a set of letters which deal with Babylonia, where the king's officials were beset with even greater anxieties than they were on the Mediterranean coast. We have detailed accounts of a rebellion fostered by a chieftain named Ukin-zer<sup>18</sup> who for a time gained control of Babylon itself and attempted to disaffect those who had thrown in their lot with Assyria. It is interesting to read of the tribal intrigues that have been the perennial occupation of Arab shaikhs. And here for the first time we meet as a young man Marduk-apal-iddina, already playing a crafty diplomatic game and ready to appear as an ally of Assyria, but only as a time-server in order to get the better of the south Babylonian tribesmen whose submission was necessary if he were to capture the most valuable prize, Babylon itself. He is more familiar to modern readers under the name of Merodach



107. ND2090 A, B. Length 15.7 cm. Baked clay cylinder made up of three separate pieces found on different days in the rubbish fill of the scribal chamber ZT4, chancery of the N.W. Palace. Inscribed to the order of Marduk-apal-iddina (Merodach Baladan of II Kings XX), a Chaldaean shaikh, then king of Babylon, who exulted in his victories over Assyria. The inscription reveals that its original site was distant Erech, a city in S. Babylonia whence it was removed by king Sargon who, for political reasons, later substituted an 'improved' version after his victory, and retained the derogatory original amongst his archives.

Baladan, mentioned in the Book of Kings as the author of an intrigue which aimed at uniting with Hezekiah king of Judah in an anti-Assyrian coalition—a policy which Isaiah astutely discouraged.<sup>19</sup> The beginnings of this story are here revealed in letters to Tiglath-pileser III. The sequel to it is contained in a document also from the chancery, broken into three pieces, and found by our expedition on three successive days.

The document in question is a baked clay cylinder, ND2090 A, B [107] which had been captured from Erech by Sargon II and brought to distant Calah. It is a boastful text which describes how Merodach Baladan had been proclaimed king in Babylon, had reconstructed the city, and had driven out of Akkad the evil Subaraean—an expression synonymous with the Assyrian. Sargon, who in the end overcame his opponent, evidently went to the trouble of digging out the cylinder from the building in which it had been housed in Erech, and substituted in its place another 'improved' version of his own.<sup>20</sup>

By a curious coincidence, while we were finding this cylinder, which had once been the property of Erech, a German expedition was unearthing the very building from which it had been removed. This is thought to have been a temple dedicated to the god Ningizzida, and was identified by an inscription which referred to other known buildings and to gardens planted in the vicinity of the ziggurrat in Erech.<sup>21</sup>

Finally, many pieces were discovered in the corridor behind the chancery and in room 10; they included a double set of eight-sided inscribed prisms<sup>22</sup> which recorded Sargon's military and civil achievements. These mentioned his capture of Samaria, and of other cities in Iran, Anatolia, Syria and Babylonia, and his receipt of tribute from islands as distant as Bahrain (Dilmun) and Cyprus (Iadnana). Most remarkable is the passage which describes his expulsion of Marduk-apal-idinna from Babylon and his rebuilding of that city which lay waste, had become a jungle infested with lions and no longer heard 'the sweet harvest song': here is a snatch of poetry which reflects contemporary refrains



108. Magazine, ZT13 in the north wing of the N.W. Palace. The north wall is built at a slope or batter which helped to support external towers; the recess seen on its inner face served the purpose of a cupboard and its bottom shelf was about 3 ft 6 in above the level of the floor. In the corner a group of pottery as left in about 612 B.C. The whole of this chamber was filled with ash from the destruction. See p. 177.

better known in the Old Testament. It is unfortunate that only a few lines survive of a column which was concerned with the construction of his new capital Dur-Sharrukin (Khorsabad), from which we learn that native Assyrians were working side by side with foreign captives. The same subject is mentioned in two letters (from the chancery) concerned with the supply of materials required for this project.<sup>23</sup> Whether the missing parts of the prism would have referred to the king's architectural work at Calah is uncertain, but we know that Sargon was responsible for substantial repairs in the Burnt Palace at the south-east end of the akropolis.

Thus the chancery and other places in the north wing of the palace have yielded an unexpectedly rich find of documents relating principally to two monarchs whose activities in the last half of the 8th century B.C. enabled their successors to extend the frontiers of their empire yet further, from the Persian Gulf to the Red Sea, an expansion which was eventually destined to overstrain the resources of the Assyrian government and to result in its downfall.

It is therefore all the more fortunate that another suite of rooms (11-17)[100] on the eastern side of the north gate in the same block yielded a set of 60 business documents which had been written at various times during the reigns of the last four monarchs of Assyria. About half a dozen had been preserved as undiscarded archives from the reigns of Sennacherib and Esarhaddon; the majority belonged to the time of Assur-bani-pal (668–626 B.C.); three could be attributed to the short reign of Assur-etil-ilani and the remaining thirteen documents to that of Sin-shar-ishkun (622(?)–612 B.C.)<sup>24</sup>; one tablet dated by the name of *limmu* Bel-iqbi probably falls as late as 616 B.C.<sup>25</sup> The dating of these texts depends on the fortunate circumstance

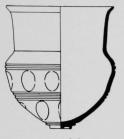
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that early in the history of the monarchy the Assyrians developed the practice of fixing their contracts and other tablets by reference to the name of the limmu,26 the eponym who held the most honourable office of the year for a twelvemonth. The succession is known from lists which have annotations giving the name of each until the year 648 B.C. Unfortunately after that time until 612 B.C. although the names are known, the order of these post-canonical limmu is uncertain, but nonetheless this system has enabled us to obtain a sequence by comparing the names of associated witnesses and determining, for various other reasons, groups of tablets which are likely to fall early or late in the series. For these reasons we can be sure that the tablets with which we are concerned take us down through the closing years of the Assyrian empire. It is thus of particular interest that the rooms in which they were found had been burnt by a serious fire; indeed, in the corridor 17 the accumulation of ashes rose from the pavement up to the top of the stump of the surviving walls which in places were as much as 10 feet (3 metres) high; and the tablets themselves, originally sun-dried, had been baked hard and were easily legible in consequence. For the stratified debris in these rooms there can now be only one interpretation, namely that we have before us the evidence of the great catastrophe which overtook Calah, beginning with an attack probably in 614 B.C., two years before the Babylonians and Medes captured Nineveh and finally triumphed over Assyria. It is perhaps significant that in the last four years written documents become scarcer; business and security alike were no doubt already in a decline.

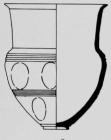
The rooms in which this evidence was recovered were well adapted to serve both as places of business and as magazines. Nos 11, 13, 17 were corridors with

**109.** View of the paved corridor which ran between the outer wall of the administrative wing, N.W. Palace, and the ziggurrat terrace. This thoroughfare was probably used by visitors entering the palace precincts and was no doubt manned by the royal guards. In the foreground, left, a burnt-brick pavement of the 9th century B.C. and above it a later patchwork. See p. **178**.

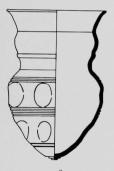




110. ND1838



111. ND1841





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niches or cupboards in the walls which, as we have seen, were thick enough to have supported an upper storey [108]. Room 15 measured about  $9 \times 4$  metres (29 ft 6 in.  $\times$  13 ft 3 in.); rooms 14 and 16, originally a single room, totalled 10 metres (33 ft) in length; towards the end of their lifetime they had been subdivided by flimsy partition walls. The narrow rooms 11-13 at the back, only 1.5 metres (5 ft) wide, had the appearance of being arranged as intra-mural chambers between the big apartments 14-16 and the huge northern wall of the palace which was built at a slope or batter, as if it had been a retaining wall; when first dug, it looked like the edge of a terrace to the Ziggurrat. This however was not so, since the corridor on the far side of it [109] was at the same level as the rooms on the inside. No doubt the reason for the batter was the fact that the main gate was set in the wall which, as the buttresses indicate, probably carried high flanking towers. Their extra width at the base was well calculated to support the great weight which they were expected to carry. It was therefore not surprising that the contents of these well-built chambers included valuable property which must have belonged to high officials. We know little about them except their names. But one of them, a man named Izbu, was an army officer; another was Ishdi-Nabu, the grandson of a maid of the palace; and others concerned were men employed by the palace.

The majority of the tablets from these rooms were records of loans-advances of silver or grain for various purposes which included the provision of payment for hired men at the harvest. The rate of interest on money, 25 per cent, seems very high by modern standards, but this was regular Assyrian practice. Money, that is, silver, was also lent for buying and trading in grain which had to be repaid at the harvest, for the threshing floor was sometimes specifically mentioned as the place at which repayment had to be made. Other texts were records of court judgements, and one case, a dispute about the purchase of a donkey, mentioned on two different tablets, may have dragged on for some years.27 Several tablets were deeds of sale, of slaves as well as of land which included a fuller's field. Two tablets referred to women votaries dedicated to the service of the goddess Nin-lil; one was an outright purchase, the other regularized the lady's position on marriage to a weaver. Most interesting was a document which was the marriage contract of the daughter of a powerful lady,<sup>28</sup> who must have been either a princess or priestess and was described as 'the shakintu woman set over the new palace at Calah'; the bridegroom was a well-known citizen named Milki-ramu, who was limmu in the year 656 B.C. The witnesses included a number of high officials including the hazanu, chief magistrate of Calah. The gifts, as may be imagined, were expensive: decorated sandals, gold plate, silver ornaments, linen, various garments, a bronze bed and a copper chair, as well as costly household utensils. This was a dowry fit for a princess and it is clear that Milki-ramu must have been a man of great wealth, but whether he was also a patrician is uncertain. At the end of the contract, there follows a series of clauses

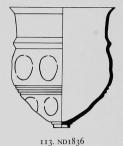
110-14. ND1838, 1841 and 1877 (*left*) and 1836 and 1945 (*opposite page*). Types of palaceware vases, delicate, beautifully made vessels, decorated with dimples, mostly light buff in colour. Owing to the smallness of the bases they had to be stored upside down when not in use and were found thus in a niche which served as a cupboard, against the north wall of room T12, N.W. Palace. Scale c. 1/2

## THE N.W. PALACE-NORTHERN WING AND CHANCERY

which lay down the rights of both parties in case the lady should not bear sons for her husband, who may then, according to normal Assyrian practice, take to himself a handmaid. Should the wife treat the handmaid improperly, the husband will have the right to divorce her, but the final clause may be understood to say that nonetheless the lady shall retain the dowry, or be compensated with gifts. If the interpretation of this difficult legal phraseology is correct, it would seem to imply that Milki-ramu was not as high-born as his wife, for in such a case he would normally have then been entitled to take back the nudunnu, or marriage gift with which he had endowed her.29 This interesting document emphasizes in no uncertain manner a fundamental concept in all societies. ancient and modern, that the prime purpose of marriage is the procreation of children. The exact year of the marriage is uncertain, as we are unable to say when the limmu Sharru-na'id in whose name this document was dated, held office, but it was probably in the reign of Assur-bani-pal.<sup>30</sup> It is, however, most interesting that in the Burnt Palace, an ivory which may have been a sceptre top or a fly-whisk knob, inscribed in Phoenician with the name Milki-ramu, was found by Loftus a century ago. And although this name is not uncommon, it is possible that this object was owned by the same Milki-ramu, and that other similar articles of that class should be dated to the same period.<sup>31</sup>

The discovery of so many documents with limmu names in these rooms has enabled us to give precise dates for various classes of objects, particularly the fragile pottery which was found in association with them. Thus in the relatively small room 12 [100], there was a cupboard formed by a recess, the ledge of which stood about 5 feet above the floor. On the ledge, still in the position in which they had been left by their last owner, there was a collection of beautifully made palace-ware pottery, which consisted mostly of small goblets with a tiny ring base not big enough to serve as a secure stand; consequently they had been stored upside down. It was fortunate that although some were damaged by the collapse of the roof when these apartments were sacked, others had been saved by the fall of soft earth and so were intact. Few finer vessels of pure pottery can ever have been made. They are of an extraordinary fragility, only a little thicker than egg-shell. Mr P. S. Rawson, who examined them, has written: '... The throwing of these goblets, especially the thin-bodied ones, is of an extraordinary competence. . . . A particularly interesting feature of some of the more delicate goblets is the pattern of rows of fingertip indentations round the outside of the belly of the pot. The original reason for the development of this ornament, with its particular spacing, was clearly an inescapable practical fact. For a pinched off pot has to be caught in the potter's free hand as it is finally separated from the clay matrix; and the makers of these goblets used to catch them with their fingertips, which indented the fine, slimy body of which they were made. The potters then added further indentations to make a pattern [110-114]. The original set of finger impressions can be identified on complete pots by fitting them to one's own finger grip. . . . The accuracy of centring which is necessary to ensure the practically perfect circularity and evenness of the lips, and the delicacy called for in the subsequent handling of the fine clay, indicate a rare level of craftsmanship.32

Since we know that these vessels were still in use at the time of the fall of Calab, we can now date them and the associated crockery almost to a year, for



114. ND1945



115. North-west corner of the pottery store, room ZT15, north wing of the N.W. Palace. This large group of pottery, together with domestic utensils including querns and rubbers were left *in situ* after the destruction in 612 B.C.

their owner must have been drinking out of them as late as 614-613 B.C. The life of such fragile vessels must have been precarious, and this makes it probable that many of those that were found intact were manufactured during the last decade of the neo-Assyrian empire. We have indeed other examples of delicate palace-ware which we can attribute to the previous century, but this particular lot has slight variations in typology which no doubt reflect the inevitable changes of fashion in luxury wares. Larger quantities of vessels were found in the same suite: there was a group of water jars, vases, and big plates in the south-west corner of room 13 [108] and a big pile of broken crockery in 15 ranging from big water jars to tiny bottles [115]. The series when fully published will form an invaluable addition to the corpus of Assyrian ceramic; indeed, from no other site in Assyria is there so large a group of exactly datable pottery. Thanks to the precise Assyrian system of dating documents, we thus have a more exact chronological knowledge of certain styles of Assyrian pottery than we have of many well known classes of famous European wares made far nearer to our own times.

The vessels found in this area were used for a variety of purposes; there were the ordinary domestic wares of everyday use as well as the luxury vessels; there were several pottery lamps; the small globular bottles were perhaps oil-flasks; and one large amphora, ND1975, of a type familiar in Palestine, contained inside it lumps of 'Egyptian blue' which was the substance principally used for the incrustation of ivories. This type of vessel, which normally one would suppose must have been used for the export of wine and of oil, thus also served as containers for other valuable solids.

We have of course to reckon that many kinds of perishable materials,



**116.** ND3413(AM). Clay bulla or docket, diameter 27 mm. ( $r_{10}^{-1}$  in), stamped with the royal seal of Assyria. This type of stamp was used as the official signary from the reign of Shalmaneser III to that of Assur-etil-ilani. The inscription on the circumference and traces of string marks indicate that it had been attached to bales of cloth levied by Shalmaneser III from the nobility. Found in the great hall 2725 of the N.W. Palace.

garments, linen goods and the like were also stored here. Thus in the debris of room 25, we discovered a clay docket [116], stamped with the royal seal-a picture of the king stabbing a rampant lion in the belly-of a kind which served as a label for the king's property throughout this period. This one bore an inscription which indicated that it had been attached to bales of cloth contributed to the royal treasury by the noblemen.33 Other perishable objects included wheat, barley and linseed found in rooms 14 and 15 where they were appropriately associated with stone rubbers and querns. Dr H. Helbaek has noted that the high quality of wheat found embedded in bricks from the time of Shalmaneser III onwards suggest an irrigated crop. Other domestic activities are certified by the discovery of loom-weights, spindle-whorls and numerous specimens of ostrich eggs, some of which appear to be stained a carmine red. Decayed fragments of the wooden haft of a musical instrument, probably a harp; of an iron sword with copper pommel, a bronze halter; iron hoops such as could have been used to contain a beer-barrel, and a copper fibula are further indications of the great variety of property stored here.

One large fragment of an ivory plaque, ND3266 [131], found in room 25, deserves examination on account of its style. It depicts a processional scene in two registers. Above, we see three high-ranking officers carrying bows, quivers, and mace with a lanyard at the end of the shaft; below, two squires armed with swords which have voluted ends; and between them a bearded figure, advancing in some royal procession. A palmette design separates the two rows. There is a certain naivety in the slightly ragged drawing of these



117. ND3397 (Met. Mus., N.Y.). (*Left*). Polished limestone ornament, length about 10 cm.; (*below*) side view. It terminates in a pair of lion's heads which are represented as roaring. The grooves were originally decorated with a faience guilloche inlay coloured white, red and green, and overlaid with gold foil. Note the warts on the head of lapis lazuli. This object could have been the terminal to a sword-hilt or scabbard.

ill-proportioned, cramped figures, interesting in comparison with the more precise fine engraving on comparable plaques of the 9th century [132, 226]. Since so many of the associated objects in this wing of the palace belong to the end of the 7th century B.C., one might be tempted to assume that these engravings reflected a period of relatively late development in which, while the set poses appropriate to Assyrian court life were still retained, there was now a tendency to slipshod drawing, particularly of the hands, and the figures themselves were more cramped and crowded, partly because there was now an increasing shortage of ivory. But notwithstanding these considerations concerning their date, I am more inclined to give weight to the evidence of the mace with the lanyard and voluted sword which do not appear to be carried by courtiers after the 9th century B.C. Only the king still carries the latter in the 8th. On these grounds, it seems safer to assume that this plaque was carved by an inferior artist, perhaps during the reign of Shalmaneser III.<sup>34</sup>

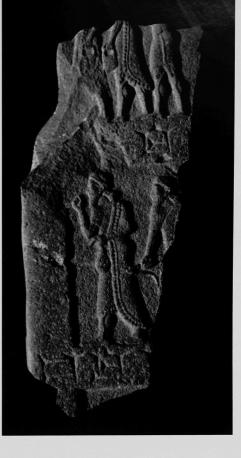
One other object, much more formal in style, found in room 31, also deserves a detailed scrutiny. This, is a magnificently carved ornament of polished limestone, ND3397 [117], terminating in a pair of lions' heads, bifrons, represented as roaring. It is decorated with a pair of Oriental warts in lapis lazuli, the eyes were once inset, and there are the remains between the ribs on the stem of a faience guilloche inlay covered with gold foil. This form of terminal often figures on the hilts or scabbards of swords on the bas-reliefs.<sup>35</sup> The boldly executed and assured style remind us of the ivory head of a roaring lion found in the well NN of the N.W. Palace [74]; it may perhaps be dated to the same period, that is to the reign of Sargon. This Assyrian form of lion found favour far afield, and there is a stylistic parallel in a stone lion from Samos, complete with warts, and probably of the early 6th century B.C.<sup>36</sup>

One discovery in the corridor outside the north wall is interesting because it illustrates 9th century workmanship very clearly, and almost certainly is a fragment of a basalt obelisk discovered by Layard and now in the British Museum [118].<sup>37</sup> It depicts a procession of captives and tributaries, an early example of the 9th century stone relief work known by its inscription to have been made for Assur-nasir-pal. A similar scene is shown on a broken limestone vase from an old rubbish dump in the same area [119]: on it we see a horse walked by the leading reign; this fragment may perhaps be joined to another found by Layard.<sup>38</sup> These scenes should be compared with the processions illustrated on the ivory plaque ND3266 [131] described above, and with others on 9th century ivories from Ezida (p. 279). It will generally be found that in the naturalistic



118 (*Right*). ND3219(B),  $35 \times 15 \times 6$  cm. Fragment of a basalt obelisk from the dump in the corridor which flanked the north side of the administrative wing of the N.W. Palace; it is probably a part of the obelisk BM118800 found by Layard, now in the British Museum, and depicts a procession of captives and tributaries led before King Assur-nasir-pal by Assyrian officers. The carving, typical of 9th century work, is of high quality.

119 (Below). ND5335,  $3.2 \times 5$  cm. Fragment of a white limestone vase found in the rubbish dump over room zrro of the N.W. Palace. It depicts a scene similar to the one on the obelisk [118]. An Assyrian officer leads a procession of tributaries carrying expensive gifts. The last figure walks a horse by the leading rein. This may join with a broken inscribed vessel found by Layard in the vicinity.



rendering of hands and arms, freedom of movement and sense of spacing, this early work in the Assyrian style represents a high level of ivory craftsmanship.

Thus the discoveries in this northern administrative wing of Assur-nasir-pal's N.W. Palace have given us a conspectus of the activities historic, artistic, technical, administrative, economic, that were going on in the city over the two and three-quarter centuries during which its remains reflected the fortunes of the Assyrian empire. The magnificence of the greater monuments found in the apartments of state was impressive, but it seems to me that the small domestic articles of daily life buried under a heap of ash in the chambers which once flanked the northernmost gate of the palace brought home more dramatically than anything else the last days of the city's history. As the business documents grew scarcer, we could detect the growing anxieties of the citizens, beset by powerful enemies from Babylonia and Iran—dangerous hereditary foes who were now fast outstripping their overlords by the might of their arms. Yet right up to the end, the men and women of Calah continued to pursue their peaceful avocations, unmindful that the blood of others which their forefathers had shed was shortly to be avenged by the cruel sacrifice of their own.



# CHAPTER XII

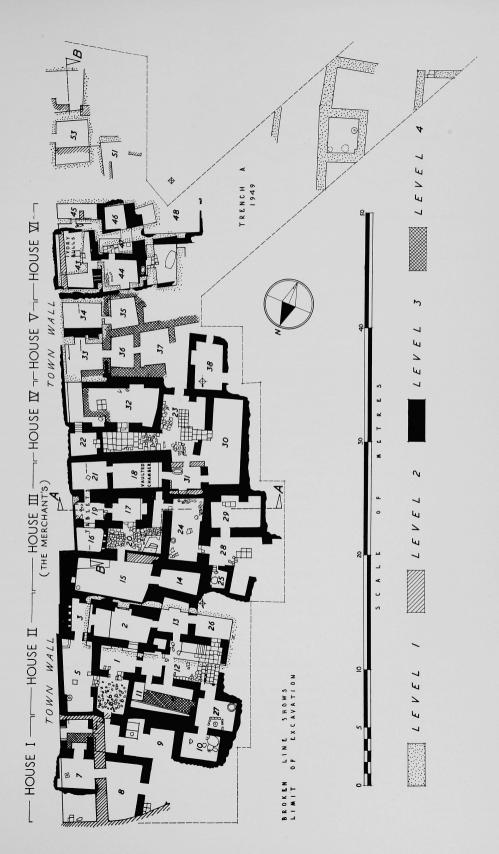
# PRIVATE HOUSES

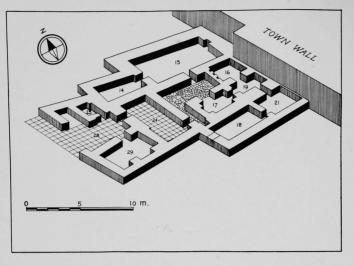
FTER so much work had been done in the grandiose palaces of Calah it was a relief to turn to the smaller domestic architecture and to examine the humbler abodes of those who were not members of the royal household. How did the homes of the ordinary citizen compare with the vast structures which were erected to house the king and the gods? It is true that we already have good evidence on this subject from the German excavations at Assur, where many private residences have been revealed; some good Assyrian house plans are also known from the American excavations at Shibaniba (Tell Billa) in the neighbourhood of Nineveh.<sup>1</sup> The houses discovered at Calah, however, are of unusual interest. The proximity of the N.W. Palace and the temples brings home to us most vividly the extraordinary difference between the standard of accommodation familiar to the court and that of the less exalted official. Even so, the relatively small houses on the akropolis were reserved for distinguished citizens whose buildings were still far more expensive than those erected in the outer town. A wide gulf was fixed between rich and poor: most of the peasantry must have lived either in exiguous hovels or under tent; to them the house was a bare shelter against the elements. At Calah we were singularly fortunate in discovering one house which contained within it both the goods and the archives of its owner who died at a ripe old age and left us a fascinating glimpse of his business activities. It is unusual for the private record to combine so perfectly with the archaeological.

The area selected for excavation was in the north-east sector of the akropolis where Layard had, in the last century, made tentative soundings which he quickly abandoned on finding that the place contained no sculpture.<sup>2</sup> The plan [120] shows that we succeeded in exposing a house area over a frontage of just under 70 metres (230 ft). Most of this work was accomplished in the spring of 1953, following up tentative beginnings in 1949 and 1951. The houses themselves abutted directly against the town wall which, as we have seen (p. 76) was 120 feet thick; they commanded a magnificent view over the outer town, for their floors were set nearly 50 feet above it. A site with such amenities was clearly reserved for privileged members of the community; here house-holders enjoyed

The notes for chapter XII will be found on pp. 340-2.

120 (*Right*). Plan of six private houses built against the town wall on the eastern side of the akropolis (Tw53). The fullest plans (solid black), belong to the 7th century B.C. (level 3) and represent dwellings sacked in or about 614 B.C. Levels 2–1 belong to later, poor periods of resettlement.





121. Isometric drawing of the Merchant's House, no. 3. The approach was from a street on the west side of paved court 28. Room 29 contained the skeleton of a dog; 25 was the bakery; 24 unloading and general purposes room; 20 cobbled inner court; 17 for storage of utensils; 16 and 19 contained vegetables, cereals, oil, pottery, and business archives; 21 anteroom to the family burial vault in 18. Main reception room was probably 15, with subsidiary apartment 14. The women's apartments must have been on the upper floor.

the advantages of living in conditions of the greatest possible security and of being situated close to the temples and the N.W. Palace.

Six houses situated in a single block running north-south were dug [120]. The units are clearly distinguishable, mainly through their approaches and the thickness of their northern and southern boundary walls; they vary in size, and there is evidence that at least one (no. 3), owned by a merchant, encroached on its neighbour (no. 4). The largest, (no. 2), contained about a dozen rooms and may originally have occupied an area of about 3,000 square metres, a comparatively spacious establishment, more especially if we reckon that some parts of the houses were probably surmounted by an upper storey; for we have stairs to the roof in room 12, and the considerable thickness of some of the partition walls, many of which measure 1 metre or more, leads to the same conclusion.

Every house appears to have been approached by an open courtyard on its western side which must have been flanked by one of those long and rambling streets typical of Assyrian towns; the curvature at one end of a street is revealed by the line of the northern wall of room 8. The network of streets in an Assyrian town has been well displayed at Assur and reminds us of a remark made by Aristotle, that in town planning it was advisable for purposes of security to adhere to a system which made it difficult for strangers to get out of a city and for assailants to find a way in.<sup>3</sup>

The untidy layout, which compares ill with that of Assyrian houses at Assur and at Billa, is no doubt due to the fact that all of them date from the last century of Assyrian occupation, and that while many of the walls followed the lines of older ones, modifications were introduced in later times without any attempt at co-ordinated town planning. A detailed description of a single house, no. 3 [121], will suffice for a general understanding of the remainder.<sup>4</sup> This belonged to a man named Shamash-shar-usur, whose archives were preserved in room 19.

The approach to the house was through an open courtyard, no. 28, which had originally been paved partly with mud-brick and partly with pebbles, doubtless to facilitate the loading and unloading of goods carried by pack animals. Since the archives show that one of the principal lines of business pursued by the occupant was the trapping of birds, it is tempting to suggest that these were often temporarily penned and caged in room 29, a spacious chamber 15 feet

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(4.5 metres) long, in which we found the skeleton of a domestic dog, a type of saluki, which no doubt had served both as watch-dog and in the chase. A small room opposite, no. 25, was used for the baking of bread; it contained a conical terracotta bread-oven which was sheltered from the wind on a sunken floor in a cellar partly underground, approached by four steps.

Penetrating further into the house we pass from the outer courtyard into a spacious general purposes room (24), perhaps used as a clearing-house for goods in transit. In the post-Assyrian period, after the burning of the house, this room had been used as a graveyard, for two inhumation graves were found within it. Room 20 was a rough-paved inner courtyard carefully sealed off from the outside by a series of bent-axis approaches which, as the plan shows, gave a zig-zag penetration from the outer court to the inner precincts. This inner court gave access to room 15, the largest chamber in the house (about  $23 \times 12$  ft), which may well have been used both as a business office for accountancy and for purposes of entertainment, since it was conveniently served by a smaller room (14); it contained a jar, ND3071, decorated with blue-green and white glaze, a proper ornament for the main reception room. Here the great thickness of the walls suggests that there was an upper storey, but all traces of the stairs, which may have been of wood or of mud-brick, had vanished.

On the opposite side of the inner court (20) there was access to a set of much smaller rooms in which perishable goods, some metal implements, and the archives had been stored. This end of the house bore the most extensive traces of burning, which had hardened the wall plaster and turned the sun-dried clay tablets to terracotta. Room 16 contained traces of charred roof beams and vegetable matter as well as pottery vessels which, together with those found in 19 and the contemporary collections in the chancery of the N.W. Palace, are among the most precisely dated sets of vessels yet discovered in Assyria, since all of them were destroyed in 614 B.C.

Room 17, another small chamber, was notable only for the discovery of a decorated bone scoop or spoon, as well as some dismembered fragments of iron armour and parts of a typical Assyrian corslet which may once have belonged to one of the household who had served in the army. That other officers had resided in these quarters was suggested by the discovery of a finely-made dagger with copper pommel and iron blade found in a room south-east of house 6 (Trench A) in 1949 [120].

It was room 19, full of merchandise and stores, which more than any other illuminated for us the way of life pursued by the Assyrian citizens whose houses lay in this quarter of the akropolis. This small inner chamber had been used for the storage of perishable goods which were kept in pots, and for the business archives. The large collection of pottery found in this room forms an invaluable type series, for most of it must have been made during the last two decades of the Assyrian empire. The pot forms, which include a few delicate bowls of palace-ware type, have already been published in detail and present many points of technical interest.<sup>5</sup> There was a jar, ND3065, of white glaze, overlaid by a yellow-green on base and rim, decorated around its middle with orangecoloured triangles; and a fine palace-ware bowl; the remainder consisted of there were also traces of agricultural implements which include a flat iron

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axe-blade, an iron sickle, copper nails and a fragment of an iron bill-hook. All these objects were found in disorder scattered through a thick bed of ash which was strewn 5 feet deep over the floor. This well-stocked house must have been a special target for the enemy at the time of the great destruction. The outer rooms had been stripped of their contents, and these inner chambers with their less valuable, perishable, and inflammable goods were chosen as the centre for the lighting of the fire which raged most virulently here.

The business documents, nearly 50 in all, tell a most interesting story over a period of about five decades, precisely dated by *limmu*; and many of them are stamped with characteristic seal impressions. The earliest of them goes back to 666 B.C. and the latest, in a more or less continuous series, is dated to the year 622 B.C. They record the activities of the houseowner, Shamash-shar-usur, throughout the whole of the reign of Assur-bani-pal, and especially during its last decade. One of the documents, ND3429, not completely legible, may contain the name of the *limmu* Bel-iqbi and, if so, falls as late as 616 B.C., four years before the final destruction; while another, ND3438, unfortunately partly damaged, may contain the name of the *limmu* for the last year of the empire, 612 B.C.<sup>7</sup> However that may be, it is certain that business was in full swing until 622 B.C., and probable that the scarcity of archives for the last decade of all reflects a state of affairs when the Assyrian empire was fast approaching its end.

The merchant who kept these records must have been a remarkable man for he was in business for nearly 50 years. Shrewd and evidently tough, mentally and physically, he had many dependents and his state prospered. He is an interesting example of longevity in ancient Assyria: the unusual length of his career may be compared with that of a nearly contemporary Babylonian father and son whose transactions in the city of Nippur covered a period of 86 years (702–617 B.C.)<sup>8</sup>; we may also recall that the queen mother of Nabonidus, last king of Babylon, born in the reign of Assur-bani-pal, is recorded as having lived to the age of 104.<sup>9</sup> The science of gerontology has recognized that in comparatively primitive communities where hard living and insanitary conditions are the rule, the expectation of life, in contradistinction to that of modern pampered communities, rises rather than falls after the age of 60. Simply put: to survive for so long without the aid of medical science, a man must be wellnigh indestructible.

Shamash-shar-usur was a moneylender. Many documents record advances of silver or of grain for harvesters; he took security on land, houses and personal services. His constant preoccupation seems to have been with the supply of birds. In one case, ND3426, there is a mention of as many as 230 doves, in another, ND3455, of cranes (?) from Syria for the city of Erbil. The probability is that the birds were required for divination in the temple of Ishtar, for it is well-known that many temples kept aviaries for that purpose. In the course of these transactions our merchant prospered, for he acquired six female and two male slaves at an average cost of 50 shekels of silver; one girl was obtained at a particularly low price (only 15 shekels); she was the daughter of a bird-catcher in the village of Rapa. It is hardly fanciful to suggest that this miserable wretch engaged in trapping had contrived to fall into debt and was forced to part with the girl cheaply. In another case, the old man advanced money to a bird-feeder. It is obvious that Shamash-shar-usur must have been in close contact with



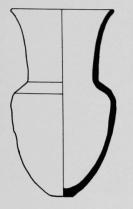
**122.** A large storage jar, height 1.2 metres, decorated with two heavy cabled ridges for suspension by means of ropes, as found *in situ*, room 10, in house no. 2. Similar jars found in houses at Assur contained the skeletons of children. This one may originally have been used for a similar purpose in the late Assyrian period, see WVDOG, 65, grave 503, Abb. 33 and Taf. 13b. See p. 190.

temple officials and priests for whom he was probably acting as middle-man. This business no doubt brought him into contact with the *qatinnu* official of the Nabu Temple from whom he purchased a house<sup>10</sup> which, on archaeological grounds, may perhaps be identified as no. 4 because in the course of time rooms 18 and 21, once separate and formerly in house 4, were connected by a communicating door to 19 in house 3. Possibly, therefore, this was the house in question and it may eventually have been completely annexed. One of the annexed rooms, 18, was a corbel-vaulted chamber and probably served as a family burial vault. At Assur, where the dead were also commonly buried under the house floors, it appears that certain rooms became insanitary and were finally closed and altogether sealed off from the living. Although the practice of domestic burial is also proved at Nimrud, there is no evidence that the houses were subsequently abandoned on that account.

The description of the ground floor rooms in the merchant's house (no. 3) will no doubt have made it clear that with the exception of one large apartment (15) which may have been used for entertainment as well as business, the remainder had functions concerned with administration, distribution and storage: room 25 may have been used as a kitchen. It follows that the more private domestic quarters, living rooms, and doubtless the women's apartments, must have been situated on a now vanished upper floor. Such an arrangement is still adopted by the more wealthy village families in the neighbourhood today.

There would be little point in further detailed description of the remaining houses: the reader who is interested may consult *Iraq* XVI. The pattern is much the same throughout: mud-brick walls and stamped earth floors, except in some of the courtyards and passages where brick and pebble pavements occurred. Drains were mostly burnt-brick channels; some of the smaller rooms must have

123. NDI 323. Palace-ware vase, height 13 cm. Found with rhyton [124].



been used as lavatories. No wells were found, but there must have been a common well somewhere in the settlement; there was evidence of big water butts in room 10. Further signs of domesticity included loom-weights in room 7: bone spatulae and picks which may have served as forks were common. There seems to have been a wooden partition in room 7, and occasional use of swing doors is suggested by burnt bricks with hollows in the middle. A tablet in room 5, ND3415, recorded the sale of a house with roof-beams and two doors, a reminder that in Assyria these appurtenances were regarded as movable property, for timber was always valuable. Traces of bitumen for damp-proofing, and of reeds, doubtless used both as matting on the floor and in the roof, were frequently observed. Niches or *loculi* in room 11 must have been used as cupboards, and in the next one, 12, a cavity beneath the floor served as a hiding-place for some feminine trinkets; these included a mottled pisolite bead, a golden lunate earring, and a fragment of an ivory leg and paw of a lion which was probably even then considered to be both rare and antique.

Scale c. 1/2

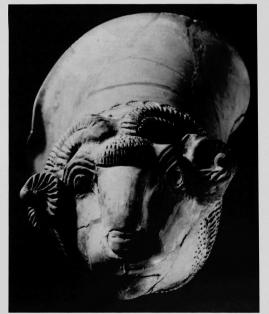
While observing the evidence of inhumation beneath the house floors we noticed that nearly all the 7th century graves had been disturbed by later ones. The methods of interment were of the standard type most frequently found in Assur itself; there were traces of pot burials, big jars decorated with a ridged cable pattern at the shoulder so that ropes could be tied round them and the receptacle lowered into a pit [122]; there were also terracotta larnax or boatshaped vessels with similar contrivances for the ropes. Family vaults there had been, and two of them survived : the one in room 18 we have already mentioned ; the second, a large chamber, no. 34, also vaulted with a corbelled mud-brick roof, was of particular interest because it appears to be the structure referred to by Layard in Nineveh and its Remains, vol. II, p. 41-about '10 feet high, and the same in width'. The chamber had been violently burnt and the bricks turned to slag; and Lavard remarked that it had the appearance of a large furnace for making glass or fusing metal. He was unable to account for its use. Now, however, after a century of digging in Assyria, we know that this was the standard type of family vault for the wealthier members of the community.<sup>11</sup> The vitrification is amply accounted for by the conflagration of 614 B.C., when, we may suppose, the enemy deliberately sought out the more valuable treasure which these graves once contained: goldwork and expensive jewellery were commonly deposited within them at Assur. These vaulted chambers were frequently reused, and traces of more than one skeleton were found in them.

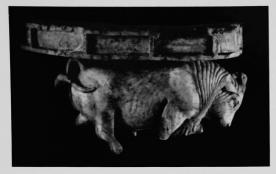
Fortunately, one burial in room 34 still remained only partly disturbed, for here, as at Assur, in what had evidently served as a family vault for many generations, some of the older interments had been dislocated by later ones. The skeleton in question was found lying against the east wall, on its right side, parallel with the main axis of the room, head to the north, the body slightly flexed. At the feet there was a vase of fine palace-ware, NDI323 [I23], in every respect similar to one that had been found in the Governor's Palace: some shell ring beads and a damaged iron dagger found in disturbed soil nearby appear to have been rejected loot. The plunderers also left behind, unwanted, a most beautifully made clay rhyton, ND1273 [124], of delicate fabric, with its base shaped into the head of a ram; the junction between the vase and the head, which had been separately fitted, was effectively concealed by a band decorated with stamped rosettes or spoked circles. The top of the vase had a slightly pinched trough obviously intended to facilitate the pouring of libations. The head is brilliantly modelled, a happy blending of realism and convention whereby full play is given to the naturally decorative twisted spirals of the horns, which partly conceal and envelop the ears. Mr Charles Wilkinson has aptly commented that on Dorset rams the horns are so massive that the ears can be almost unnoticed, and no doubt this observation also applies to some Oriental species.



124. ND1273(B), length 22.5 cm. Clay rhyton of delicate palaceware, the base shaped as the head of a ram, a ceremonial vessel with pinched spout for pouring libations. The head is brilliantly modelled, the junction between it and the vase effectively masked by a collar decorated with spoked circles. Approximately contemporary vessels similar in shape, both in metal and in clay, were much prized in Anatolia, north Syria, Assyria, and Iran. On a relief of Sargon II at Khorsabad courtiers are represented drinking from lion-headed rhyta. This one was found in room 34 of house no. 5, a family vault continuously used for several generations. This object was probably deposited in it during the period 700–680 B.C.







125. ND3587. Ivory bull, length 8 cm. in the round, except that the back is left rough like that of [126]. On the top, part of a circular frame originally decorated with incrustation has survived: this proves that the bull was one of a set which had originally surrounded a circular column as on a better preserved specimen, ND7560, from Fort Shalmaneser (ch. xvII [551]). These figures may therefore once have been component parts of furniture, perhaps from the legs of chairs or tables. Found in the debris of level 2 in room 43, private houses, and therefore probably still conserved after 614 B.C. by householders who had returned after the first great sack of Calah; but the object itself probably dates back to the reign of Sargon shortly before 700 B.C.



126 (Above). ND3586. Ivory bull, front and back views, showing the back left rough because attached to a column. Length 7.5 cm.; similar to [125]. The knob at the top was for the purpose of fixing it to the superstructure. Found in room 43 together with that shown in [125] and other similar bulls illustrated in *Iraq* XVI, pl. xxxiv. Scale c. 1/1

127 (*Left*). ND3602(B). Ivory hawk, length 6·2 cm., with outspread wings, wearing the *pschent* double crown of Egypt. The tip of one wing touches a palmette and the bird itself seems to have been represented as perched on the end of a coiled snake which in turn rested on a second palmette. A similar figure is engraved on a bronze bowl found by Layard in room AB of the N.W. Palace, see *Mons. of Nineveh* (2nd series) pl. 68. Treatment of the two strands of hair which hang down from the neck is identical with those on the openwork lion ND6349 (ch. XVII). Probably made during the reign of Sargon, 722–705 B.C. Found in level 2 of room 43.

Scale c. 1/1

128 (Below). ND3592 (B). Ivory pin, length 13 cm., terminating in a human hand with bangles round the wrist, a kohl stick for the application of cosmetics (?). Room 43 of the houses. Scale c. 4/5





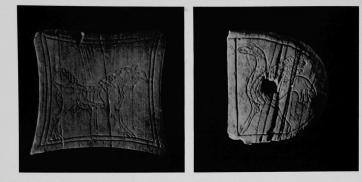
#### PRIVATE HOUSES

The stratification of this burial indicated that it was deposited a little before the general level 3 (level I was the latest occupation), that is, earlier than the merchant's house and therefore before 666 B.C., the period of its most ancient record. We are therefore probably safe in assigning it either to the reign of Sennacherib, or to the early years of Esarhaddon, say between 700 and 680 B.C. Such a date fits well with other archaeological evidence, for in Assyria the rhyton does not appear to occur before the reign of Sargon, when it figures on the reliefs with lions' heads at Khorsabad. Interesting for comparison are clay rhyta which were discovered at Zinjirli; another from the district of Ziwiye may be approximately contemporary: the former are more simply executed, the latter is much closer in style to the remarkable specimens from Iran in the Metropolitan Museum, New York, and in the University Museum of Pennsylvania.<sup>12</sup>

The fine quality of the luxury goods owned by these wealthy householders is best illustrated by a number of remarkable ivories, many of which were found out of place in a disturbed upper level of room 43. Five models of bulls in high relief, almost in the round, were found here; four of them proceed to the right, one to the left; they are vigorously carved, and admirably express the strength of the animal [125-6]. The backs were left rough; each has a knob on top of the body for attachment to a circular panel. At the time they were found in 1953, I surmised that they might have been torn off a circular tray and that originally they had been represented in pairs, head down, fighting. But in the light of a discovery made five years later in Fort Shalmaneser, it seems more likely that they had adorned a column, in tiers, and were originally represented in procession (see ch. XVII, p. 584, ND7560 [551]). What decorative function the ivory column itself had served we do not know, but it was perhaps a component of some furniture-an upright of a chair, a table, or the like. The riddle of the bulls' original function is thus still not wholly solved; but these two separate discoveries made five years apart are an interesting illustration of the way in which patient and continuous digging may eventually reveal the clues to an unsolved mystery.

[127] illustrates another ivory nearly in the round, depicting a hawk with outspread wings wearing the Egyptian *pschent* crown on the head; one wing-tip is perched on a palmette; there are no feet, but instead, a sinuous serpentine tail which rests upon a second palmette. Unfortunately, a fragment of the terminal is missing and the junction is therefore uncertain. But a partly similar design is engraved on one of the bronze bowls discovered by Layard in room AB of the N.W. Palace, though in that case the hawk appears to be associated with a single papyrus instead of with two palmettes.<sup>13</sup> This beautifully designed ivory, part of some larger composition, is no doubt of Phoenician origin, and, in view of its stylistic affinities with the designs on the bowls and palace ivories, may best be attributed to the collection made by Sargon (722–705 B.C.).

Among other ivories from the houses we may note also a fragment in relief of a processional scene in which a cow licks the tail of a calf, a bull's hoof, a lion's claw, the model of a human foot, and an ivory pin with bangles at the wrist surmounted by a human hand with fingers extended; this was perhaps a lady's kohl stick for the application of cosmetics to the face or eyes [128].



**129** (*Far left*). ND3600. Ivory plaque, 4:7 cm. across, tip to tip. Engraved with figure of a bull, well drawn summary sketch. Possibly 8th century B.C. Room 43 of the houses.

Scale c. 1/1

**130** (*Left*). ND3603 (B). Ivory plaque,  $4 \times 3 \cdot 3$  cm. engraved with figure of a striding ostrich (?), dowel hole bored through the middle. Probably 7th century B.C.; room 43 of the houses.

Scale c. 1/1

In sharp contrast with the relief style are the engraved ivories, and whereas the relief work may usually be attributed to Phoenician and Syrian ateliers the incised pieces are more often Assyrian in character. Thus a lozenge-shaped plaque, ND3600 [129], lightly engraved with a bull, head down, tail curving over the back, is reminiscent of typically Assyrian mural paintings in the palace at Khorsabad, and in that of Adad-nirari III in the outer town of Calah. An engraved bird on a small lunette-shaped plaque, perhaps an ostrich [130], is a design which occurs on Assyrian cylinder seals (imitated in Urartu, ancient Armenia) and ultimately derives from a bird which figures on bas-reliefs of Assur-nasir-pal: this one, however (also from room 43), need not, in view of its summary cursive drawing, be earlier than the end of the 8th century B.C. Markedly Assyrian are fragments of engraved plaques with processional scenes, freely drawn and carelessly executed; one of these, ND3266 [131], is possibly of the 9th century B.C. (see also ch. XI, p. 181), though it may be chronologically hazardous to compare the unpretentious miniature designs on small ivories with the more formal styles on the monumental stone reliefs. We can, however, with more assurance propose a date for the interesting scene depicted on ND3599 [132] where we see the king, heavily armed with bow and spiked shield, which on the Assyrian reliefs does not appear after the reign of Shalmaneser III, standing without the gates of a walled city, while women on the battlements clash cymbals in his honour. Here, comparison with designs on the bronze gates of Balawat is inevitable, and it is probable that these ivories, part of a pyxis, belong to the 9th century B.C., perhaps as early as the reign of Shalmaneser III (859-824 B.C.).14 Finally we may notice a unique engraving on an ivory plaque ND3506 [133] depicting a four-winged female who recalls the seductive Babylonian vampire lilu, a magical spirit familiar also in Assyria and Syria. When the plaque was found, the head had been deliberately cut out, leaving an excised v,

**131.** ND3266 (B). Ivory plaque, length 10·3 cm., crudely engraved with a scene in two registers illustrating, above, a procession of armed warriors, and below, squires and their attendants in procession: the palmettes over their heads are very roughly drawn. This not unattractive, rather cramped sketch illustrates courtiers carrying mace with lanyard, and voluted sword, which are characteristic of the 9th century. See also the discussion in ch. XI, p. 181. Found in room 2T25, north wing of the N.W. Palace.





132. ND3599 (Met. Mus. N.Y.). Ivory pyxis or ointment box fragments, height 4:8 cm. The engraving depicts a castle with great folding doors. On the battlements women clashing cymbals appear to be celebrating the arrival or departure of a bearded king (?) armed with spiked shield, bow with quiver, and mace. Compare scenes on the bronze gates of Balawat depicting women on the battlements of fortified castles which figure in the campaigns of Shalmaneser III. Possibly 9th century B.C. Found together with the ivories in [125, 126, 127, 128, 130] in room 43 which was reoccupied after the great sack of Calah and contained this older collection within it. Level 2 of room 43 of the houses.



133. ND3506(AM). Ivory plaque, height 11-8 cm., depicting the four-winged female demon *lilith*, the seductive Babylonian vampire, *lilu*. The base and the head, which had been deliberately excised, have been restored in wax. Compare a nude, stone demon published in *Carchemish*, vol. III, pl. B40. From debris belonging to the private houses. Scale c. 1/1

#### PRIVATE HOUSES

a curious example of iconoclasm perhaps committed by some post-Assyrian settler at Nimrud who feared the power of an alien demon. It has been possible, however, to restore the head by reference to a nude, horned demon discovered by Sir Leonard Woolley at Carchemish; and the Nimrud plaque may be of north Syrian origin.<sup>15</sup> The ivory objects found in the houses thus represent a varied collection in different styles, which range in date over a period of at least 150 years. They show that the wealthy householder coveted ivories and collected them, no doubt for their intrinsic as well as for their ornamental value. It is not unlikely that some of them were already damaged by the time they found their way into these Assyrian homes.

Among many other categories of small objects of a more or less familiar type found in this sector of the town are the designs stamped on the tablets. These are of particular interest because they may be precisely dated by reference to the limmu names on the documents. In the house of the merchant, as we have seen, there was a series which may be fitted into the period 666-622 B.C.; and although some of them are necessarily older than the year in which they were used for sealing, the majority provide good evidence of the type of stamp employed by business men during the reign of Assur-bani-pal. While many of the impressions are purely Assyrian in character, others have a Phoenician appearance, as we should expect at a period in which Assyria was in direct contact with Egypt through Phoenician markets which were reflecting Egyptian trends of style and circulating modified forms of Egyptian designs. A selection of these stamps arranged according to date is illustrated on [134]. While many of them come from the houses, others, rather earlier, found on dated documents from the N.W. Palace, have also been selected for comparison; and the series forms a representative cross-section of the type of sealing in use during the last century of the Assyrian empire.16

The documents discovered in the houses have thus produced important chronological evidence, particularly with reference to the third level from the top which spanned the half-century between 666 B.C. and 612 B.C. and ended in the disastrous fire to which Calah succumbed. The plan [120], shows that the majority of the houses belong to this period. Most of the rooms, but not all of them, appear to have been reoccupied in the subsequent period by impoverished persons, survivors perhaps of the sack, who repaired the older remains; their scanty possessions show for the most part no change in character; but two duck-amulets, one in carnelian, the other in chalcedony, engraved on the underside with a fish and a prancing gazelle respectively, and a red, veined stone pendant engraved with a rayed Ishtar, all in the neo-Babylonian style, are of a type which became common in the 6th century B.C.<sup>17</sup> This second level settlement was probably short-lived and, like its predecessor, was destroyed by fire; in the light of subsequent discoveries at Fort Shalmaneser (see ch. XVI), we may now affirm that these houses represented an unsuccessful attempt at resettlement by refugees who had returned to the site after 614 B.C., only to be driven out again by raiders. The second settlement was followed in the topmost level of all, by some poor remnants of houses which may be attributed to the Hellenistic period.

Some attempt was also made to recover the earlier history of the site. The fourth settlement from the top was only partially dug; the few excavated houses,

as may be seen from the cross-hatched portions of the plan on [120] were no less substantial in character than their successors. It is not unlikely that this settlement was founded in the reign of Sargon (722-705 B.C.), for a number of the seals found in later houses, possibly heirlooms, go back to this period;<sup>18</sup> most of the pottery, especially in room 33, showed little difference from the types common in the third settlement, but in room 18 some fragments of very fine palace-ware resembled some of the best ceramic discovered at the Sargonid level in the northern administrative wing of the N.W. Palace. Only at one spot. by digging a pit in room 18, was it possible to penetrate down to deeper levels. Counting from the top, we disclosed a succession of no less than eight floors of which the earliest probably represented an occupation in the time of Shalmaneser I (1274-1245 B.C.), the first Assyrian founder of Calah. A single cylinder seal impression probably of that period was found at a similar level elsewhere, in a trial pit some distance to the south of the houses; it depicted a nude winged female holding two gazelles by their hind legs; this piece may be contemporary with a faience cylinder seal from the house area engraved with a typically Hurrian scene of seated gazelles, a guilloche pattern and standing figure holding a tree.19

Technically, it is interesting to compare the relative depths of accumulated debris over the earlier and later phases of the city's lifetime. Between levels 8–4, c.1280–700 B.C., nearly six centuries of occupation are represented by a rise of about 3.2 metres in the ground level; whereas between levels 4–2, c.700–612 B.C., less than one century corresponds with a rise of about 2.5 metres; that is to say, the city's dirt in this area accumulated much more rapidly in the last century of its lifetime than in the preceding six centuries. This may be accounted for by the hypothesis that in the early periods the city was not continuously occupied, and its deserted buildings were slowly filled by a process of erosion.<sup>20</sup>

It may be that some succeeding generation will return to the houses and discover their layout in the long succession of periods prior to 700 B.C. Other and more pressing tasks have prevented us from exposing these deeply buried settlements which may conceal traces of Calah's earliest Assyrian foundations. 134. Seal impressions on tablets dated by *limmu*; detailed descriptions in *Iraq* XVII, p. 97*f*. Postcanonical dates (after 648 B.C.) follow the order proposed by Margarete Falkner in *AFO* XVII.

- 1~ ND806 and 809. Size about  $2\times2~cm.,$  from room HH of the N.W. Palace; found on the floor with the ivories, dated by reference to a bulla 716 B.C. and a docket 706 B.C.
- 2 ND3488. Width 1.8 cm., from ZT31. Seal of Hashini dated to the year 706 B.C.
- 3 ND2331. From ZT17. Seal of Shangu-Ishtar dated to the year 679 B.C.
- 4 ND2333. Size about 1.6×1.6 cm., from ZT16. Seal of Nabu-rimani dated to the year 672 B.C.
- 5 ND3464. Size about 2×1·9 cm, from TW53, room 19. Seal of either PAP.E.DI or Adad-ishkieresh, dated to 666 B.C.
- 6 ND3424. Size 1:4×9 cm., from TW53, room 19. Seal of either Mannu-ki-ili or Pagu (?)-ili-usur dated 665 B.C.
- 7 ND3436. Size about 1.1 × 0.9 cm., from TW53, room 19. Seal of Zer-Ishtar dated 660 B.C.
- 8 ND2328. Width 1.6 cm., from ZT17. Seal of Gabbu-amur dated 650 B.C.
- 9 ND3435. Size  $2\times1.9$  cm., from TW53, room 19. Seal of Bariki dated 650 B.C., limmu Bel-Shadua.
- 10 ND3437. Width 2 cm., from TW53, room 19. Seal of Mannu-ki-Nabu dated 650 B.C.
- 11 ND3422. Width 1.7 cm., from TW53, room 19. Seal of either Ishdi-Nabu or Nabu-asbate dated by *limmu* Arad-Nabu 644 B.C.
- 12 ND3421. Size about 2·3×1·9 cm., from TW53, room 19. Seal of Handaburi dated by *limmu* Assur-shar-usur 643 B.C.
- 13 ND2320. Size about 1.7×1.? cm., from ZT, room 16. Seal of Urdi dated by *limmu* Mushallim-Assur 642 B.C.
- 14 ND2078. Size about 1·3×1·2 cm., from zT, room 14. Seal of Ishdi-Nabu dated by *limmu* Assurgimil-tirri 641 B.C.
- 15 ND3425. Size about 2×1·2 cm., from TW53, room 19. Seal of either Shepa-Nabu-asabat or Ishdi-Sibitti, dated by *limmu* Zababa-eriba 640 B.C.
- 16 ND3446. Size about 8×8 mm., from TW53, room 19. Seal of Gutusu dated by *limmu* Zababaeriba 640 B.C.
- 17 ND3449. Size 2×2 cm., from TW53, room 19. Seal of Qurdi-Nergal dated by *limmu* Sharrumitu-ballit 637 B.C.
- 18 ND3463. Width about 2 cm., from TW53, room 19. Seal of Nabu-ka-ahi-usur, the *qatinnu* official of Nabu, dated by *limmu* Assur-garua-niri 635 B.C.
- 19 ND3460. Size about 1.2×1.2 cm., from TW53, room 19. Dated by limmu Bulutu 632 B.C.
- 20 ND3433. Size about 1·3×1·0 cm., from TW53, room 19. Seal probably of Ahi-edi, dated by *limmu* Upaqa-ana-Arbaili 631 B.C.
- 21 ND2094. Size about 1×1 cm., from zT14. Seal of Assur-lishir dated by *limmu* Paqa-ana-Arbaili, 631 B.C.
- 22 ND3427. Width about 1.7 cm., from TW53, room 19. Seal of A-hi-?-i-di dated by *limmu* Sharru-na'id 629 B.C.
- 23 ND2307. 1:4×1:7 cm. From ZT16, recording marriage of Milki-ramu, dated by *limmu* Sharruna'id 629 B.C.
- 24 ND3423. Width about 1.8 cm., from TW53, room 19. Seal of Mati-ilaa, dated by *limmu* Nabushar-usur 626 B.C.
- 25 ND3441. Size 2×? cm., from TW53, room 19. Seal of Nabu-eriba dated by *limmu* Nabu-sharusur 626 B.C.
- 26 ND2093. Size about 1.5×1.2 cm., from ZT14. Dated by *limmu* Nabu-shar-usur, the palace scribe 626 B.C.
- 27 ND2138. Size about 1.4×1.4 cm., from ZT16. Seal of Laquipi, dated by *limmu* Sin-shar-usur 622 B.C.



629 B.C.

626 B.C.



# CHAPTER XIII

# THE BURNT PALACE

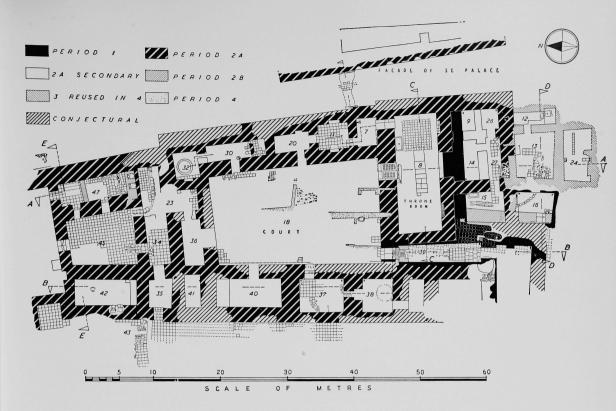
URING our first two seasons at Nimrud we deliberately avoided digging in the south-east corner of the akropolis because the ground was uneven and the going was difficult. Moreover, this, the highest part of the mound, had been overlaid by gigantic rubbish dumps in the 19th century. Nonetheless, we realized that if we could overcome these obstacles we might expect a reward as rich in material objects as in historical information.

Our grounds for hope were based on a large collection of ivories in the British Museum which W. K. Loftus, who had worked at Nimrud in 1854-5, had found in some chambers west of the 'South-East palace'.<sup>1</sup> 'In the very first room were discovered an immense collection of ivories, apparently the relics of a throne or furniture broken up for the sake of the gold or jewels with which they were adorned . . . they were strewed together at the bottom of a chamber among the black ash of the wood from which cause they are nearly all burnt black.' In a letter published in *The Athenaeum*, 24 March 1855, p. 351, he wrote: 'I have got up a horseload of objects and am fitting them together as fast as possible, preparatory to boiling them in gelatine.'<sup>2</sup>

As ill fortune would have it, Loftus, whose health had been impaired by his work in Assyria and Babylonia, died at sea on his way home to England in 1858. No comprehensive account of his work in Assyria was ever published, but a copy of a printed report (No. II) of the Assyrian Excavation Fund, fifteen pages in length, describing his activities in 1854, has survived in the British Museum; it is dated February 20th 1855, and was reprinted by C. J. Gadd in *The Stones of Assyria*, together with Loftus's ground plan of the 'Mound of Nimrood'<sup>3</sup> upon which the chambers excavated were clearly marked, with an indication of the rooms in which the ivories were found. In 1951, Dr R. D. Barnett, whose merit it has been to resuscitate the part played by Loftus in these discoveries, showed me an air photograph on which the site of these chambers was clearly visible.

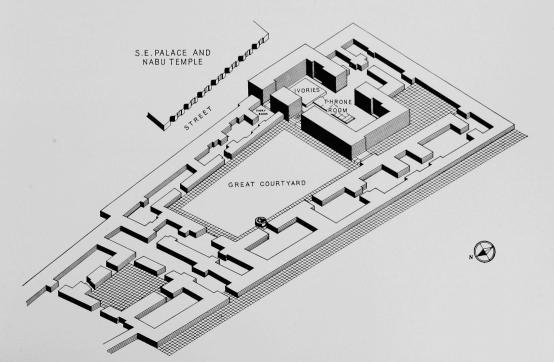
The inducement to reopen these rooms and to strive to complete the ground plan of what was obviously a big building was therefore considerable. Our first step was to ask the Iraq Petroleum Company in Kirkuk for the loan of a bulldozer, and this was generously granted, together with the services of a mechanic. In the space of a few days, the huge dump which covered most of this site was removed without causing any damage to the tops of the ancient walls which remained below, and we were then free to investigate the building.

It took us five years, 1951-5, to complete what we had set out to do; each



135. Plan of the Burnt Palace showing the successive periods of construction. See the chart on p. 286, ch. XIV, for chronology and key to the conventions used thereon.

136. Isometric reconstruction of the Burnt Palace as it existed in the period between Sargon II and about 612 B.C.





137. East end of the throneroom in the Burnt Palace showing the mud-brick dais on top of which many burnt ivories were found and the paved stone track leading up to it. The man standing in the far right-hand corner of the room masks the entrance to the Loftus tunnel which contained an ancient stone cist grave of the 18th century B.C.

spring season we dug out some additional part of the building, and little by little solved the complicated problems of stratification. It required much time and thought to follow out the modifications which had been made to the building since its foundation; to determine the dates at which these changes had occurred; and to discover the relationship between the palace and the other structures in the neighbourhood. The solutions came gradually from a combined examination of the evidence provided primarily by stratigraphy, epigraphy, ceramics, and the sequence of small objects associated with successive buildings. In elucidating these problems, we recorded the evidence after each successive season in our journal Iraq, and some of our first tentative conclusions proved to be erroneous. It is instructive to follow the gradual process of logical deduction that led to the establishment of a well-founded chronology which was eventually corroborated in many other parts of the citadel. Wherever our reasoning was at fault, it was due to preconceived notions about the dates at which certain types of objects had ceased to be made, or about the chronology of the various catastrophes which had occurred in the city's lifetime. Yet when one is seeking for the solution to new archaeological problems, some kind of working

138. Raised throne-dais, constructed of mud brick, whereon many burnt ivories were found, and left, entrance to room 7 of the Burnt Palace.





139. Aerial view of the expedition house and tents, south-east end of the akropolis; right centre, the Governor's Palace; left, Shalmaneser Street; beyond it, Ezida and the Nabu Temple; right, a part of the Burnt Palace now mostly covered.

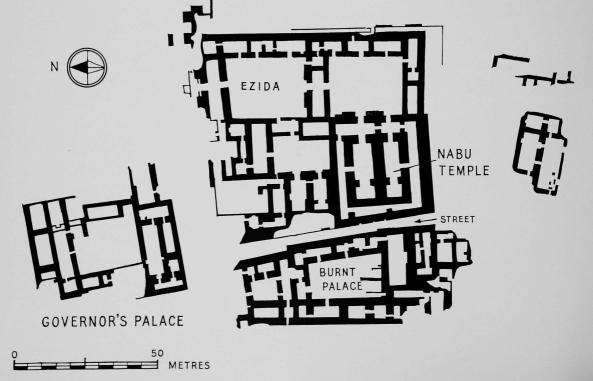
hypothesis often needs to be framed as a guide. The repeated testing of hypotheses must eventually lead either to their rejection or to their confirmation, and if rejected, then to some substitution which in turn has to be verified. In this process, the whole of the archaeological armoury has to be brought to bear; the collection of techniques has in the end to submit to one final overriding compulsion: the sharp intransigence of logic.

We may now turn to examine the plan of the building at its most developed stage [135-6], that is, as it stood in the period 722-612 B.C., anticipating the evidence which has led to that conclusion. Its organization is typical of an Assyrian palace, the throne-room being the largest apartment in the building; it has a huge courtyard flanked by chambers on either side, and an approach through a subsidiary court at the far end. Originally the palace must have measured nearly 100 metres north to south; the throne-room itself [137-8] is a great hall 17.5 metres long and 6.5 metres wide. The great thickness of its

walls, up to 3.5 metres, indicates that it was the highest room in the building. All the walls were of mud brick, covered with mud plaster; the rooms were paved with burnt brick, though much of this had been torn up by later builders looking for ancient materials. Only one small entry was found, through room 35, but it is not unlikely that the main entrance was through a courtyard still undug, at the northern end of the palace.

Two main streets flanked the palace: one on its northern side led past the complex known as Ezida and into the outer town through the Shalmaneser gate; the other, on its eastern side, with an average width of about 6 metres, separated it from Ezida and the Nabu Temple [140]. It was a section cut through the latter street [folder v] which demonstrated conclusively that the niched and rabbeted façade of the Nabu Temple had been built at the same time as the eastern wall of this palace, for the foundation trenches of both buildings were dug from the same level and filled with identical debris—small chipped stones. The niched façade of Ezida could be ascribed to Sargon (722–705 B.C.) because an identical form of architectural decoration was used by him in the city which he built at Khorsabad (Dur Sharrukin). This hypothesis was corroborated by the discovery in the Burnt Palace throne-room of letters addressed to him: elsewhere the debris included burnt bricks inscribed with his name; they were of a type found in the Khorsabad palace and were doubtless kept here as specimens, in conformity with ancient practice. Finally, in the throne-room itself there was

140. Plan of the Burnt Palace showing its situation with reference to the Nabu Temple and the throne-room in Ezida.





141. Decorated stone threshold, probably carved to the order of Sargon and torn out of its context in the Burnt Palace throne-room for use at the north end of the passageway 39 after the sack of the building.

a stone threshold in the entrance and another in a niche of the south wall covered with rosettes in the style of decorative masonry at Khorsabad (141]. Several cylinder seals found in the Burnt Palace were characteristic of Sargon's reign;<sup>4</sup> and since the stratigraphy also demonstrated that this building was founded after the time of Adad-nirari III (808–782 B.C.), and as the most powerful monarch after him, Tiglath-pileser III, had a palace of his own elsewhere, the evidence for an ascription of this construction to Sargon is as strong as circumstantial evidence can be.

This association of Sargon with the Burnt Palace adds a personal interest to its history, for we can visualize the king seated in his throne-room conducting affairs of state which were of critical importance to Assyria at the time. Among about a dozen letters found in the building, a cuneiform tablet in the throne-room debris addressed to the king by one of his governors alluded to the Gimirrai, the Kimmerians who were threatening the northern borders of Assyria at the time; the document mentioned Urzana, Governor of Musasirone of the capital cities of Urartu, ancient Armenia.<sup>5</sup> This reference to Urzana is likely to imply a date before Sargon's eighth year, that is before 714 B.C., for it was then that he conducted his famous eighth campaign which led to the sack of Musasir and a general flight from that city. The account of this victory occurs in a letter which he addressed to the god Assur while residing in Calah.<sup>6</sup> By a coincidence we also know where that celebrated document was kept at Assur itself: it was in the house of an incantation priest together with an inscribed cylinder containing the annals of Sargon's reign.7 Furthermore, another letter, ND2759, preserved in the chancery of the N.W. Palace (ZT4) throws additional light on the situation in the north. In it, Sargon instructs the Crown Prince Sennacherib to convey his pleasure to one Mita (Midas), in other words the king of Phrygia, who has intercepted an embassy sent to Urartu by the king of Oue, a province of Cilicia. Sargon proposes an alliance and the exchange of embassies between Assyria and Phrygia, as well as an extradition agreement concerning deserters.8 It is thus evident that although one of the principal cities

of Urartu had been subjugated, there were still grave dangers in the north where the Kimmerians, who in 717 B.C. had backed an attempted revolt against Assyria by the king of Carchemish, were poised to take advantage of the situation; in fact, a generation later, they subdued Phrygia and overcame its capital at Gordion. History tallies closely with the findings of archaeology in establishing the close connections of these states at the time, for while two bronze 'situlae' or rhyta<sup>9</sup> discovered in the so-called tomb of Midas at Gordion were probably of Assyrian origin and may well have been a gift of Sargon himself, other articles in the same tomb—bronze cauldrons decorated with winged females round the rim—are likely to have come from Urartu.

Sargon evidently played his part astutely in these political intrigues, aided no doubt by his energetic and able son, Sennacherib. Another document records the receipt in Calah of captured treasure<sup>10</sup>—booty, including ivories from Mutallu, king of Kummukh, who resided in distant Melidu (Malatia). Moreover, the account of the eighth campaign against Urartu has a vast list of booty which included ivories of all description, some of them undoubtedly of the kind discovered by Loftus and ourselves in this very palace. Among this treasure, there was a silver shield decorated with lions' heads in the style of a silver gilt bowl found in Fort Shalmaneser (ch. XVI, p. 430), and ivory sceptres overlaid with gold which were also found in abundance in this palace.<sup>11</sup>

The list of Urartian booty is in fact a most interesting commentary on many of the fragmentary treasures discovered not only in the Burnt Palace but elsewhere in Nimrud, and demonstrates clearly that the ivories had served as ornaments for a great variety of royal domestic furniture: beds, chairs, and tables, as well as boxes, caskets, scabbards and the like. The constant military and political intercourse between Assyria and the many kingdoms and dependencies of north Syria and Asia Minor accounts for the presence of much foreign artistry in the treasuries of Calah. Resemblances between motifs on the Nimrud ivories and stone reliefs at Carchemish and the similarity of some ivories found at Zinjirli in the state of Sam'al on the borders of north-west Syria to others from Nimrud, must likewise be due to frequent Assyrian contact with the north.

It may seem surprising that if Sargon was so closely connected with the Burnt Palace, he did not leave evidence of his name in the shape of dedicatory inscriptions. But in fact the place was no more than a temporary residence while he was erecting his new capital at Khorsabad, and a letter addressed to the king is proof that the governor of Calah was responsible for building a part of the walls designed for that town.<sup>12</sup> Indeed, the new palace was never finished, and apparently was not fit for residence before 707 B.C., only two years before the king's death. It is therefore not unlikely that some of the ivories found at Nimrud were intended eventually for Khorsabad, but never removed; of this we have already seen evidence in the ivory omen texts found in the N.W. Palace (ch. x).

There is therefore much to account for the accumulation by Sargon of so many treasures within this very building whence he had initiated many of his successful campaign, and to which some of the fruits returned. With this background in mind, we may observe how the building was organized and where the principal objects were found.

In the first place, the irregularity of the plan [135] is striking, for the long eastern wall swings round gradually in a north-westerly direction and is never parallel with the western one. This observation warrants the inference that the Burnt Palace was an adaptation of an older building: the stratigraphic proof we shall examine later on. As Sargon no doubt only regarded the Burnt Palace as a temporary residence, its archaic layout was sufficient, and indeed we know that some considerable remodelling took place, for the throne-room was partly rebuilt, and the antechamber which had confronted it in an earlier period was pulled down.

Unfortunately, we know little about the uses to which the various rooms were put, apart from the throne-room, because the original furnishings and apparatus connected with them had been removed after the destruction of the main building. In a later period rooms 37, 38, 40 in the western wing were used for domestic purposes, for they contained bread ovens and some fragments of rough kitchen ware, but this can hardly be taken as proof of their original function. It is however probable that rooms, 7, 11, 20, 30 and 32 in the eastern wing were for official use: the niches in the walls of two of the rooms were carefully contrived and could have been storage cupboards for articles of value, whilst room 7 contained some precious ivories. The north end of the building about court 45 was primarily a passage-way and served perhaps as a residence for high officers: the large rooms 40 and 42 could have been used either as magazines or as state apartments.

The throne-room 8 was, as might be expected, the most elaborate part of the building, and must have been renovated more than once. Throughout its lifetime it seems to have been decorated with painted murals, which during Sargon's reign consisted of geometric designs in green, red and cobalt blue on a white ground—for traces of these colours were found buried in the throne-room and in the passage-way 39 beneath the footings of later plaster. More extensive fragments had survived of the latest painted murals, which consisted of plain horizontal stripes of red paint spaced at broad intervals on a white lime background. The date of this simple but effective decoration can be ascribed to the period of Assur-etil-ilani, the penultimate king of Assyria, who was probably responsible for similar mural paintings in the palace AB, south of Ezida (p. 293).

Against the background of geometrical wall-paintings we may visualize the king's throne, which must have stood at the east end of the room on top of the mud-brick dais raised 40 centimetres above the level of the main floor [138]. It was on this dais that hundreds of ivory fragments were found, many of them lying on charred, carbonized wood. Here were abundant signs of a violent conflagration, the ashes of which lay in places 60 centimetres deep. The virulence of the fire could be most easily discerned on the charred walls, where it had baked the mud plaster to a hard terracotta, and blackened and scarred the brickwork beneath it with soot. In room 7, adjoining the throne-room, the burnt-brick pavement had turned yellow, licked by the flames which had been fanned by the wind during the destruction. Here the evidence of the final holocaust was all too clear. The date of this catastrophe we now know from decisive evidence in the adjacent building Ezida: it was part of the general destruction which was caused by the Median and Babylonian attack, probably in the year 614 B.C. This conclusion, reached after many seasons of investigation, was indeed a surprise, for

until we found a tablet dated to 616 B.C. in the burnt debris of Ezida which had been destroyed concurrently, no inscriptions had appeared to warrant this assumption, and we had therefore believed that the main destruction had occurred at the end of the reign of Sargon, whose activities were so abundantly illustrated on the tablets.<sup>13</sup> There had, moreover, been much to suggest that the style of the ivories was for the most part not later than the 8th century, and perhaps even earlier. Indeed, that assumption is still valid, but we now realize that these collections of ivories and associated objects were retained by successive Assyrian kings generation after generation. Their practice was entirely in keeping with ours: we may build a new house or renovate an old one, but we retain within it family china and furniture which is often centuries older than the rooms in which we live, and to our old collections of knick-knacks we add modern pieces. That is the problem: to pick out of the Nimrud ivories what is new and what is old; we shall see as we examine individual pieces what criteria there are to guide us.

However that may be, there is, as we have already seen, much evidence in the Burnt Palace of Sargon and of his successors. The broad paved stone strip leading up to the royal dais was on the scale used at Khorsabad, and the decoration of the stone paving-slabs was similar. Many fragments of glass bowls in the same room were also appropriate to Sargon's reign, when glass was becoming common, although some of these specimens could have been made in the 7th century. There were, it is true, a few traces of materials which could be dated later and were at first wrongly attributed to the period which succeeded the holocaust. Important evidence in this respect was a contract tablet dated to the reign of Esarhaddon or his successor, possibly as late as 666 B.C., in the passageway 39.14 Moreover, a single inscribed brick of Assur-etil-ilani (625-623? B.C.)15 found in a Loftus tunnel along the south wall of the throne-room, and therefore rejected by us as evidence, can now be accepted as contemporary with its latest occupation, for similar inscribed bricks occurred in the appropriate strata both in Ezida and in the palace AB. Indeed the assumption that the main plan of the Burnt Palace [135] falls within the period 722-612 B.C. is one that fits best with the long stratigraphic succession. It may seem surprising that this took so long to determine, but it has to be appreciated that the solution of the problem had been bedevilled by the numerous tunnels cut in the preceding century. These nearly always run parallel with the walls and so had cut away the vital evidence which modern archaeological method so often recovers from the direct contiguity between the rubbish-fill in the interior of a room and the wall face itself.

Many different kinds of objects were recovered from this building. Not a large quantity of pottery could be expected in a palace, but apart from some typical domestic utensils, there were a few sherds of a fine red ring-burnished ware which could be matched at Hama in the Orontes valley and in Samaria. Metal objects were rare, for most of them had no doubt long ago been looted; but a beautifully made bronze linchpin, ND2136, from an Assyrian chariot deserves illustration [142]: its function could be determined from a stone relief of

142. ND2136 (B). Bronze linch-pin, length 13.5 cm., from the hub of an Assyrian chariot, surmounted by the figure of a bearded man, praying. Found in upper rubbish of room 32, c.722 B.C.





III ND1095(B) Caryatid. Height 16.7 cm. From throne-room of Burnt Palace. See p. 211.





143 (Left). ND1663(AM). Rock crystal bowl, translucent, diameter originally 7.8 cm., maximum thickness 0.85 cm., decorated with an engraved chevron design simulating a floral calyx of the lotus (?). Sargonid c.700 B.C. from throne-room, Burnt Palace.

144 (*Right*). ND1075 (i)(B), length 7 cm. Egyptian style wig or crown, once part of a statuette, composed of 'Egyptian blue' and ivory-white tesselations with traces of faience and gold leaf overlay. From throne-room, Burnt Palace. See p. 211.

the Achaemenian period at Persepolis where a male head appears on the hub of a chariot-wheel. This symbolic piece may therefore have been a talisman intended as a safeguard for the king's life while he was riding in his chariot.<sup>16</sup> Although found out of place amid later debris, it may be assigned to the 8th century B.C.

Perhaps the most unexpected finds in the throne-room debris were fragments of glass bowls and cylindrical vases, much weathered by moisture; two of them were decorated with a chevron of glass threads. For the manufacture of these and other glass vessels found elsewhere at Nimrud, various methods appear to have been used including grinding, drilling, engraving, the lathe and the lostwax process, (see appendix III where Axel von Saldern has discussed these problems in detail). Since there is evidence that glass became prized in the reign of Sargon, some of them may have been made as early as 715 B.C., a period at which elaborately decorated glass was known at Gordion in Phrygia. But on the whole it seems more likely that the throne-room fragments date from the 7th century: none of them is later than 612 B.C.; they were associated with several specimens of 'Egyptian blue'. In shape and decoration some of these glass bowls were probably similar to a remarkable bowl in translucent rock crystal shaped like the calyx of a lotus flower, ND1663 [143].

Other contemporary glass fragments were also found in room 23 of the palace. But the tradition of glass-making on the site had survived long after the end of the Assyrian empire, for on the south side of room 47 there were traces of kilns

145. ND2135(AM), ivory comb, 11×7.5×1 cm. Room 30, Burnt Palace. See p. 211. Scale c. 4/5







and of a glassmaker's kit, including one specimen of sealing-wax red glass, probably from a crucible. This red glass was of the lead silicate type coloured with cuprous oxide and contained 22.8 per cent of lead oxide. The kilns with which this fragment was associated had been sunk from a level containing Hellenistic pottery which could be dated about 200 B.C. This specimen is therefore comparable with others of about the same period from the island of Elephantine in Egypt, and illustrates in an interesting way the spread of technological invention in the Near East, for it appears that Mesopotamian redlead glass was unknown before the Hellenistic era.<sup>17</sup> Another interesting find in the post 612 B.C. ash-belt in room 47 was the stone stamp seal ND3201 [95], probably of Syrian origin, (see ch. x, p. 160 and note 35).

146. ND1095 (B), height 16.7 cm. Pair of chryselephantine caryatid figurines; nude females, the crowns surmounted by a foliate capital, bangles an the wrists. Traces of gold leaf survive on the crown and on the hair; the eyes were once incrusted. The crowns are an antique type which is worn by a queen or priestess depicted on an ivory at Megiddo; see also note 18 for reference to other examples from T. Halaf. These caryatids may have been the handles of fans or fly-whisks. In Egypt caryatid figures of the end of the 8th century B.C. served as mirror-handles. Photographs are by Antran of the Iraq Antiquities Dept.; the one below was taken against a mirror. Face, left breast of one of the figures, and the capital were embedded in ash and are blackened, but the remainder retains the natural ivory colour. Found in burnt debris on the floor in the centre of the throne-room, Burnt Palace.



#### THE BURNT PALACE

Among the objects found in the throne-room was an Egyptian-style, doubtless Phoenician-made, miniature crown composed of faience and gold leaf overlay; the surface is embellished with 'Egyptian blue' and white tessellations of 'glassy' paste. This remarkable specimen, ND1075(i) [144], now in the Iraq Museum, Baghdad, has not been submitted to chemical analysis, but it illustrates the kind of workmanship popular in royal circles at the time, and again may be dated to the end of the 8th or to the 7th century B.C. Probably it was part of some composite figurine; the head may have been of wood or of ivory. Appropriately, in a palace which revealed so many different hair-styles, there was also a good specimen of an ivory comb with finely sawn teeth, ND2135 [145].

Of all the discoveries in the Burnt Palace the ivories were outstanding. The carved females especially have an arresting and varied personality; they form an important addition to the already rich collection discovered by Loftus a century ago. Two examples depicting caryatid females were found: ND1095 [146] is the better preserved. Here is a pair of nudes, back to back, with long tresses of hair which fall on to the breasts. They wear antique crowns of a type already figured on an ivory carving at Megiddo in the 13th century B.C. The heads are surmounted by foliate capitals; there are bangles on the wrists; the completed figures may have worn anklets. The emphasis on the mons Veneris and the full breasts, and the sensuous rendering of the body, evoke the idea of sex and procreation which was particularly associated with the divinity of Astarte or Ishtar whose cults were widespread in Babylonia, Assyria, Syria and Phoenicia: their origin is difficult to determine. Were these figures images of ladies in the royal harem, hand-maidens of the queens of Assyria, votaresses of a cult? There are no texts to answer the question. Apparently they were made to be the handles of fans or fly-whisks; they were certainly luxurious objects of great value; their crowns were overlaid with gold, some of which survives. ND1644 [147] depicts another set of burnt carvatids, and this time there are four figures instead of two, back to back. They may well have been made to the order of Sargon; if so, they would have been contemporary with the caryatid gilded silver mirror handles possessed by the Pharaoh Shabako, 716-701 (?) B.C., found in his tomb at el Kurru in Nubia.18

No less fascinating are the female heads from various rooms, including the throne-room. Nearly all of them were lying in ash and are burnt black, with that miraculously permanent polish given to ivory by carbonization in a wood fire. One of the most striking, ND2102 [148–9], wearing heavy earrings, is crowned with a rosette and papyrus (?) diadem, and headcloth from which pomegranate tassels are suspended. This fruit, with its numerous seeds, evoked the concept of fertile sexual union and was appropriate to the temple harlot. The concept of motherhood is represented by a fully draped figure, ND1610 [158], holding a child to the breast; to one side of the body is an object which has been interpreted as a swaddling band.<sup>19</sup>

147. ND1644 (Met. Mus. N.Y.), height 11 cm. Four ivory caryatid figures, of nude maidens wearing crowns, back to back, blackened through exposure to a wood-fire and found embedded in ash, close to [146], throne-room, Burnt Palace. Scale c. 1/1







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Other heads illustrate a varied selection of female types with many different styles of hairdressing and crowns: ND2100 [150], the antique crown formerly worn at Megiddo; ND2105 [151], lotus buds; ND1189 [152], and ND2104 [156], pomegranate tassels; ND2101 [153–4], a charming maiden wearing neck-laces and long tresses of hair carved in rectangular blocks; ND1187 [157], with fleshy nose—on top of the head there is the stump of a capital; ND1658 [155], with coiled fillet and two rows of curls.

A particularly fine example is ND2103 [159], with minutely scored strands of hair parted in a v over the forehead, which is surmounted by rosettes and gold discs embedded in frit. The double knot by which the hair is bound at the back of the head is an interesting anticipation of a hairstyle on Greek *korai* of the early 6th century B.C. Compare for example an east Greek statue from Samos, considered by Humfry Payne to be by a Naxian artist; the blocked form of the hair reproduces a technique long familiar among the Nimrud ivories. We need have little doubt therefore that this and other east Greek heads of c.600 B.C. are directly attributable to Oriental influence. Indeed Payne has said of them: 'they reflect an essentially un-Attic point of view', but they 'played an important part in the development of Attic style'.<sup>20</sup>

In these Nimrud ivories we may recognize the extent to which some archaic Greek statuary is indebted to the Orient. We need not exaggerate the debt, for Oriental art was converted to its classical forms by the individual Greek genius which had germinated from seed transmitted from the Levant through the East Greek islands and Greece itself. Cyprus and Crete were also involved in the process. In Greece, some of the strongest evidence for contact with the Orient is to be seen in the votive deposits of the early temple in Perachora (Gulf of Corinth) and in Sparta. At the latter site there were thousands of figurines,





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148-56. Ivory heads of females, found embedded in ash in various rooms of the Burnt Palace. They illustrate the different types of head-dresses, crowns, and hair-styles. All of them were blackened and have taken a high polish through exposure to fire during the sack of Nimrud, but the grey colour of [150] indicates that it was lightly burned. See pp. 211-5. Scale c. 1/1

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148. ND2102 (Met. Mus., N.Y.). Height 40 mm. Note the frontlet on the crown, the courtesan's headcloth with pomegranate tassels pendent from it. From floor of room 23.

149. ND2102. Profile view of [148]. Crown decorated with rosettes and papyrus (?) twists; the carvings are unusual.

**150.** ND2100 (B), height 43 mm. Wears the archaic, compartmented, royal (?) crown first represented on an ivory at Megiddo in the 13th century B.C. and still familiar in Assyria during the 8th century. Eyes formerly inlaid with a coloured paste. Floor of room 23.

151. ND2105. Height 40 mm. Crown decorated with lotus buds; hair on top of head in fine strands and quartered radially from top of head. Room 23.

152. ND1189 (B). Height 50 mm. Hair represented in fine strands; pomegranate headcloth. Back of head slightly concave. East end of throne-room.

**153.** ND2101 (B). Height 43 mm. Three-quarter face view. Hair in the heavy, blocked style falls radially from top of head and is bound by a fillet. Note also necklaces and the tenon at base for morticing into a wooden (?) body. Found in ash in the top debris of room 39 at the level on which Hellenistic walls were founded.

154. ND2101. Profile view of [153].

**155.** ND1658 (BM). Also published by R. D. Barnett *CNI* pl. xcviii, s.348. Height 75 mm. Back view of female with curls, face missing, showing an elaborate style of hairdressing, with curls and coiled fillet of hair round forehead and back. East end of throne-room.

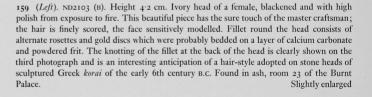
156. ND2104 (B). Height 34 mm. Hair represented in heavy, blocked style. Pomegranate headcloth. Room 23.





157 (*Above*). ND1187. (Met. Mus. N.Y.). Profile, front and back views. Height 35 mm. Heavy blocked style of hair, fragment of stump of a capital on top of head. East end of throne-room. See p. 212. Scale c. 1/1

**158** (*Right*). ND1610. Height 4.8 cm. Ivory female wearing long mantle with girdle and carrying a child. Adjoining the waist, below the elbow, is a carving which has been interpreted either as swaddling clothes or the placenta. Throne-room, Burnt Palace. Scale c. 4/5



160. ND2114 (B). Length 18 cm. Ivory torso of nude maiden swimming (front view below and back view at foot of opposite page); the head, missing, was originally dowelled to the body; the figure was probably attached to an ivory cosmetic bowl and supposedly pushing it through the water. Similar figures were found by Loftus, see R. D. Barnett CNI pls l, li. From room 23, Burnt Palace.









162. ND1556 (B). Height 4 cm. Ivory torso of a nude female, bewigged, beautiful modelling. Throne-room, Burnt Palace. Scale c. 3/4



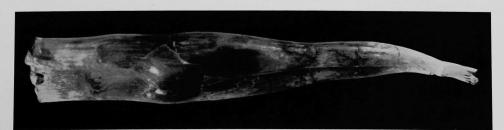
including bone images of Artemis Orthia and lead plaques depicting winged females and monsters of the 7th century B.C., which, although Greek in style and execution, must be directly related to approximately contemporary minor works of art in Assyria.<sup>21</sup> At Perachora<sup>22</sup> an ivory sphinx, couchant rams, an ivory head, seals, and a bone figurine of Hera dated c.700–675 B.C., while already Greek in style, may have been indirectly influenced by the Oriental schools of carving which at a slightly earlier period had produced carvings of the kind so frequently discovered in the Burnt Palace at Nimrud.

It is also interesting that in 6th century Greece, the effect of statuary was heightened by inlaying the pupils of the eyes with coloured glass,<sup>23</sup> a method perhaps derived from the technique of applying coloured frit incrustation to Oriental ivories. Indeed, the great chryselephantine statue of Athene Promachos in the Parthenon may be recognized as the last stage in this particular line of descent from Oriental art. This is hardly surprising when we reflect that as late as the 6th and 5th centuries B.C., the Greek sculptor may have seen Oriental antiquities which had been looted from the palaces of Assyria in 612 B.C. and thereafter transmitted to other parts of the Levant and Western Asia.

There is difficulty in deciding the original functions of all the female heads found in the Burnt Palace. Some, as we have seen, were parts of fan handles or fly-whisks of which simpler forms are depicted on the older stone bas-reliefs of Assur-nasir-pal. Others, such as ND2104 [156], may be variants of the type known as the 'Lady at the Window',<sup>24</sup> the courtesan or votaress whom we shall meet again in the furniture of Fort Shalmaneser (ch. XVII): these could have served as ornaments between the upper and lower arms of royal thrones in the manner depicted on the famous garden scene relief of Assur-bani-pal at Nineveh; but it is doubtful whether this peculiar form of ornament occurs in the Burnt Palace, for none of the miniature window frames which should go with it have been found. Some of the heads in the round, such as ND2103 [159-60], may have been parts of small composite statues with wooden bodies overlaid with gold: considerable quantities of wood were in fact discovered on the dais in the throne-room; but these again could equally well have adorned furniture—chairs, tables, or the like.

Delight in the carving of the female form is also shown by the svelte bodies of nude swimming maidens, as on ND2114 [160-1], once attached to cosmetic bowls which they pushed in front of them. These, perhaps carved in Phoenician workshops, were directly inspired by Egyptian prototypes, examples of which have also been found on Syrian sites for example, at Alalakh<sup>25</sup> in the Orontes valley and are as early as the New Kingdom era, 14th century B.C.; very delicately rendered is a lovely female torso ND1556 [162].

161. Back view of [160].





163 (*Left*). ND2106(AM). Ivory head, height 54 mm., male, wearing a truncated form of Egyptian double crown. Long tresses of hair at the sides, bound just above the curled ends; a tenon projects at the bottom for mortising in to a wooden (?) body; note the double necklace. Very fine carving. Room 23, Burnt Palace. Scale c. 4/5



164 (*Right*). ND1145 (Met. Mus. N.Y.). Ivory head of a bearded male, height 4.5 cm., wearing fillet and long side tresses of hair well modelled. Throne-room, Burnt Palace. Scale c. 4/5

Much rarer are the male heads, of which the finest is ND2106 [163], wearing the high Egyptian double crown, with long tresses of hair falling at the side. Also unique is a bearded head, ND1145 [164], and another, ND1605 [165], wearing a pointed neo-Hittite type of helmet with the horns of divinity on the front, comparable with one depicted as worn by a god on a rock-cut relief at Ivriz. Finally we may note ND1147(B) the portly torso of a headless male figurine wearing a kind of kilt [166]; he may well be descended through Phoenicia from the Egyptian-style Shaikh el Beled.

The pyxis, a cylindrical box, was another class of object much favoured by the ivory carver, for a practical reason. When sawing the thick end of an elephant's tusk one of the natural shapes that emerges is a cylinder from which the artisan has only to scrape out the *medulla* to be in possession of a hollow receptacle such as is commonly cut by Indian craftsmen today. The finest example, ND1642 [168], was found in the doorway of room 7. This depicts a procession of court musicians clad in fashionable linen raiment. The men are bewigged and, like the women, wear a long fringed coat with short sleeves, girt at the waist : the women may be distinguished by their short hair which is curled over the nape of the neck. The instruments are the lyre, drum, and double pipes or flute; the background consists of voluted palmette trees, and there is a guilloche border to the vessel. Another fine example of a musical pyxis discovered in the same building by Loftus indicates that the missing portion of ours must have depicted an enthroned queen with banquet spread before her on a table terminating in lion's



**165.** ND1605 (B). Ivory head, male, height 5.2 cm. in three-quarter relief, a fragment of a plaque doubtless once decorated with other figures, wearing a pointed helmet with two tiers of horns, symbolic of divinity. The form of the helmet is unusual in that it covers the ears and has additional protection in the form of a leather (?) back-cloth which falls down over the nape of the neck. Interesting for comparison is the rock-cut relief of the god Tarhuntas at Ivriz in Asia Minor dedicated c.740 B.C. by King Urpalla of Tabal, a vassal of Tiglath-Pileser III, c.740 B.C. and probably approximately contemporary with the Nimrud ivory. The neo-Hittite relief depicts a helmet of similar form with two tiers of horns, but without cheekpiece and flap. The Ivriz relief is illustrated in H.Th. Bossert, *Altanatolien*, no. 796. From west end of throne-room, Burnt Palace.

166. ND1147 (B). Ivory torso, height 7 cm., of a portly male figure, reminiscent of the ancient Egyptian 'Shaikh el Beled'. Below the girdle, a kind of embroidered apron. The rings above the elbow perhaps indicate that the figure was presented as wearing a tight-fitting short-sleeved, upper garment. Throne-room of Burnt Palace. Scale c. 1/1

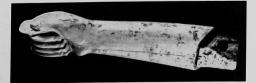
feet.<sup>26</sup> An ivory leg of similar design which must once have belonged to a stool was found later, in Fort Shalmaneser, ND6383 [335] (see ch. XVI, p. 408). It is also of interest that a tablet, ND6219, discovered in Fort Shalmaneser, referred to the king's male choir which included Kassite, north Syrian and Assyrian singers, a further testimony to the Assyrian's delight in music. The scene on the Nimrud pyxis reminds us of a passage in the account of Sargon's campaign against Urartu, where he describes his victorious return to the Assyrian camp to the accompaniment of singers, harps and tabors.<sup>27</sup>

Fragments of a similar box, ND2232 [78], were found in the well NN of the N.W. Palace, and another, ND1143 [169], in the Burnt Palace. The latter could be joined to some incomplete pieces found by Loftus a century ago, and is of technical interest because, as Barnett has pointed out, a circular peg was inserted into the dress of one of the ladies depicted on it, in order to replace a defective knot in the ivory.<sup>28</sup>

It was also satisfactory that a fragment, ND1155 [170], found by us in 1951, could be joined to another found in 1854, exhibited in the British Museum.<sup>29</sup> This unique object, which may perhaps have served as a lid, depicts a seated lady, perhaps a goddess, the  $\Pi \delta \tau \nu \iota a \Theta \eta \rho \bar{\omega} \nu$  within her sanctuary, the framework of which reproduces the embrasure typical of doorways in 8th and 7th century Assyrian palaces. The door itself is flanked by a pair of lions; the central portion of the lid depicts a procession of long-horned cattle, and we may infer that the lady is regarded as mistress of the herds. The iconography is very ancient, for the prototype of this scene figures on Sumerian cylinder seals of the Jamdat Nasr period, before 3000 B.C. A spread eagle on this same box closely resembles one depicted on a bronze bowl associated with Sargon (722–705 B.C.) found by Layard in the N.W. Palace. The architecture of the doorway indicates a date not earlier than the 8th century B.C.

[171-2] illustrate another ivory, ND2116, which, if not a box-lid, must have been purely ornamental: it has protruding ledge handles. If it was a lid, the decoration on its sides would have been concealed until the lid was lifted. The holes drilled into the surface of the ivory around the rosette were designed to fix models of calves and flowers (see ND2107 [173]). This was a welcome discovery, for hitherto, although many such animals had been found, no one

167. ND766. (B). Ivory forearm and hand, length 8 cm., with perforated tenon for fixing on to a statuette. The hand is holding some object between forefinger and thumb. Found together with a collection of other ivories in room HH, domestic wing of the N.W. Palace. See ch. VIII, p. 113. Scale c. 1/1









168 (Above). ND1642(B). Ivory pyxis, or ointment box, height about 6 cm., depicting a band of royal musicians, men and women, elaborately dressed in long, fringed coats girdled at the waist, playing lyre, drum and flute. Guilloche border at top and bottom, between the figures voluted palmette trees with fronds. Note the difference in the hair-styles: the man wears a heavy Egyptian or Phoenician wig; the women's hair in fine strands falls in a buch with curled ends against the nape of the neck. Similar boxes decorated with musical scenes were found by Loftus in 1854 and show that these were court musicians playing before enthroned royalty. Tablets of the 8th century B.C. discovered in Fort Shalmaneser were concerned with the provisioning of the king's musicians (p. 408). Found in room 7 near the entrance to the throne-room of the Burnt Palace. See p. 216. Scale c. 1/1

169 (Left). ND1143 (BM). Ivory pyxis fragment, height 6.2 cm., depicting a female carrying bunches of lotus flowers, and striding in a lotus field; guilloche border; dowel hole at top; hole in the garment has been patched in antiquity, perhaps to conceal a flaw in the ivory. The empanelled scene is comparable with another on a pyxis fragment from the well NN of N.W. Palace, ch. IX. [78]. This fragment made a join with another from the same pyxis found by Loftus in 1854, illustrated in CNI, pl. xxvii. From a Loftus tunnel, against south wall of the throne-room, at its eastern end. See p. 217. Scale c. 4/5



170. ND1155 (BM). Ivory fragment of a box lid (?) 5.5 cm. across, jointed with a much larger fragment found by Loftus in 1854; the *disjecta membra* now brought together are illustrated by R. D. Barnett, *CNI*, pl. lxv. The scene depicted an enthroned lady, the  $\Pi \delta \tau \nu a \; \Theta \eta \rho \omega \nu$ , within a shrine that has recessed doors, flanked on either side by rampant lions. From the throne-room of the Burnt Palace. See p. 217. Scale c. 1/I

171. ND2116 (Met. Mus., N.Y.). Ivory lid of a pyxis, heavily burnt, diameter 10.4 cm., height 14 mm., the top (*right*) decorated with a double rosette. The projecting ledges are unusual; the dowel holes were intended to fix recumbent calves and vegetation which decorated the top of the lid, as is proved by ND2107 [173]. Found near the door at the north-west end of room 2. See p. 217. Scale c. 4/5

172 (Below). Enlarged photograph of [171] showing the band of running ostriches and palms in high relief which decorated the sides.

173 (Foot of page). ND2107 (B). Ivory lid (?) of a pyxis, diameter 12:5 cm., the top decorated with recumbent calves which are dowelled to it, and vegetation. Dot borders and rosettes on the sides. Many ivory calves with mortice holes beneath them were found in the same building. See[174-5]. Room 23, Burnt Palace. See p. 217. Scale c. 3/4













174 (*Above left*). ND2108(AM). Ivory calf, length 47 mm., recumbent, originally dowelled to a box lid like ND2107 [173]. Many similar other ivories were found both by Loftus in 1854 (cf. *CNI* ci-cvi) and by the British School of Archaeology in Iraq Expedition in 1951–52, most of them beautifully carved. Room 23, Burnt Palace. Scale c. 1/1

175 (*Above right*). ND1157 (B). Ivory calf, length 36 mm. Similar to [174] but no two of these animals are identically rendered. Throne-room, Burnt Palace. Scale 2/1



176. NDI088 (B). Ivory bull,  $11.5 \times 8$  cm., slightly darkened by exposure to fire, a masterpiece of forceful carving; horns and ears, missing, were separately dowelled; faint traces of gold associated, probably overlay for the mane. The animal advances, head down on a circular base which is perhaps carved to represent matting. The back is slightly concave; rectangular tenons on the top of the body and beneath the base appear to indicate that the carving was originally affixed to a column like the columnar ivory found in Fort Shalmaneser. Found directly on the burnt floor of the throne-room, Burnt Palace. Scale c. 1/1

knew how they had been attached. The scene in relief on the sides depicts birds, apparently ostriches, running between palm trees: although not closely comparable in style, the birds remind us of those depicted on a cylinder seal of Urzana, king of Urartu, a contemporary of Sargon.<sup>30</sup> A glazed vase found in a 7th century level of the N.W. Palace is an even closer parallel: it depicts a hunting scene in which clumsy-looking ostriches are the objects of the chase [61].

The ivory ornament ND2107 [173] was found in room 23 of the palace; it is decorated on the side with rosettes; calves and lotus buds are fixed on the top. The highly stylized, beautifully carved animals are to be numbered among the most delightful miniatures of the time.<sup>31</sup> Two examples, ND1157 and ND2108, are illustrated here [174–5]. No less striking is ND1088 [176], a powerfully 177. ND1186. Ivory oliphant (?), length 7 cm., in the shape of a roaring lion; originally there was probably an unguent bowl between its extended forelegs. Fragments of others, partly similar, were found by Loftus, cf. *CNI* pls. xlix, l. The oil probably issued out of the hollow tube through the lion's mouth into the receptacle in front of it. Throne-room, Burnt Palace. Enlarged



modelled bull proceeding head down—a splendid sculpture, highly ornamented, which directly conveys to us the massive weight and strength of the animal. It stands on a circular fragment of a disc which, as the tenons above and below indicate, must have carried other carvings with it: small traces of gold were associated; the eye was no doubt once incrusted with coloured 'glass' or 'Egyptian blue'.

The skill of the ivory carver in representing animals is also displayed by a series of lions. ND1186 [177] is a fragment of an oliphant in the shape of a roaring lion through whose jaws sacred oil once flowed into a bowl held between the paws. Another specimen, ND1645 [178], is remarkable for the way in which it depicts the curls of the mane and for the strange conventionalization of the ears; it is closely comparable with one found at Zinjirli.<sup>32</sup>

Other miscellaneous items of ivory included fragments of winged sphinxes, a winged hawk crowned with sun-disc, and a plaque depicting a lion passant in low relief with flame-like markings on the rump, a trait which frequently appears on Assyrian ivories.

To examine every one of the thousands of ivory fragments in detail would be unnecessary and repetitive; but no account of the discoveries in the palace can be considered adequate without some reference to the large numbers of fragments of miniature work, many of them very delicately carved: some are engraved, others are in relief; and they include animal, floral and human designs of the categories already described. Many were parts of decorative plaques perhaps overlay for furniture, boxes, and other articles of luxury. Their survival proves that no scrap of ivory was wasted by the ancient carver, who devoted much time and skill to the adornment of small fragments of the tusk left over after the larger articles had been completed. Many of these items were in what is usually considered to be the 'Phoenician style', notably winged striding male figures in profile, barefoot, carved on thin slivers of ivory, for example, NDI092 [179–81], a winged boy holding the papyrus flower. Several of these small plaques bore quasi-alphabetical Phoenician or Aramaic craftsmen's signs

178. ND1645 (B). Ivory lion, diameter 5 cm., three-quarter relief, flat on underside and at the end holed for dowels, probably therefore a protomos or terminal to some piece of furniture. Vigorous, highly stylized carving, comparable to a Syrian figurine found at Zinjirli. Throneroom, Burnt Palace. Scale c. 1/1





179 (*Lcft*). ND1092 (7). Ivory plaque, height 8 cm., exceptionally thin in section, depicting a bewigged youth, holding a lotus flower and saluting a tree. Throne-room, Burnt Palace. See p. 221. Slightly enlarged

180 (*Right*). ND1092 (11). Height 4.3 cm. Ivory plaque, fragment, exceptionally thin in section, depicting a youth, bare-foot, standing in front of a voluted tree. Traces of gold-leaf. Throne-room, Burnt Palace. See p. 221. Slightly enlarged



on the back [182], had been overlaid with gold foil and had turned grey from exposure to fire. Characteristically Phoenician also is the well-rendered figure of the prophylactic dwarf demon, Bes, with unarticulated joints. This one, ND1510 [183], was in high relief, on a plaque. It is not unlikely that he is a product of the 7th century B.C., perhaps of the time of Esarhaddon, who conquered Egypt; Egyptian style amulets, possibly of Phoenician origin, then seem to have become popular in Assyria. Bes perhaps tended to supersede the older Mesopotamian demon Pazuzu: he survived into Hellenistic times as an aid to medicine, and was associated with Harpocrates.<sup>33</sup>

Lastly, one category of ivories found in some abundance, especially in the throne-room, was a series of cylindrical handles of staves or sceptres, many of them terminating in spherical knobs: large numbers were found by Loftus, a few more by us. They may well have been badges of office, sceptres or the like, for one of them was inscribed, within a cartouche, with the name Milki-ram in Aramaic characters. The name itself is not uncommon, but it is tempting to identify it with that of a high official who was *limmu* of Assyria in the year 656 B.C. and married the daughter of the *shakintu* 'of the New Palace', as we learnt from a marriage contract found elsewhere on the site.<sup>34</sup> If so much be admitted, then it may well be that in the 7th century the Burnt Palace was in fact called the 'New Palace' although by that time there were even more recent royal residences elsewhere in the town. Like New College, Oxford, one of the older colleges in that University, the New Palace, Calah, clung to its ancient name alongside later foundations.

We have previously seen that our Burnt Palace, whatever its ancient name may have been, flourished in its present form mainly during the last century of the Assyrian empire, c.722-612 B.C. What of its preceding and succeeding history? Its antecedents were determined through a meticulous examination of the underlying strata, the complexity of which is seen on [184-5, folder v]. The site itself proved to have been built on over a period of more than 1,000 years; but this included stages when the city was largely abandoned

181. ND1092 (5). Height 4 cm. Ivory plaque, exceptionally thin in section, depicting a winged youth, holding a lotus flower. Traces of gold leaf overlay. Throne-room, Burnt Palace. See p. 221. Slightly enlarged



and lying in ruins. Successive occupations have been classified into eight phases, represented by the letters of the alphabet A–H in the table at the end of ch. XIV, which resumes the combined evidence from the palace and Ezida.

Within the area occupied by the palace itself we can deduce that the first three phases, A-C [184], represented by fragments of pavement in the courtyard, are prior to the 9th century B.C.; and that the successions in each case represent only a very slight rise in level: the plan of the buildings to which these brick courses belonged is unknown, but already in A there must have been a construction of some importance since the pavement rests on a solid mudbrick platform of unknown depth. This platform continued to rise with each phase of new occupation. Phase B was represented also by drains and wall stumps, and the buckling and bending of bricks in the platform shows that at this time Calah experienced an earthquake: more than one was recorded in Assyrian inscriptions.35 Too little material was found to afford any precise dating evidence; but some potsherds in the street east of the palace are of a type associated with buildings of the 15th and 14th centuries at the Mitannian city of Nuzi. It is therefore probable that one of these three phases coincides with the earliest recorded city of Calah, that founded by Shalmaneser I who came to the throne in 1274 B.C. The south-east end of the akropolis had however been occupied long before that time, for a stone cistgrave discovered by Loftus<sup>36</sup> and still visible in a tunnel cut by him through the south-east corner of the throne-room dates back to the 18th century B.C. Moreover, ovate flint arrowheads of the Early Dynastic period and potsherds of the type known as Ninevite V prove that the original hamlet was in existence not long after 3000 B.C. Thus the evidence indicates that some part of the levels A-C falls within the period 1300-900 B.C. and that much earlier remains underlie them. A finely constructed brick-lined well with stone collar at the base [186-7], discovered at the north-west end of the palace courtyard, must have been first dug not later than the 13th century B.C.

Our fourth phase, D, has been well summarized by David Oates and J. H. Reid as follows<sup>37</sup>:

[This] marks a radical change both in the alignment and purpose of the building, and in methods of construction; its massive foundations outline for the first time the plan which, with internal modifications, is followed by the later palaces, focusing on the long throne-room which was their principal feature. The axis of this room, and of the adjacent structures on the

**183.** ND1510 (B). Ivory plaque,  $7 \times 4.5$  cm., depicting Bes in high relief. This prophylactic, lucky demon figure was introduced to Assyria through Phoenicia from Egypt and became very popular in the 7th century B.C., but whereas in Egypt he was usually naked, in Assyria he was given a loin-cloth. See also ch. xvt, p. 435. Found in courtyard no. 18 of the Burnt Palace. Scale c. 1/1

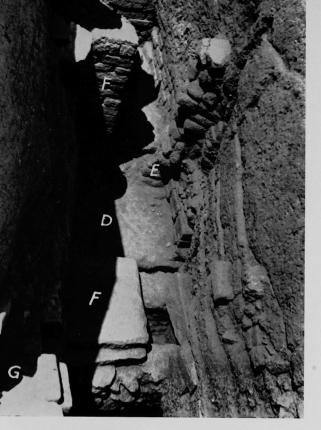




184. Successive levels in the courtyard of the Burnt Palace. Phase  $\Lambda$ , the earliest, is represented only by patches of pavement which underlay drains B and C; these three phases probably fall within the period 1300– 900 B.C. Phase F coincides with the reign of Sargon; G is a squatters' level, after 614 B.C.; H is post-Assyrian. See pp. 222–7.

north, is set at an angle of some 7 degrees to the line of the earlier walls and pavements, approaching more closely to a true east-west alignment; and this orientation is maintained throughout phases E and F. It controls the layout of part of the east wing and the whole of the west wing of the palace [135], whose inner wall, in the north-west corner of the courtyard, is carried over one side of a previously existing well by means of a brick relieving arch [187]. The date of this well in its original form is uncertain, since the insertion of the relieving arch involved the removal of the original well-head and the pavements associated with it, and the only pavement levels which we can trace are those of phases E and F overlying the arch. It must also remain doubtful whether the west wing was originally laid out in Phase E, or whether a Phase D level has been lost at this point. The north-east corner of the palace, on the other hand, adheres in Phase F to the earlier alignment, and it is a fair assumption that it had done so continuously. This involved an adjustment of a few degrees at some point along the east side, and the successive solutions of this problem are responsible for certain curious irregularities of plan which will be seen to occur.'

A glance at the plan on [135] shows how these observations explain its irregularity. The earliest A-C orientation is preserved in the alignment of the boundary wall on the east side of room 47, while to the south of it the wall



**185.** Drains and street levels between the Burnt Palace and the Nabu Temple façade; see Phases D, E, F, belonging to the 9th, 8th and 7th centuries respectively. Note in F the massive stone drain running under the street. See pp. 222-7.

swings round with gradual adjustments to follow the later orientation of D–F which is fully taken up in the western wing where later builders were in no way controlled by more ancient foundations.

In phase D, the different alignment of the walls was not the only marked deviation from an earlier orientation. A radical innovation was a change of axis in the street on the eastern side of the palace, for this now ran north-south instead of east-west. The formidable character of the architecture, the greater thickness of the walls, and the solidity of the stone drains, all suggest that this phase is to be attributed to the great rebuilding of the city which took place in the reign of Assur-nasir-pal, and it is reasonable to assume that he would not have left this important part of the akropolis untouched.<sup>38</sup>

The succeeding phase, E, which coincided with a widespread re-levelling of the foundation platform, was notable because at this time there was a great anteroom on the north side of the palace throne-room. All the evidence indicates that this was the time at which Sammuramat and her son Adad-nirari III devoted their attention to the south-east sector of the akropolis. The most distinctive feature of the construction on this phase was the use of clay bands to correct the levels of the mud-brick platform as it rose in height: this building device, which had been used before, was most clearly marked at this stage. The contemporary floor of the nearby Nabu temple was 3 metres higher than that of the palace on the other side of the street [140].

#### THE BURNT PALACE

The activities of the builders in the Burnt Palace at this time are also very clearly traced by a series of votive deposits consisting of small magical figurines made of sun-dried clay and buried in boxes under the floor. One of the principal types, the armed warrior [188–9], is obviously reminiscent in style of the stone statues of Nabu discovered at the outer portals to the temple, and indeed there are references to the making of such figures as early as the reign of Shalmaneser III (859–824 B.C.), as well as in that of Assur-nirari V (754–745 B.C.).<sup>39</sup>

The boxes which contained these figurines were usually buried in the corners of the rooms; the figures themselves sometimes, but not always, faced inwards towards the centre of the room. This magical practice had an immensely long survival, as witness the nursery rhyme:

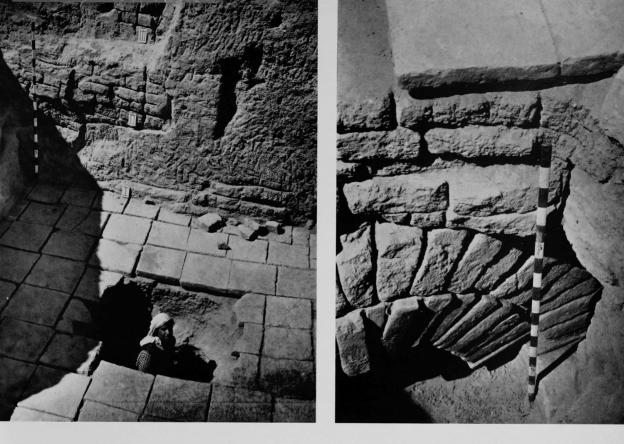
> Four corners to my bed, Four angels round my head, One to watch and one to pray, And two to bear my soul away.

[190] shows the shape of the boxes exposed in the platform under the floor. In room 37 [192], there was a bull-man probably representing the Sumerian mythical hero Gilgamesh who was still warmly regarded by the Assyrians. With him was a warrior, a standing figure, bearded and bewigged, clasping a spear against the front of his body. Other figures of the kind represent men wearing hoods in the guise of fish-skins, who may have been the attendants of the god of magic, Ea.

Most entertaining are the sets of seven bird-headed figurines carrying buckets in their left hand, winged, marked on the back with red or black stripes, and coated with white plaster of which substantial traces often remained [191]. They correspond almost exactly to the prescriptions in a text from Assur which disclose both the technique of making them and their identity. 'Seven clay statues of the Wise Ones, furnished with faces of birds and wings, carrying in their right hands a "purifier", and in their left a ritual-cup, clad in gypsum, cloaked with wings of birds upon their shoulders, bury in the foundation of the house or at the head of the bed, recite before them the incantation: "Ye statues of Wise Ones, watchmen." '<sup>40</sup>

The bucket in their left hands indicated a traditional relationship with the magical genii represented on the stone reliefs of the N.W. Palace: such buckets were still carried by the cone-bearing winged figures erected by Sargon on the citadel gate at Khorsabad, and by an 8th century ivory figure discovered at Fort Shalmaneser (ch. XVII, [575]). At Assur variants of the type were found buried under the floor of a house belonging to an incantation priest, both singly and in boxes containing the seven.<sup>41</sup>

The textual evidence suggests that these images were thought of as guardians, protective against evil spirits like the miniature watch-dogs buried under doorsills and prophylactic against sickness. Indeed, an Assyrian letter to Esarhaddon records that the necessary incantation had been recited and the proper images made in order to free one of his palaces from pestilence, sickness and death.<sup>42</sup> Sometimes such figurines were placed near to the bed of a sick person. Their survival in sets of seven is a reminder of the eternal magic associated with that number; the casting out of the seven devils in the New Testament is a classic example.



186 (Above left). Well in the courtyard of the Burnt Palace at the time of its discovery, and general view of the pavement. See p. 224.

187 (*Above right*). Well, showing relieving arch beneath the pavement of which two bricks are shown at the top. See p. 224.

These boxes with their votive deposits are thus the most interesting evidence we have of the palace in phase E; and while the majority of them are contemporary with it, notably the seven, it is probable that some of those buried in the west wing, especially the bull-man and warrior, belong to the subsequent phase F, that is to the palace of Sargon contemporary with the ivories, the plan of which in [135] has been almost completely recovered. In Sargon's reign, the types of magical figures changed: to his reign especially may human bodies with lion's heads be attributed; and further changes of type occurred thereafter.

Of the building phases subsequent to the Burnt Palace, there is little to be said, for the succession was much better illustrated in the palace AB and in the trenches dug south of Ezida (ch. xv). When the great holocaust was over, the building, although inhabited, ceased to be a king's palace. After 612 B.C., when the Assyrian monarchy had collapsed, the place was used by squatters who sought shelter under its walls, many of which still stood to a great height. At the





188-9 (*Left*). ND3516-7 (Met. Mus., N.Y.). Sun-dried clay figurines of bearded warriors, height about 14 cm., heavily bewigged and holding long spears in front of the body. Like the *apkalle* they were covered in white plaster and buried in the corners of the rooms, notably 9, 14-16, 27, 37, 38, 39 of the Burnt Palace. They were not all deposited at the same period: some appear to date from the 9th century, others may have been deposited when repairs were being made, in Sargon's reign, and subsequently. See p. 226.

**190** (*Above*). A foundation box which had contained a warrior figurine dug out of the mud-brick platform of the Burnt Palace within which it was embedded. See p. 226.

191 (*Above right*). ND3522, front and back views. Height 14 cm. Sun-dried clay figurine of the four-winged, bird-headed *apkallu* carrying bucket in the left hand. Found in sets of seven in corner of various rooms under the floors of the Burnt Palace, they were known in the magical texts as the 'wise ones' and their function was to keep illness out of the house. The clay was covered with white gypsum plaster and the wings were decorated with painted stripes on the back. Sets of the seven were recovered from rooms 9, 17 and 27. These appear to have been laid down at the time of the foundation by Adad-nirari III, c.800 B.C. See p. 226.

192 (Below right). A pair of figurines, bull-man and warrior, ND3604, lying in foundation box under floor, south-east corner of room 37, Burnt Palace. See p. 226.



### THE BURNT PALACE

south-west end of the building the passage-way 39 was repaved with burnt brick askew to the line of the older pavement. A gate was built at the north end of the passage and a stepped threshold at the entrance consisted of a stone block carved with rosettes which had been torn up and wrenched out of the old throne-room now in disuse. The broken, burnt, and mutilated ivories which must have been dug up from time to time were treated as waste, for a fragment of a miniature, carved ivory capital from a sceptre was found buried in the door-socket box at the passage entrance. Some of the rooms in the west wing were turned into kitchens, and a stone threshold<sup>43</sup> in the doorway to court 45 at the extreme north end of the building, originally decorated with a design of rosettes in relief, had been chiselled smooth as if the new comers, perhaps Medes or Babylonians, deliberately wished to obliterate all memory of the Assyrians.

The dates of the two phases of occupation subsequent to F, which saw the end of the palace, are unfortunately not indicated by any documents. But the short period of squatting, phase G, simply represents the return of impoverished survivors to the ruins. Phase H represents a more substantial effort at reconstruction, patching and re-plastering of some of the old walls, re-laving of a few pavements, and in some places, especially in the adjacent Ezida and Nabu Temple, the raising of the level by a little over I metre. The stratified evidence indicates that this period of occupation has to be accommodated in some considerable lapse of time after about 600 B.C., and considerably earlier than 220 B.C., when Hellenistic coins appear in the latest phase of all, phase I. We should probably therefore not be far wrong in assigning a sporadic occupation of the site in H to some time in the 6th and the 5th centuries B.C., that is to say in the periods known as neo-Babylonian and early Achaemenian. It is possible that an undated Babylonian letter found in room 1644 belongs to this period, which is best represented by a series of pyramidal seal pendants decorated with emblems of the gods Marduk and Nabu, commonly found in 6th century levels in Babylonian sites.<sup>45</sup> Glazed vessels were made at this time, and the fact that in the last phase of all-phase I-much of the Hellenistic pottery was typologically a direct descendant of the Assyrian goes far to show that Calah was not altogether deserted between 600 and 220 B.C.; indeed Xenophon, to whom it appeared an abandoned city in 401 B.C., saw natives watching his army of 10,000 Greeks as they marched past the Ziggurrat.<sup>46</sup>

In the Palace, the most distinctive traces of the Hellenistic phase I consist of poorly built walls which run at a high level over the tops of the old Burnt Palace walls and cut across them. They rest in deep beds of ash within which many fragments of much older ivories were found. At this time, the akropolis was studded with deep pits which were used as grain silos. The remains of glass-makers' kilns sunk deep for protection against the wind into room 47, red glass containing over 26 per cent of lead oxide, and some Hellenistic pottery point clearly to a date not earlier than the last quarter of the 3rd century B.C.<sup>47</sup> Finally, in the courtyard of the palace, an amphora handle with the name of Thasos stamped upon it proves that the long-distance trade in Greek wine, some of it bottled in Rhodes, contemporaneously attested in Babylon, had also penetrated to the once famous city of Calah.<sup>48</sup>

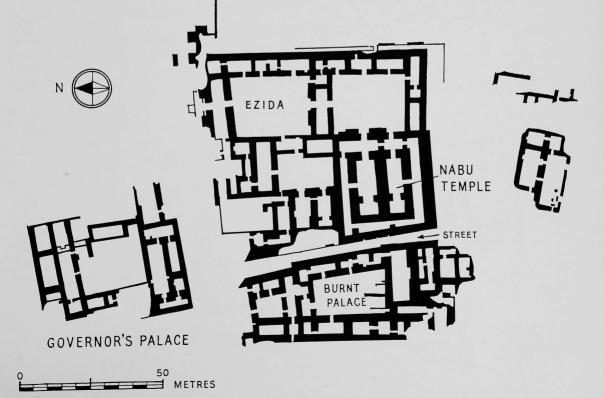
# CHAPTER XIV

# EZIDA AND THE NABU TEMPLE

CROSS the road from the Burnt Palace, opposite its eastern façade, there lies an enormous building second only in size to the N.W. Palace [193]. It took us two seasons, 1955–6, to recover the plan and once again we were only able to do so through the loan of a bulldozer which swept aside for us the mountainous dumps deposited in the previous century by Layard, Rassam, Loftus, and George Smith who had dug there sporadically and left on record an uncompleted plan of less than a dozen chambers, including the sanctuary of the god Nabu.<sup>1</sup> Much damage had been done by the unskilled digging of haphazard

The notes for chapter XIV will be found on pp. 347-54.

193. Ezida in relation to other palaces. The palace  ${\mbox{\tiny AB}}$  is on the right, south of the Nabu Temple.

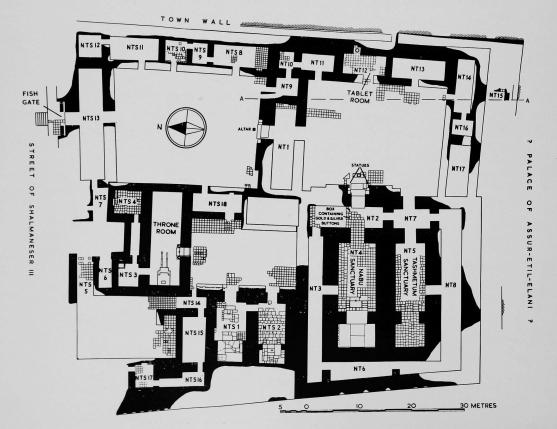


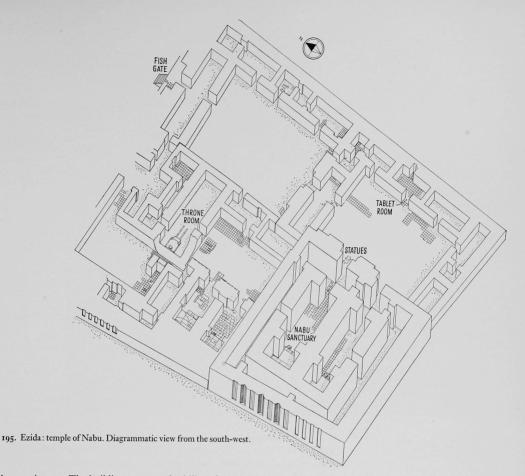
plunderers, and parts of the site had suffered from erosion. But, nonetheless, we were able to recover in outline the plan of over 35 rooms, many of them large apartments, in addition to four great courtyards and a number of long corridors [194–5]. This in itself may be counted as a substantial achievement, but the real addition to knowledge was that we could now understand the organization of the whole building and the significance of each of its parts. By the time we had finished we knew the name of the place, the date at which the two principal temples had been built, and the names of the various monarchs who had repaired them and modified the original plan. For this result it would be ungrateful not to acknowledge a debt to our predecessors, each of whom had produced some important evidence which gave direction to our own more intensive labours.

The building was in antiquity called Ezida, a name given by the Babylonians and adopted by the Assyrians for a complex which contained within it the temple of Nabu: the most famous example in Babylonia was the Ezida of Borsippa which the god left once a year to join in the spring festival of his father Marduk.<sup>2</sup> The arrangement of the layout was different at Calah and the sanctuaries were organized on the Assyrian model, but the original conception was probably Babylonian.<sup>3</sup>

From the plan [194] it may be seen that the maximum overall dimensions are about  $85 \times 80$  metres, covering a little less than three-fifths of a

194. Ezida: temple of Nabu.





hectare in area. The building was organized like a fortress, superbly situated on the high ground at the south-east end of the akropolis. On the eastern side Ezida towered some 16 metres above the level of the plain; from the south there was no approach, for other buildings backed on to it and the ground sloped steeply up to the crest of the hill. To the west, there was an enormous defensive wall which varied between 3 and 8 metres in thickness, and the sanctuary floors were over 3 metres above the level of those in the Burnt Palace across the road. The only access to the building from the low-lying outer town was along the steep slope of Shalmaneser Street which could be sealed off from the town by closing the Lion Gates (ch. v); and there was but a single entrance up a ramp<sup>4</sup> which led up to the Fish Gate with its heavy buttresses on either side. After passing through a large ante-hall, NTS13, one reached the great outer courtyard which measured  $27 \times 21$  metres. This courtyard and the chambers on its eastern and western sides were sharply separated from the sacred precincts of the god Nabu by the hall NTI [196] which, together with the boundary wall north of the long corridor NT3, divides the two main halves of the building. The plan as we now see it probably represents the general arrangement of the building for the last hundred years of its occupation until the final sack in 612 B.C., though some parts of it are older. The differences of orientation in the two

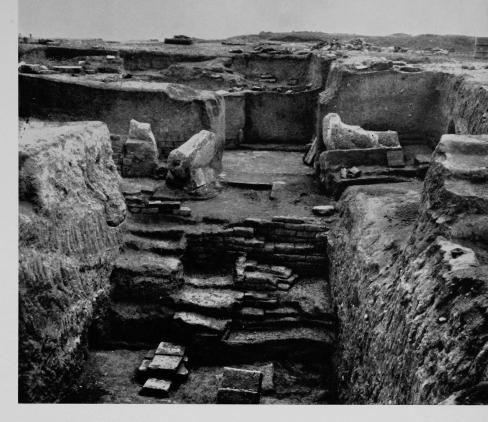


196 (*Left*). North entrance to the great hall NTI which gave access to the southern courtyard of Ezida confronting the sanctuary of Nabu. The two great courses of ashlar limestone were surmounted by mud brick; note stone threshold, and an altar or podium in the foreground. Originally two great statues of the attendants of Nabu stood against the 'reveals' at the entrance: they were probably erected by Adad-nirari III and were discovered by Rassam. In the right middle-ground is the lower half of a statue of an attendant of the god Nabu. See pp. 233, 238.

197 (Below). Mud-brick façade with engaged columns facing the courtyard which gave access to the subsidiary sanctuaries NTS1-2 in Ezida. The colonnade was erected as a set-back above two courses of limestone ashlar masonry. Probably a reconstruction by Sargon II, 722-705 B.C.

main wings are due to the presence of older foundations to which later builders had to adjust their newer alignments as best they could. Thus the axis of the northern entrance undoubtedly followed that of a building erected in the time of Assur-nasir-pal or Shalmaneser III (phase D of the Burnt Palace, see p. 223) parallel with the street. The western façade with its niches and recesses, and particularly the complicated arrangement west of the principal sanctuaries NT4-5, closely resembles that of the temples at Khorsabad and was almost certainly the work of Sargon II (722-705 B.C.). To the same period we may ascribe the mud-brick columned façade in front of the two subsidiary sanctuaries NTSI and 2 set upon two great courses of ashlar masonry [197], as well as the engaged columns of the façade on either side of the Fish Gate [198]. This entrance is so called because in the recesses on either side of it we found a pair





**198.** Remains of the ramp leading up to the Fish-Gate, the main entrance through the north wall of Ezida. Flanking the gate are limestone 'mermen' standing on a stone podium 1.70 metres in length.

of limestone mermen each standing on a rectangular stone base carved from the same block 1.70 metres in length and 50 centimetres wide. They rested on a mudbrick plinth which was 40 centimetres high, plastered, and made waterproof with bitumen. The mermen were 80 centimetres in height; their heads had been demolished, but their scaly bodies and fins are fairly well preserved. They lack the sharpness of delineation and modelling characteristic of early 9th century sculpture, and it is reasonable to suppose that they were carved to the order of Sargon since similar figures were executed for him both in stone and in bronze in his palace at Khorsabad; the fact that the façade on either side is also Sargoni in style makes this attribution most probable. Alternatively, it is not impossible that they had been made to the order of Adad-nirari III.<sup>5</sup>

The Fishman is appropriate to Ea, god of the deep and of magic; since we know that Assur-nasir-pal built a temple to Ea and his consort Damkina,<sup>6</sup> it is reasonable to wonder whether Sargon's Fish Gate commemorates that tradition; if so, the subsidiary shrines NTSI and 2 with their Sargonid façades [199-200] may also have been dedicated to them. Unfortunately, on this problem there is no documentary evidence. The adjacent rooms to the north of these



199. Sanctuary and podium in NTS2, facing west. See p. 235.

two shrines, NTS14–16, may also have been erected by Sargon, for the massive wall and pier between 16 and 17, no doubt devised to accommodate stairs up to the roof, is a close architectural parallel to an arrangement in the forecourt of Sargon's temple to Nabu at Khorsabad, and the façade is again Sargonid in style.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, the stump of a stone column, an architectural member which also occurs at Khorsabad during this period, was found in the court west of NTS15.<sup>8</sup>

When the compact suite which includes the throne-room and NTS3-4 was built we do not know, though it must certainly have been in use during the reign of Esarhaddon whose documents are, as we shall see, closely associated with this part of the building. Unfortunately, erosion has altogether destroyed the remains in the north-west corner while the original character of NTS5-6 and the court between those rooms and NTS7 has been obscured by later reconstruction of the Hellenistic period.

East of the outer court, the chambers NTS8-12 follow the alignment of the old akropolis defensive wall, and there was evidence low down of an early mudbrick structure which may have been of 9th century date in NTS11-12. In this wing we found traces of repair and reconstruction by Assur-etil-ilani, the penultimate king of Assyria, whose inscribed pavement bricks were found in

NTSIO, and were also associated with debris both from NTS8 and from NTSI-2. The inscription on these burnt bricks records his work as follows: 'I am Assuretil-ilani, King of the Universe, King of Assyria, Son of Assur-bani-pal, King of the Universe, King of Assyria, (grand)son of Esarhaddon, King of the Universe, King of Assyria. I caused bricks to be made for the rebuilding of Ezida which is in Kalhu (Calah) and presented them for the life of my soul.'9

As to the function of the small chambers in this wing we may reasonably deduce that at least two of them, NTS9-10, had been used as scribal offices. It was in NTS10 that George Smith found in 1873 part of an important fragment of a historical text describing the campaigns of Tiglath-pileser III. Although Smith did not, so far as we know, make any plans of the rooms he excavated, his description was sufficiently accurate to make this identification certain. In a passage which describes what he saw at the entrance to the Nabu sanctuary he adds:10 '. . . and in one of the eastern chambers, just beside a fallen wall of kiln-burnt bricks, I came on the upper portion of a tablet of this monarch.' Since the only room on the eastern side of Ezida where we have observed any traces of a fallen burnt-brick wall was this one, we need have no doubt about the provenance of this important text which belongs to an historical series of which we found two more fragments in 1956, unfortunately out of position, in thrown debris (see p. 274 below). These further additions are complementary to a fragment, ND400, which we discovered in 1951 in the Governor's Palace; evidently some archives of this monarch were at one time housed hereabouts. It is interesting that the situation of NTSQ-10 across the court, opposite the throneroom and two sanctuaries, is exactly in keeping with the contemporary arrangement at Khorsabad where the archive rooms bore a similar relationship to official and religious apartments across the court. With this we may also compare the situation of NT12, the tablet room, which likewise was placed on the other side of the courtyard opposite the sanctuary of Nabu.<sup>11</sup> Indeed, if we examine the organization of Sargon's Nabu Temple at Khorsabad it is clear that his newer foundation was modelled on that of Calah; but at Khorsabad the architects, unimpeded by earlier buildings, were able to plan the building with forecourt, central court and sanctuary on the same axis, instead of having to

200. Sanctuary and podium in NTSI, facing west. See p. 235.



devise a turn through 90 degrees to find room for the Holy of Holies. Thus at Calah, the great hall NTI which, as we have seen, marks the division between the two wings, approximately follows the orientation of the early 8th century wall lines in the eastern wing, and is an attempted compromise between the diverging axes of NTII-I3 on the one hand and NT4-5 on the other. The quality of the two great courses of dressed limestone ashlar masonry<sup>12</sup> along the north wall of NTI [196], like that along the façades of NTSI-2, is closely comparable with the bridge between Nabu Temple and terrace at Khorsabad. We may therefore conclude that NTI represents a rebuilding by Sargon of an entrance hall which had originally been planned by Adad-nirari III who, as we shall see when we enter the great sanctuaries, had been their founder.

When we review the sequence of historical names associated with the northern wing of Ezida, we find evidence of the activities of seven Assyrian monarchs beginning with Shalmaneser III (859-824 B.C.), who built the akropolis and the Lion Gate and recobbled the street leading up to the Fish Gate with its entrance hall on a 9th century axis. Of his son, Shamshi Adad V (824-810 B.C.), we have a solitary monument, the great stela now in the British Museum which was found by Rassam and had been removed from the temple of Ninurta at a time when Nabu was elevated to play a predominant part in the pantheon at Calah. In this we may discern the influence of the powerful Queen Mother Sammuramat, whose son Adad-nirari III (810-782 B.C.) was as active in the south-east sector of the akropolis as Assur-nasir-pal II had been nearly a hundred years earlier in its north-western sector. For the next 30 years, while Assyria was eclipsed by the power of Urartu (Armenia), no substantial repairs were attempted in Ezida, although a contract tablet, ND5420, dated either 776 or 756 B.C. found on the floor of NTI3 [194], and other documents of about that time from the Governor's Palace, show that there was no serious break in the occupation of the building.

How much interest Tiglath-pileser III (745-727 B.C.) took in this building we do not know, but since his archives were kept in NTS10 and elsewhere in the southern wing he may well have patronized it. Such an assumption is not improbable since he had his own 'Centre' Palace on the akropolis, not far away; whereas of Sennacherib who took no interest in Calah we have no inscriptions referring to any building activity there. But the records of the triumphs which restored Assyria to its supremacy were carefully conserved here, and it is satisfactory to have recovered additional fragments of these annals. Interesting is the mention of the king's claim to conquests as far as the river Arat, probably the river Aras where a Russian expedition has been making extensive discoveries.<sup>13</sup> The site of Karmir Blur in this river valley has produced much material which is closely related to discoveries at Nimrud; it is clear that craftsmen from the two cities were in close touch with one another. Bit Agusi, a district of north-west Syria, is also mentioned, and there again traces of the Assyrian period have recently been unearthed by a British expedition at the site known as Tell Rifa'at which may probably be identified with ancient Arpad.<sup>14</sup> Since we know from another inscription that in 743 B.C. Tiglath-pileser III solemnly received tribute including ivories from several neighbouring kingdoms in that city, continuous excavations at this site would certainly produce important chronological evidence of contact between the two countries.15

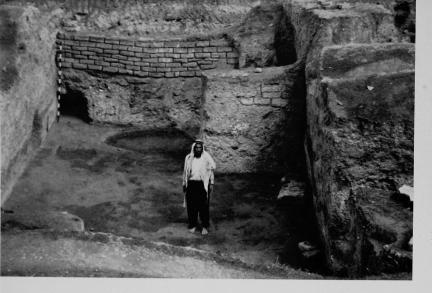
Among the many other items of interest which recur in this catalogue of Assyrian triumphs is the reference to Damascus as 'the broad (territory of the house) of Hazael' which was evidently a dynastic name for a line of Damascene kings, since more than one Hazael is known: there is also mention of Israel in the form 'the house of Omri', as it had long ago been called in the annals of Shalmaneser III. In this context we also hear about an alliance between a contemporary Hiram of Tyre with Rezin of Damascus, and an Assyrian expedition to Israel in 732 B.C. when Hoshea was set on the throne in place of Pekah. On a tablet, ND400, from the Burnt Palace we had already been told about the defeat of the king of Gaza; here we learn that he came to Calah and presented his tribute personally. Assyria had now reached the frontiers of Egypt and was later to acquire considerable booty from that country.<sup>16</sup>

Following on these triumphs, Sargon II (722–705 B.C.) was able to undertake far more extensive building operations than his predecessors, and we have already noticed the evidence of his architectural schemes in Ezida, while his scribal activities are well attested by two beautifully written documents associated with the Nabu Temple, in particular the famous eighth campaign against Armenia written by his chief scribe Nabu-shallimshunu, no doubt prepared in room NT12. The king's success in countering the aggression of Urartu warranted the writing of a letter to the god Assur.<sup>17</sup>

In the next reign, Calah was neglected, for Sennacherib applied most of his architectural activity to Nineveh which he rebuilt on a grand scale. It is evident that the various capital cities of Assyria tended to be developed in alternate periods, partly perhaps from a filial tendency to react against paternal cliques, partly because the number of skilled masons available was not unlimited: manpower required for the task of building could not be applied everywhere, but had to be concentrated where it was most needed. Two prism fragments from NTI are recorded in *Iraq* XXVI, p. 122.

After the death of Sennacherib and a period of comparative neglect, Calah benefited from the activities of Esarhaddon whose fragmentary prisms, found in the Nabu Temple, speak of repairs to the sanctuaries of Nabu and Tashmetum. But the most striking historical legacy of Esarhaddon's presence in Ezida comes from the throne-room and suite NTS3-4 in the western wing. We do not know if he himself built these apartments in their present form: rooms including a bath or ablution-room at the eastern end, linked by a corridor, on the north side of the throne-room, reproduce a plan already adopted in an 8th century palace at Arslan-Tash in northern Syria. The plan is also partly comparable with that of a sanctuary known as the 'Kultraum' at T. Halaf.<sup>18</sup>

It is in the throne-room itself [201-2] that we have the most intimate glimpse of the royal presence. This hall, which measured  $17.5 \times 5$  metres, had a single entrance from the courtyard to the south [203], and at the west end a stepped mud-brick dais [202], perhaps for the use of the king when engaged in his ceremonial duties. On the top of the dais, and less than half a metre from the back wall, there was a large oblong burnt brick which, if covered with cloth, could have served as a foot-rest for a throne in the manner depicted on Assyrian bas-reliefs. But in fact this pedestal was too near the wall to have served the king himself, and it seems more probable that it would have been used by an attendant standing behind the throne. Alternatively this brick might, as in the



201. East end of the throneroom showing traces of ash on the floor and, r-20 metres above it, a mud-brick wall of phase H when parts of Ezida were reconstructed some years after 612 B.C.

'Kultraum' at T. Halaf, have been a base for a small statue, for it must be admitted that the stepped mud-brick podium was a surprisingly unsubstantial basis for a royal throne, although if covered with mats or rugs the surface would have been sufficiently protected from damage through treading. Nonetheless, since the disintegrated remains of what appeared to be a throne were found here, we must conclude that this was a flimsy version of a royal dais which in the 9th century B.C. would certainly have been constructed in stone. Probably, therefore, in the last days of Assyria, when Calah was no longer the king's residence, the dais was rebuilt and refurbished for special ceremonial occasions, and very likely the mud-brick podium reflects the impoverished times of Sinshar-ishkun when building materials were more cheaply contrived.

Typical also of the royal throne-room are the stone 'tram-lines' which ran up to the dais [202]. It seems unlikely that lines so short served, as is commonly believed, for the use of a wheeled car or incense burner of the kind discovered in a palace at T. Halaf.<sup>19</sup> It is more probable that such lines were intended to demarcate the resting-place for the bier upon which the god's statue was carried in the course of the various religious processions which took place at the appropriate festivals. Mr David Oates has surmised<sup>20</sup> that we may see here one of the temporary resting-places for the statue of Nabu when it was carried out of his sanctuary on the way to his country temple at the akitu or spring festival which lasted ten days. On specified days the god and his wife left the sanctuary, entered the bed-chamber where a meal was prepared for them, passed some time in another room called the chamber of the palace, and then travelled out into the country before finally returning. It is possible that the throne-room may be identified with one of these chambers, either the bedchamber or the chamber of the palace. If the king was unable to be present in person then his deputy must have officiated, for the festivals were celebrated concurrently in the other capital cities of Assyria. At all events, these apartments were designed for some such purpose, since not only have we the evidence of dais and 'tram-lines', but attached to the throne-room are the two subsidiary robing and ablution rooms NTS3-4 [194] with access only from the throneroom, an arrangement which must imply that they were reserved for the strict



202. Stepped mud-brick podium at the west end of the throneroom, with stone 'tram-lines' leading up to it. Traces of the deep bed of ash in which many ivories were found are visible in front of the steps.

privacy required by the king or his representatives during preparation for the ceremony. Whether the two sanctuaries NTS1-2 were also used in the succession of these events we cannot prove; but they too may have been temporary resting-places for the statues at various times.

When we came to excavate these apartments we found that each of them had been devastated by the terrible fires which the enemy had lit when Calah was sacked—doubtless in 614 B.C. A bed of ash in places up to 80 centimetres deep covered the floor, particularly over the dais and immediately in front of it, where the fire had raged most severely [204]. Amid the ashes we made discoveries which have illuminated for us the picture of that terrible scene. We found the charred fragments of the king's throne overlaid with carved ivory burnt black and grey and stained with ash. And in front of the dais, scattered around the doorways and over the stone lines, there were hundreds of fragments of inscribed cuneiform tablets, some of them as large as any we had ever seen. It was the decipherment of these documents which bit by bit told us the story. After the lapse of a few days, Miss Barbara Parker who was at the time the expedition's epigraphist, had identified some of the principal fragments as parts of a treaty made by King Esarhaddon with various princes of western Iran in the year 672 B.C., for the

**203**. South entrance to the throne-room filled with bricks which had collapsed into it after the final destruction. A section through this fallen debris appears on the right hand side of the photograph, and, running up to the entrance jamb, the mud plaster on the walls baked hard from the conflagration.

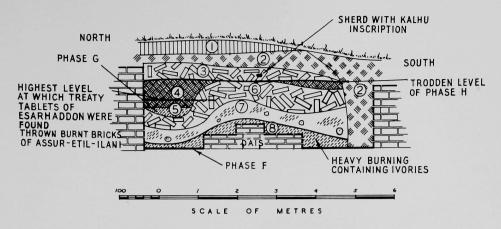


document was dated by the name of the eponym. The names of the districts and of their rulers began to emerge little by little, together with the necessary clauses of the treaty, and finally it was revealed that the whole of the back of the tablet was covered with curses.

The complete decipherment and repair of these formidable documents was, however, a task that could not be completed in the field, and the accomplishment of it was made possible by the scientific co-operation of the Iraq Antiquities Department which authorized us to remove the fragments for prolonged study in the British Museum. There, this enthralling task was appropriately assigned to Mr (now Professor) D. J. Wiseman in the Department of Western Asiatic Antiquities who had already thrice served in the field at Nimrud. The completion of this work took three years, in the course of which the fragments were skilfully cleaned by Mr C. A. Bateman who assisted Mr Wiseman in the gradual building up and joining of the whole. A single tablet measuring  $45.8 \times 30$  centimetres [205] was reconstituted from many fragments to provide the main text, 674 lines in length, which concerned a ruler named Ramataia of a province in western Iran called Urakazabanu, and contained within it the long and solemn undertaking sworn in the presence of the king of Assyria. As the fragments included parts of at least eight further copies specifically written for other Iranian chiefs in identical terms, it was possible for Mr Wiseman to reconstitute practically the entire text in spite of the big gap which is shown on the principal one. A table at the end of his publication shows how each of the main fragments may be keyed in to the whole text and span almost every gap, so that in fact there are now only a little over a dozen partly defective lines and less than half a dozen altogether missing out of the original 674. The copy, transliteration and translation is an achievement which deserves the highest praise; much credit is due also to the careful preliminary work in the field which made this full presentation possible.<sup>21</sup> No doubt in years to come further commentaries,<sup>22</sup> exegesis and emendations of obscure passages, and understanding of niceties in legal phrasing will emerge but these will be refinements of minor importance: let it be said that this is one of the individual and collective triumphs of British scholarship.

What then of the document itself? First come two lines of superscription which run: 'Seal of the god Ashur, king of the gods, lord of the lands—not to be altered; seal of the great prince, father of the gods—not to be disputed.' This opening at once gives us a clue to the character of the document which is a contract imposed on the vassals of Assyria, guaranteed on the king's behalf by the great god Assur. There follows the name of King Esarhaddon and that of Ramataia, city-ruler of Urakazabanu, upon whom the oaths have been imposed in perpetuity: 'with his sons, his grandsons, with all the Urakazabaneans young and old, as many as there may be.' In the eleventh line we are told that the treaty concerns the Crown Prince Ashurbanipal and there follows the list of witnesses which includes the planets and all the gods of Assyria, Babylonia, Sumer and Akkad.

After this preamble we come to the gist of the document, which is in effect the last will and testament of Esarhaddon wherein he ordains that the Crown Prince Assur-bani-pal shall succeed to the throne of Assyria, and that the houses and gifts already presented to his sons, together with any other property which they have acquired for themselves, shall not be sequestrated (lines 271–8), and



**204.** Section through the west end of the throne-room showing dais embedded in ash, destruction debris, and level of the subsequent phase H (after  $6_{12}$  B.C.). Key: I surface humus; 2 loose earth, in Loftus (?) tunnel and trench; 3 fallen mud brick; 4 hard packed earth; 5 ash; 6 fallen mud brick; 7 grey ash and clay containing tablets; 8 black ash and traces of heavy burning, containing ivories. See p. 241.

that the lands, houses, plantations, peoples, implements, horses, mules, donkeys, cattle and flocks which Esarhaddon, king of Assyria, has given to his sons, shall be theirs. In this context, lines 285–6 state specifically that these legacies concern Assur-bani-pal, the Crown Prince, and his brothers, sons by the same mother as Assur-bani-pal. The niceties of legal draftsmanship in this and other passages bear the stamp of that specialized phraseology so dear to the attorney throughout the ages. Phrases which to the layman seem to smack of repetition and tautology are the indispensable adjuncts of such deeds. The remainder of the document is concerned with the oaths imposed on the Iranian vassals of Assyria, not only to ensure their loyal co-operation in upholding the rights conferred on the legatees, but in binding them to eschew every kind of plot or intrigue and to report any attempt at subversion.

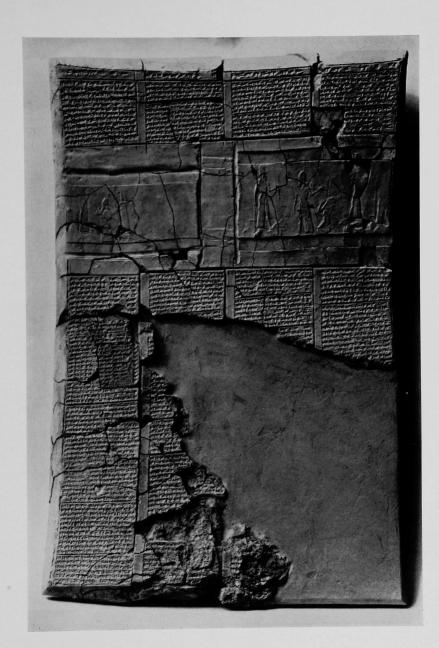
One particular aspect of this document has a most interesting bearing on the events which preceded and succeeded it. It would seem that although Esarhaddon had six sons<sup>23</sup> the choice of a successor was difficult and protracted. It had been his original intention to appoint one of them named Sin-iddina-aplu<sup>24</sup> to the throne, but either death intervened or the court and the oracles were unfavourable, for that intention was never realized. But when the choice fell on Assur-bani-pal every possible step was taken to implement it. There can moreover be no doubt that the elaborate preparations in drafting, and the ceremonies which must have accompanied this will, were due to Esarhaddon's desire to avoid for his successor the mortal danger that had beset him when he came to the throne after his own father's parricidal murder.25 The dynastic succession in Assyria, always a constant anxiety of government, was now acute and the king chose the year 672 B.C., when he must have been at the height of his power, for publicly declaring the instrument which he had drawn up in order to enforce his succession. In that same year, Assur-bani-pal was formally inducted into the 'House of Succession', the bit reduti at Tarbisu, as heir apparent. Evidently

Esarhaddon was particularly anxious that none other than Assur-bani-pal, or should he predecease him, Assur-bani-pal's son, should succeed to the throne. Indeed it is significant that we have to wait until the eighty-sixth line of the document to find any mention of the second son, Shamash-shum-ukin: 'Swear that, should Esarhaddon, king of Assyria, die while his sons are minors, you will help Assur-bani-pal, the Crown Prince, to take the throne of Assyria, (and) will help to seat Shamash-shum-ukin, his "twin" brother, the Crown Prince of Babylon, on the throne of Babylon.' Moreover we find another clause (lines 239/) providing against the possible murder of Assur-bani-pal (by an officer or a courtier), in which case the vassals are enjoined to swear that they will (if necessary) await either the woman pregnant by Esarhaddon, king of Assyria, or the wife of Assur-bani-pal, the Crown Prince. (Swear) that 'after (the son) is born you will bring him up and will set (him) on the throne of Assyria. That you will seize and slay the perpetrators of rebellion. You will destroy their name and their seed from the land.'

In examining the foregoing clauses only one construction of the king's intent is possible. The succession was to be matrilineal, confined to offspring either by the Queen Mother or by the wife of the Crown Prince though, curiously enough, in allowing for the possibility of Assur-bani-pal's premature death there is no explicit declaration as to which of the two possible heirs would then be the first nominee to the throne. But that ambiguity only serves to underline the implicit desire of the king to prevent Shamash-shum-ukin from succeeding to the throne anywhere but in Babylon. The point at issue is confirmed by a contemporary letter which Mr Wiseman has appropriately quoted. From this it is clear that these dynastic dispositions were by no means without objection and, indeed, a noble named Adad-shum-usur who made this known to the king must have commanded powerful support in daring to put this in writing. His words ran: 'What cannot be done in heaven the king, my lord, performs on earth and displays to us. You have clothed your son with (royal) robes and made men do obeisance to him. You have entrusted him with the kingship of Assyria. Your māru rabu you have appointed to the rule in Babylon . . . what the king, my lord, has done with the young rulers is not good for Assyria.'

Reading between the lines we may suspect a personal preference on the part of Esarhaddon for Assur-bani-pal, who was probably the younger of the two sons, though the text appears to refer to them as twins, and more certainly we may deduce that he was anxious to eliminate any chances of the Babylonian party becoming paramount in Assyria. The clear definition of legitimacy to succession of the Assyrian throne would thus have made the task of usurping power in Assur more difficult than ever for Shamash-shum-ukin: there was in fact considerable cunning in the father's dispositions.

**<sup>205</sup>** (*Right*). ND4327 (B) 45×30 cm. Obverse of the great 'Treaty Tablet' of Esarhaddon dated to the year 672 B.C., found in the throne-room. This document, 674 lines in length, binds a ruler named Ramataia of Urakazabanu in W. Iran to support the Crown Prince of Assyria as legitimate successor to the throne of Assyria. The reverse contains a list of curses which shall overtake the wicked if they repudiate their oaths of loyalty. The missing parts of the text have been reconstituted from fragments of eight other contemporary treaties found embedded in ash, in the same room. See pp. 242–7.

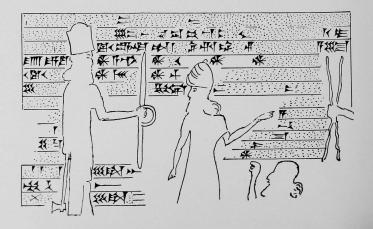




**206–8.** ND4327 (B). Detail of the three seal impressions at the top end of the treaty tablet. This historic document was sealed with three dynastic seals; 206 (*above*), period of Shamshi-Adad I, c.1800 B.C.; 207 (*below*), possibly of Tukulti-Ninurta I, c.1260 B.C., 208 (*opposite*), Sennacherib, c.700 B.C.

At all events, Esarhaddon's arrangements for the succession after his death were duly carried out although the fears which he had entertained were eventually realized. For seventeen years Assur-bani-pal and his brother avoided a clash. But the difficulties of living in amity through a diarchy proved insuperable and, in 651 B.C., what is known as 'the Brothers' War' broke out.<sup>26</sup> Constant pressure from the Babylonian nationalist party no doubt left Shamash-shumukin the choice of rebelling against his brother or of losing his own throne. Supported by the warlike Chaldaean tribes and aided by an alliance with the Elamites of western Iran he may well have decided that his military support was a fair match for Assyria. But in the event the better cohesion of the Assyrian army led by clever generals prevailed against a motley array of ill-assorted allies. Three years later the war was over, Babylon was invested by the Assyrians, and Shamash-shum-ukin perished in the flames of his own palace. This dramatic end was long remembered and in Greek legend was attributed to Sardanapalus. Indeed the record of these events was perpetuated at Calah itself, for in the library, NT12, we found a fragment of a prism, ND5517, a part of the annals of Assur-bani-pal, one of many written in his reign, which did not seek to conceal what had happened: 'Shamash-shum-ukin, the hostile brother, who had planned a rebellion against the country of Assyria and uttered grave insults against Assur, the god who created me-for him he determined an evil death, threw him into a blazing (?) fire and destroyed his life.'27

The historical setting of the treaty is thus presented in vivid outline, since we can follow the story to its end. There are in addition many other points of absorbing interest which are well worth examining in detail. Two examples of incidental information may be cited. First, how to make a treaty. Lines 153–6 give us a picture of the ceremonial: '. . . by serving food at table, by drinking from a cup, by the kindling of fire, by water (by oil) by holding breasts. . . ' It is the kind of scene which was depicted on a Syrian monument from Ugarit 700 years earlier.<sup>28</sup> Even more interesting, how to break a treaty. Lines 108/f: 'Swear





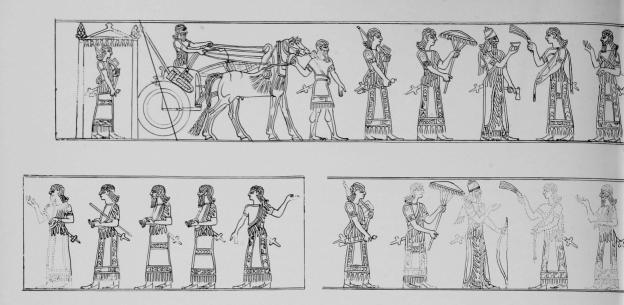
you will not listen to or conceal any word which is evil . . . concerning Assurbani-pal . . . either from the mouth of his family . . . or from the mouth of an ecstatic priest [LU mah] or from the mouth of a prophet or from the mouth of any of the masses.' How often has a fanatical mullah stirred the people to revolt in the Near East, ancient as well as modern! How tempting to enlist the oracle in the service of human design!

It is however the last 200 lines which are in many ways the most picturesque and vivid in the entire text. Here we have a list of the curses which shall overtake the wicked if they dare to repudiate their oaths: 'If you do. . . .' Then follows the awful commination service, of a kind still recorded in the English Church Prayer Book, though more violent in form. A few examples may suffice to illustrate the consequence of perjury. Amongst other ills and inconveniences for repudiation of the oaths there would be not only premature death, but sterility, leprosy, blindness, exile by the gods: '(thou shalt) Roam the desert like the wild ass (and) the gazelle.' Drought, flood, locusts, lice, caterpillars, famine, thirst, insomnia were also threatened as well as death without burial: 'May your [ghost] have none appointed as funeral-libation pourer.'

There are, moreover, picturesque expressions that have the quality of a nightmare and yet are observations from nature : 'May it rain burning coals instead of dew upon your land'—perhaps a distant reminiscence of some volcano. Others describe situations that were probably by no means infrequent : 'just as a starving ewe puts [the flesh of her young] in her mouth, even so may he feed you in your hunger on the flesh of your brothers, your sons and your daughters.' 'As a fly caught in the hand may the enemy squash you. . . .' And the most humiliating incapacity: 'may they cause you to be turned upside down like a tortoise.'

Amid so much realism it is not surprising to find in the text hints that the oaths may have been sworn to the accompaniment of certain ritual acts: 'just as this chariot with its base-board is spattered with blood . . . so may the enemy spatter your chariots . . . just as they burn an image made of wax in the fire and dissolve one of clay in water . . . so may your figure burn in the fire.' Perhaps these passages reflect an actual performance, for under the Hittite empire there was a prescribed military parade at which soldiers took the oath and witnessed a number of ceremonial acts of breaking, burning, and the like which were symbolic of the awful consequences of perjury.<sup>29</sup>

Fittingly, this historical document was sealed with three dynastic seals: one of the Old Assyrian empire, period of Shamshi-Adad I [206]; one of the Middle Assyrian period, possibly of Tukulti-Ninurta I [207]; one which had belonged to the king's father Sennacherib himself [208]. The various gods concerned are mounted on their animals—lions, dragons and the like—and carry their symbolic instruments. There is a romantic touch in that one of the impressions





**209-14.** Reconstructions of scenes engraved on a series of ivory panels once set on a wooden backing, found scattered along the front and sides of the royal dais in the throne-room.

Scale c. 1/2

**209** (Top). The principal panel, ND4193 (B),  $68 \times 8$  cm., depicts the king of Assyria attended by his courtiers, receiving a procession of foreign tributaries. Left to right, royal tent, king's chariot, archer, umbrella bearer, king carrying cup in left hand, axe in the right, three officers introducing six Medes (?) who carry gifts.

210 (Above left). ND4195 (b) (B), length 20.2 cm., part of a panel depicting five officers.

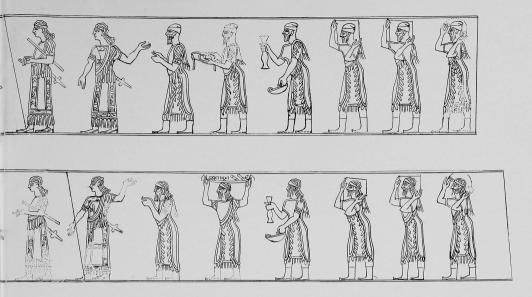
211 (*Above right*). ND4195 (a), length 59:5 cm. (E). King of Assyria (holding bow), attended by his courtiers and officers, receiving tribute.

212 (*Left*). Fly-whisk attendant, scroll and palmette borders. This composite figure, much burnt, was restored from 4194, 4201, 4240.

213-14 (Below). Ivory strips decorated with kneeling gazelles (?) and palmettes; reconstructed drawing based on fragments.







has been identified as having been made from a royal lapis lazuli seal which had been recaptured by Sennacherib from Babylon after having been looted from Assur by the Kassites 600 years before his time. 'This seal', according to the inscription, 'the enemy had carried off from Assyria to Akkad, but I, Sennacherib, conquered Babylon 600 years later and removed it from the possession of Babylon.'

Among the eight other rulers,<sup>30</sup> in addition to Ramataia, upon whom similar vassal treaties were imposed, some certainly exercised their authority over outlandish tribes in Median and Elamite territory; one named Larkutla was ruler of Zamua which may be identified with the district of Sulaimaniyah, now predominantly populated by Kurds. It is therefore satisfactory that together with the tablets we had the good fortune to find engraved figures on ivories which, although of an earlier date, may represent tributaries from some of the districts concerned.

The large collection of carved ivory fragments found mostly against the front and sides of the royal dais consisted of panels set upon a wooden backing [209– 14]. One of them, ND4193 [209], measures  $68 \times 8$  centimetres, and depicts the king attended by his courtiers, receiving a procession of foreign tributaries who are marshalled into the royal presence by the vizier. The king himself, wearing the high crown of Assyria, has emerged fully armed from the royal tent after descending from his chariot which is drawn by a pair of fully caparisoned horses





**215.** ND4195 (c) (Met. Mus., N.Y.). Photograph (*left*) and reconstruction (*right*). Burnt ivory panel, length 11.4 cm., depicting a procession of four Medes (?) paying tribute to the king of Assyria. The offerings include cruciform symbols to the gods, on a tray; cloth (?); a metal vase with long neck and pedestal base; and a two-handled bowl. The facial type is different from the Assyrian: note also the floppy caps, long fur boots, shawl over the back, and leather boots. Throne-room.

Scale c. 1/1



led by the charioteer. The umbrella bearer and squire with fly whisk are in attendance whilst the king balances a ceremonial bowl on the tips of his fingers. Into the presence of the king an Assyrian warrior armed with a long sword ushers in the procession of foreign tributaries who are distinguished from the Assyrians by their dress which consists of swallow-tail, fur-lined coats with tassels. These vassals carry tribute which consists of metal cauldrons, jugs, bowls and on other panels component parts of furniture; one small fragment depicts men carrying wineskins.

There can be little doubt that some of the tributaries, for example on ND4195(c) [215], may be identified with outlandish men from Iran who, with their flopping woollen caps and side-pieces, open fringed garments which appear to represent the fur-lined coats of Iranian highlanders, and jack-boots, form a sharp contrast to the more stiffly dressed men of Assyria. The facial differences are no less striking; thin pointed noses instead of the fleshy Assyrian type, and little straight beards. On comparing some of these fragments with engravings from Ziwiye in Mannaean territory it seems possible that some of the tribute-bearers are tribesmen from the Iranian highlands.<sup>31</sup>

These ivories, however, are obviously older than the Treaty tablets with which they were found, for there are many archaic traits, and standard figures such as those of the winged Nisroch or the eagle-headed genius [216–17]; ND5611 [218], the fragmentary figure of the god Assur carrying a bow depicted in a winged disc;<sup>32</sup> the cone and bucket bearers [219–20]; the kneeling gazelles [221]; and the squires [212] repeat the habitual designs on 9th century reliefs of Assurnasir-pal. The most striking evidence of archaic design on this panel is the long sheepskin coat [209] which is probably the equivalent of the modern Kurdish *ferma*, and was worn by tributaries represented on the monuments of Assurnasir-pal and Shalmaneser III.<sup>33</sup> They are depicted on the bottom register on

**216–17** (*Left*). ND4194 (a), (*opposite page*) ND4199 (e). Ivory chair-arms with one end rounded c. 17 cm. long, engraved with four winged 'Nisroch' figures carrying bucket; palmette and scroll borders, at the rounded end kneeling bull and scale pattern. Throne-room. Scale c. 1/1



one face of the famous Black Obelisk, which was made for the latter king. Even more remarkable is a scene on a basalt obelisk, ND3219, made for the former monarch [118]. There we see not only similar tunics, but the bulls and bull calves on the ivory panel, ND4202, described on p. 267 below. Other 9th century traits which occur in these scenes are the king's tent, the voking and equipment of the horses, and the king's umbrella. Finally, we may note that the swords terminating in volutes must be of a oth century date, for in the 8th they are never carried by courtiers-only the king wears them.<sup>34</sup> Be that as it may, the humiliation of the king's vassals, which these engravings illustrate, is in dramatic accord with the violent end to which these trophies were subjected. Who but the Medes can have more eagerly welcomed the opportunity presented to them in 614 B.C. of mutilating the treaties imposed on Iranian princes by force 60 years earlier? To consign to the flames the pictorial records of the Assyrian triumphs as well as the inscriptions must have caused them no less additional satisfaction, and at the time of their revenge they were appropriately associated with the Babylonians, traditional enemies of Assyria, who had long suffered with them.

Most of these panels could have served originally as component parts of the king's throne: the rectangular plaques with rounded and turned ends obviously suggest the arms of a chair; tables, stools and the like are other possibilities. The ivories were nailed on to a wooden backing; in many cases the nails were ruthlessly driven through the ivory by furniture repairers who seem to have cared little for the artistry of the designs.

In the same bed of ash which contained the incised ivory panel fragments, and in juxtaposition with them, near the front of the dais, lay two ivory heads [224-5] which may have been component parts of the same piece of furniture to which the panels had belonged. Unfortunately, a reconstruction was impossible because all these components had been smashed before burning and they lay in complete disorder. Nonetheless, it seems reasonable to assume that both heads are of the same date as the remainder of the ivories in this room. We may therefore conclude that these two rather crude heads with their typical raised eyes are evidence of a style of carving which must already have been in vogue before the death of Shalmaneser III, that is before 824 B.C., and they may well have served as prototypes for some of the more refined carved miniatures







218

219

Left to right 218. ND5611 (B). Ivory fragment, diameter 4 cm., representing the god Assur (?) carrying a bow, inside a winged disc. Throne-room. See p. 250. Scale c. 4/5

> 219. ND4194(b). Ivory chair-arm burnt black, with half cylindrical end, c. 33 cm. long. Engraved with winged figure of cone smearer carrying bucket, and below, winged Nisroch also carrying bucket; palmette and scroll design at top and between each figure. Throne-room. See p. 250. Scale c. 3/5

> 220. ND4240(c). (AM) Ivory chair-arm similar to [219] with figures facing left instead of right, probably therefore a pair. Throne-room. See p. 250. Scale c. 3/5

> 222. ND4198 (B). Ivory panel, length 20.1 cm., engraved with figure of the king's squire carrying sword, bow, quiver and ceremonial mace; scroll and palmette designs. Throne-room. See p. 250. Scale c. 3/5

> 223. ND4196(b) and 4197(b). Ivory panel, length 29.4 cm., engraved with vertically arranged registers of tribute-bearers, each pair separated by a frieze of crenellations. The figures carry wineskins, leather bottles, furniture and wooden planks. Throne-room. The reconstruction on the extreme right is life-size.



221 (Left). ND5604. Reconstruction from fragments of an ivory panel depicting two gazelles kneeling on either side of a palmette. Throne-room. See p. 250. Scale c. 1/1



222





223

(*Left*) ND4196 (b). Detail of the furniture bearers in the bottom register of [223]. Note the holes through the surface of the ivory, intended for fixing a nail to the wooden backing, regardless of the design. Scale c. 1/I



223







224. ND4203 (B). Ivory head of a maiden in the round, 7 cm., nose fragmentary; blackened by fire. The fine strands of hair are overlaid with hammered sheet gold; right ear missing, long locks of hair terminate in spirals at base of the neck. Note the technique of cutting the raised almond shaped eyes, resembling that used on the 'Ugly Sister' ch. IX, [73] from the well; the pupil was once incrusted. There is a tenon cut through the flat base of the neck, perhaps for fitting on a terminal to a throne. This head was found in front of the dais in the throne-room. Scale c. I/I

225. Side and back views of ND4215 and 4204, joined. (Met. Mus. N.Y.). Ivory head of a female, grey from contact with hot ash. Height 7 cm. The hair hangs down at the base of the head in eight long tresses, is bound together by a fillet 15 mm. wide scored at the back in plain metopic panels and decorated in front with lotus buds. Hair once overlaid with gold leaf, traces of which remain; amorphous nose, slit mouth, raised eyes: the top of the head is hollowed. Found in the 'tram-lines' in front of the dais in the throne-room in two separate fragments—the back of the head about 30 cm. away from the face. Scale c. 1/1







**226** (*Above right*). ND4249 (b). Ivory plaque, fine, miniature, fragment. Height c. 3 cm., very thin in section, buckled through burning. Depicts a bearded Assyrian, carrying a mace. See reconstruction on *left*, slightly enlarged. From ash stratum on floor of NTS4. Scale c. 1/I

(Below right). ND4249 (b). Ivory plaque, fine miniature fragment; Height c. 2 cm., very thin in section, burnt black. Depicts a squire, a youthful attendant, hands clasped in front of the body in the Assyrian style. See reconstruction on *left*, slightly enlarged. From ash stratum on floor of NTS4. Scale c. 1/1

such as were found in the Burnt Palace (p. 211-12 [148-156]). One of these heads, ND4203 [224], is a particularly rare and valuable piece, not only because of its size, much larger than the more common miniature heads, but because a considerable portion of the gold overlay which was beaten on to the finely carved strands of hair is still preserved. For this head, and for ND4215 [225] with its heavy amorphous nose and elaborate style of hairdressing at the back, we have no securely dated parallels for guidance, although the treatment of the eyes and, in the case of ND4203, the fine strands of hair on the head, are reminiscent of the more finely executed head of the 'Ugly Sister' found in the well NN of the N.W. Palace [73].

We must not omit a group of carved miniature ivories, ND4249 [226], which came from a suite of rooms adjacent to those previously described. The majority were found in NTS4; they depict, *inter alia*, human heads and Assyrians in procession, all in relief, on very thinly cut ivory, in exquisite miniscule detail; the figures appear to be reminiscent of 9th century reliefs, and it seems reasonable to associate them, together with the ivories in the throne-room, to that period.

Another rarity, possibly also of this period, found in the same room, is a charmingly carved, naïve wooden figure of a nude maiden, ND4255 [227], also in miniature: there is a striking parallel to this piece in an ivory figurine described by Sir Leonard Woolley at Atchana-Alalakh of the 14th century B.C., an antique Phoenician prototype of the Nimrud figure.<sup>35</sup>

227 (*Right*). ND4255. Swimming maiden, miniature, length 5 cm., probably wood. Found together with [226] in NT84.

**228** (Below). ND4253 (B). Terminal in the shape of a ram's head with elongated neck; Hard wood (?). Head 3 cm. and neck 5.5 cm. long. This was probably part of a sceptre similar to those depicted on ivories at Arslan-Tash and on coins at Sidon, familiar to Phoenician iconography. Found on the pavement in the south-east corner of NTS4 adjacent to the throne-room. See p. 256.









**229.** ND5550. Inscribed tablet dated by reference to Sin-sharishkun and his queen, and to the *limmu* Bel-iqbi, governor of Tushhan near Diarbekir probably in the year 616 B.C. It records a grant of land in perpetuity to the god Nabu together with three slaves, and is sealed with the impression from a cylinder with a design of a bearded male wearing tunic open at the knee and clutching two human-headed ostriches. Found embedded in ash behind the Fish Gate in the entrance chamber to Ezida, NTST3.

A wooden finial, ND4253 [228], terminating in a ram's head, is a most interesting parallel to a similar object in wood overlaid with polychrome stucco from Egypt, now in the museum at Turin. This object must be of Phoenician provenance, for it illustrates a type of sceptre which figures both on ivories from Arslan-Tash and on double staters from Sidon current in the 5th century B.C. (see also ch. XVII, ND7579 [412], p. 506).<sup>36</sup>

The throne-room and its adjacent apartments thus seems to have housed a series of rare and valuable carvings which must have been prized as antiquities, for they had been retained by successive monarchs through the 9th and 8th centuries and were no doubt more than ever cherished in the 7th century when ivory was becoming rare.

After the time of Esarhaddon we have some evidence of the interest taken in Ezida during the reign of Assur-bani-pal, consisting of a number of inscribed prism fragments<sup>37</sup>: one of them, ND5541, specifically states that he restored the temple of Nabu in Kalhu 'which Adad-nirari, son of Shamshi-Adad, king of Assyria . . . had built'. Subsequently Assur-etil-ilani, as we have seen, repaved several chambers with his inscribed bricks and appears to have patched the floors of the two subsidiary sanctuaries NTS1, 2. Finally we have two inscriptions which belong to the reign of Sin-shar-ishkun, the last king of Assyria, including part of a small barrel cylinder, ND4323, dated by the eponym Daddi, who is thought to have held office in 620 B.C. Most important was the discovery of a burnt tablet, ND5550 [229], embedded in ash behind the Fish Gate, in the entrance chamber NTS13, dated by reference to one Bel-iqbi who probably held the office of limmu in 616 B.C., four years before the fall of the empire. This text appears to record a grant of land in perpetuity to the god Nabu, together with three slaves, as an act of piety for the life of the king and his queen.<sup>38</sup> The discovery of this tablet, one of the latest-known commercial documents of the

Assyrian empire, embedded in a stratum of ash which can be continuously traced throughout Ezida and the Burnt Palace, is of extraordinary importance, for it has enabled us to establish beyond all doubt that the fires of destruction at this end of the akropolis, and indeed in many places elsewhere, cannot have been lit earlier than that year. As several dated documents of Sin-shar-ishkun were also found in Fort Shalmaneser, we need have little hesitation in assuming that this event took place in the course of the disastrous years, 614-612 B.C., during which time, as we know from the Babylonian Chronicle, Assur and Nineveh fell to the Babylonians and to the Medes respectively.<sup>39</sup>

It was behind the Fish Gate also that we discovered the handsome cylinder seal, ND5262 [230], in translucent grey chalcedony. The scene depicts the winged disc of Assur surmounting the sacred tree, crescent moon, star or rayed sun and the sibitti (the Pleiades). The most important figure in the scene is a god armed with bow, quiver and sword, mace in hand; subordinate to him is a bearded man and a second worshipper who is clean-shaven; both of them salute the standards of Nabu and Marduk, represented by stylus and spade, which are planted on the back of a bull. The date of this seal is uncertain but, stylistically, there is nothing against its ascription to the early 8th century B.C.; indeed it is tempting to suggest that this finely made cylinder was the property of a priest or a noble, specially made to commemorate the foundation by Adad-nirari III in the year 798 B.C. when the temple was formally opened. Close to it there was an inscribed stone mace-head, ND5544, dedicated to the god Nabu by a person whose name is known to be that of a scribe in Calah.<sup>40</sup> Another tablet, ND5472, found near the Fish Gate mentioned a high official, (amel) rab nikasi (controller of accounts), perhaps the man who was governor of Amedi in 726 B.C.: there is a reference in it to timbers of mulberry wood and to gold. Elsewhere in Ezida, and especially in that part of it which contained the sanctuary of Nabu, some interesting seals were discovered; the selection of them illustrated in this chapter [231-41], with others from elsewhere, provides a cross-section of the glyptic styles current in Assyria between the beginning of the 8th and the end of the 7th century B.C.

**230.** ND5262 (B). Cylinder seal,  $4:5 \times 1.8$  cm., translucent pale grey chalcedony. The scene consists of a god armed with bow and sword with decorated terminals, mace in hand; in front of him are the standards of Nabu and Marduk (stylus and spade) planted on the back of a bull; the god is approached by a bearded figure preceded by his son (?) whose hands are raised in salutation. Winged disc of Assur surmounts the sacred tree; in the field are crescent, star and seven Pleiades. This beautiful seal, once surmounted by copper caps, was possibly made to commemorate the foundation of the Nabu Temple in 798 B.C. Found behind the Fish Gate, side, in a broken patch of pavement.





231. ND5331 (B). Cylinder seal, black steatite, length 2.8 cm., surmounted by copper cap with loop-holder. Two figures confront the storm god Adad (?) armed with axe, standing on a bull, tree, star, fish; perhaps late 8th or early 7th century B.C. From room 11 of Ninurta Temple.

**232.** ND5254. Cylinder seal of black steatite, length 3.5 cm., with copper caps and suspension loop; ostrich, ibex; spade of Marduk with tassels; fish, star, lozenge. From a cache in the wall, south-east corner of Ezida, NTI3. Probably same date as [231].





233. ND5329 (B). Cylinder seal, grey steatite, length 1.7 cm. Bearded figure with bent club seizing the head of a rampant goat; star, crescent, spade of Marduk; probably 7th century B.C. Found on the floor of a room containing large stone jars in the building DD, east of the akropolis, outer town, next to a clay bird's head which had been inscribed with the name of Assur-bani-pal (*Iraq* XIX, p. 24).

**234.** ND5248. Seal amulet, ovate,  $17 \times 11$  mm., faience, probably late 7th century B.C., found with [233] above debris of building DD.





**235.** ND5247. Cylinder seal, faience (?), length 2.4 cm. Two standing figures on either side of a table supporting a vase, one of them fanning it. 7th century B.C., in soil thrown out of NT8.

**236.** ND5246. Seal amulet with stalk handle, diameter 1.5 cm. Bird on the wing. 7th century B.C., in debris from south end of Ezida.



231-41. Cylinder seals and stamp seal amulets of the 8th and 7th centuries B.C., from Ezida and elsewhere. See p. 257.

**237.** ND5420 (B). Clay tablet,  $5\cdot5 \times 7\cdot5$  cm., top left hand corner of obverse; two lines of inscription between the figures read: 'the seal *kunukku* (or sealed document) of Shepa-sharri, may his property grow old.' The text also contains a title of the god Nabu and is dated by reference to the *limmu* Pan-Assur-lamur, therefore to be dated 776 or 756 B.C. The seal impression depicts a god mounted on a dragon, probably Nabu, upon a low platform, attended by two figures with stars above their heads, shown full face with curling side-locks. Immediately in front of the god stands a bearded figure clad in ordinary Assyrian dress. This document is of particular interest for it enables us to assign the style of iconography on the seal to the first half of the 8th century B.C. A seal of a similar style was found at Shechem in an Assyrian destruction level of 724 B.C., and therefore earlier than that date, see *ILN* 10 August, 1963, p. 208, fig. 22. Found on the floor of NT13.





**239**. ND5244. Seal amulet, grey stone, scaraboid,  $2\cdot3 \times 1\cdot6$  cm., a figure saluting a goddess, perhaps Ishtar; probably late 7th century B.C., from surface debris, east side of Ezida. 238. ND5255. Seal amulet, ovate  $2 \times 1.5$  cm., light brownish stone. Four-winged figure holding a thunderbolt (?) in each hand; four alphabetic Phoenician (?) or Aramaic signs faintly discernible below it, but illegible. Probably latter half of 7th century B.C. Found about 40 cm. above pavement level, in a cache, southeast corner of NT13.





**240.** ND5242. Seal amulet, unperforated chalcedony, flattened ovate,  $12 \times 14$  mm. Winged griffin with star above its back and tree (?) in front of it; two connected circles below. Probably late 7th century B.C. Found with [238] in cache of NT13.

241. ND5327 (B). Seal amulet, cream stone, ovate, 2:4 cm.×1.9 cm.×7 mm. thick. Cow suckling calf, shock of corn, lozenge, crescent, star. This motif on stamp seals probably began in the 8th century B.C., cf. *Iraq* XVII, pl. xviii, ND772 and p. 108, illustrating a rectangular stamp from the N.W. Palace, but the cutting thereon is sharper. The seal illustrated here is more likely to have been made in the 7th century B.C., a time when the oval form was becoming popular, both in Assyria and in Babylonia. Found in the upper fill of room 9, Ninurta Temple.



Our evidence has so far been mainly concerned with the northern wing of Ezida, which in its present form, as we have seen, appears for the most part to be a reconstruction of the original foundation. We now come to the inner precincts of the Nabu Temple itself where the 9th century stratification has been thoroughly examined; we may begin at the inner entrance, the spacious hall NTI through which the visitor had to pass before penetrating to the great court confronting the two principal sanctuaries. Here, the main purpose of our excavations was to discover the library, for since Nabu was the god of writing, many tablets must once have been housed in this wing. But exactly where the tablet room or rooms were situated we did not then know; their discovery when eventually we made it was therefore a pleasant, but not altogether unexpected, surprise.

The great entrance hall NTI had been cleared of its contents by H. Rassam in 1873-4: its facade consisted of two courses of carefully dressed limestone blocks of considerable size (up to 80 cubic centimetres) surmounted by engaged columns in mud-brick. The construction was in every respect similar to that of the façades of NTSI and 2, but while the latter were perhaps an addition to the plan by Sargon, the former may have been a reconstruction by him of an older foundation of Adad-nirari III, for in the reveals on either side of the entrance Rassam found a pair of gigantic limestone statues, about 11 feet high<sup>41</sup> which are probably the work of Adad-nirari, designed to occupy this particular place. They faced towards the outer courtvard and are presumably the divine attendants of Nabu, for they wear the horns of divinity; they were barefoot and elaborately robed in a fashion depicted upon an ivory panel, ND4202 [250], found in the king's throneroom and engraved with figures of the priests of Nabu (see p. 267 below). The great size of the stone blocks in this wall and their careful dressing is closely comparable with those used in the construction of the bridge between Sargon's palace and temple at Khorsabad, and the engaged columns are likewise similar to those in the Khorsabad sanctuary.42

After passing through the inner hall NTI, one entered the great inner courtvard with a single row of chambers on three sides and, to the west, a self-contained unit with ante-halls leading to the two principal sanctuaries which were surrounded by three long corridors NT3, 6, 8. The courtyard pavement was originally of burnt brick, but that of the sanctuaries was more expensively done in stone paving-blocks 50 centimetres square [242-5]. The front of the principal sanctuary consisted of an enormously thick wall with reveals projecting into the courtyard; it was on opposite sides of the entrance facing eastwards towards the court that Rassam must have discovered, in 1873, the two life-size inscribed statues, smaller than the colossal uninscribed figures outside NTI, but similar in style though less elaborately dressed.<sup>43</sup> It was these two figures which first gave the clue to the identification of the sanctuary, for the name of the god to whom they were dedicated was specifically mentioned. The inscription states that they were set up for the god Nabu 'who holds the writing-reed . . . the merciful, the compassionate . . . who dwells in Ezida which is in Calah'. The date is fixed to 798 B.C. by the name of the eponym Bel-tarsi-iluma, and the dedication was 'for the life of Sammuramat (Semiramis) . . . his queen'. The last lines emphasize the elevation of Nabu to primacy among the gods. 'O man, who shall come after (me), on Nabu wait. Do not trust in another god.'44 Nabu indeed

had been endowed with a temple, perhaps on this very spot, by Assur-nasir-pal, 80 years earlier, and was already worshipped at Assur in the Middle Assyrian period during the 13th century B.C. But the tremendous effort which was made in the reign of Adad-nirari III to elevate Nabu over all the other gods marks a significant phase in the history of Assyrian religion.<sup>45</sup> The scale of this effort is best recognized by the colossal mud-brick platform upon which the god's temple was erected. This occupied a large part of the south-east quarter of the citadel and was over 3 metres in thickness (section on folder v, phase E). An army of builders must have been employed on the job, mostly unskilled, with a few overseers; and to correct their work clay bands a few inches thick, were poured over the platform at intervals in the course of its elevation in order to adjust the faulty levels of the brickwork.

We are therefore led to ask what is meant by this change of emphasis in worship. The answer must be that it signifies a determination on the part of the Assyrians to arrogate to themselves the authority and religious prestige so long held by the holy city of Babylon in which Marduk had been the paramount god. The choice of Nabu the son rather than Marduk the father was perhaps a subtle way of attracting to themselves the sanctity of a Babylonian cult without giving the impression that they had been enslaved to Babylonian tradition. This learned god may also have reflected the archaizing tendencies of the age; and his preoccupation with magic made a strong appeal to all the Sargonid kings. We may however suspect that the moving spirit in erecting the temple, the largest yet founded at Calah, was the Queen Mother Sammuramat who had acted as regent whilst her son Adad-nirari was still a minor. Besides recording her name on the god's statues she was perhaps also responsible for moving the stela of her husband Shamshi-Adad V from the Ninurta Temple to the precincts of Nabu, where it was found by Rassam in 1853.<sup>46</sup>

These two statues of the god's attendants, with hands clasped, faced, as we have seen, across the courtyard in the direction of what proved to have been the principal tablet room, NT12 [194]. In addition, two more stood in a recess on either side of the doorway into NT2; one of these was found by our expedition in its original position against the north jamb in 1955 [243]. This pair was different from the others;47 each held in front of the body a box, perhaps the container for the tablets of destiny controlled by the god Nabu-'the perfect scribe'.48 Similar statues of attendants carrying boxes were found in north Syria at Arslan-Tash; they were more elaborately carved, and better proportioned, but differed only in detail: in height they appear to have been about the same as those at Nimrud.<sup>49</sup> The practice of erecting statues at the temple doorways about this time is also marked by a pair of horned attendants from the forecourt of the temple of Nabu at Khorsabad erected by Sargon; they carried not a box but a vase.<sup>50</sup> That originally there were more statues of the kind associated with the Nabu temple is proved by the further discovery of the stump of a smaller carrier out of position near the north wall of NTI [196]; this one may originally have stood against the jamb of NT7 outside the entrance to the Tashmetum sanctuary.

It is curious that none of the statuary designed for the Nabu temple is of outstanding merit; indeed the Assyrians showed little flair for carving statues in the round. Their sculptors concentrated on bas-reliefs, an art in which they



242 (*Left*). Podium in the sanctuary of Tashmetum, NT5, showing the two flights of stairs. See p. 264–5.

244 (*Right*). The raised podium upon which the god's statue must originally have stood, west end of the Nabu sanctuary NT4. Note the two flights of stairs and the great dimensions of the megalithic blocks in the podium and the small offering boxes in the pavement. See p. 263.

**245** (*Extreme right*). Sanctuary of the goddess Tashmetum, NT5, looking west across the antechamber NT7. Note the smaller dimensions of the pavement and podium blocks. See p. 263.

243. Limestone statue, life-size, of the attendant of Nabu holding a box, perhaps the container for the 'tablets of destiny'. It stands in a reveal at the entrance to the god's shrine NT2 and faces across the threshold. See p. 261.





excelled. But even the production of stone reliefs in Assyria declined sharply for about a century after the reign of Assur-nasir-pal until it was revived by Tiglath-pileser III (745–727 B.C.) and thereafter enjoyed another century of production at a high level. These rather rare examples of statuary associated with Ezida in the reign of Adad-nirari III thus belong to a time when, for some reason unknown to us, stone sculpture was no longer fashionable in Assyria. It may be that the original veins of gypsum from which the reliefs were obtained had been worked out, and that new ones had not yet been found, or, more probably, that the great drain in manpower which the setting up of stone reliefs had entailed was considered wasteful, and that mural paintings, which have more rarely survived, were used as a cheaper substitute. Although stone relief in the provinces, particularly at Carchemish where sculptors' workshops still prospered.

The four large stone statues which we have described were the appropriate guardians to the sanctuary of Nabu and, as we have suggested, there may have been a smaller one at the entrance to the adjacent shrine which was almost certainly dedicated to the god's wife Tashmetum. [242-5] and [247] give a good impression of the handsome layout—the megalithic blocks with which the antechamber NT2 was paved, and the carefully-laid stone floors in NT4 and 5. The overall internal length of the Nabu sanctuary, NT4, was 20 metres; the antecella was 13 metres long, and the podium or dais beyond this was a further 7

metres long. This podium was raised 90 centimetres above the floor-level, and was paved with large limestone slabs, 2.5 metres long and 22 centimetres thick. They were bedded in a clay band 16 centimetres thick, which in turn lay on a 5 centimetre levelling belt of clay running directly over the platform top.

'The plan of the building was outlined in dressed limestone blocks which were carefully bedded in clay, about 10 cm. thick, on top of the platform [246]; they varied considerably in size, but kept to a rough course height of 60 cm. The mud-brick walls, which surmounted the stone base course, were normally at least 2.70 metres thick; the space between the base-blocks —following the wall faces—was consolidated by an infill of rubble. The rubble was graded—that is, the individual stones became progressively smaller towards the top; in the construction of the west wall, to the shrine of Nabu, the entire top of the base course was graded level by small, 2 cm. square, limestone chips. . . . Seventeen courses of mud-brick remained on the top of the stone base. In the first course, the bricks bedded in sand measured 36 cm. square with a course height of 11 cm.; the joints were 3 to 4 cm. wide and were pointed in mud mortar. . . . There was a clay levelling band 3 cm. thick between the tenth and eleventh courses.<sup>501</sup>

At the end of each sanctuary the raised stone podium was approached by two flights of stone stairs, each with three steps, for the use of the priests and ministrants of the god whose statue no doubt once stood aloft against the western wall, as also in NTS1 and 2[199, 242, 244–5, 247]. The adjoining sanctuary of Tashmetum, NT5, was a repetition on a small scale of that allocated to Nabu; it was similarly appointed but narrower; no megalithic blocks were used

246. Section through west wall of NT4, Nabu sanctuary, showing method of construction: a base course, 60 cm. in height, of rusticated limestone ashlar at pavement level; lower portion of wall filled with rubble; above it mudbrick superstructure. See also section on folder v.



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247. Sanctuary of Nabu, NT4, looking west towards the podium through the ante-room NT2. In the foreground, megalithic pavement slabs abutting on the courtyard, and a slab with standard inscription of Assur-nasir-pal, removed in antiquity from the N.W. Palace.

in it and the podium at the end was lower because the god's wife was the subordinate partner.<sup>52</sup>

The use of stone foundation-courses in the sanctuary walls is interesting. In a part of the building which was roofed and carefully sheltered from damp they can have served no practical purpose and indeed their cartage and dressing must have involved much extra labour. It must therefore be concluded that they were used to emphasize the distinction between temple and palace, and were one of the requirements of construction in religious buildings at that time, comparable with long-standing practice in the temples of the religious capital at Assur itself.<sup>53</sup>

An intriguing feature of the Nabu sanctuary was a series of shallow boxes lined with gypsum and sealed by a capstone, which had been cut through the stone pavement : similar boxes were found in the subsidiary sanctuaries NTSI and 2. When opened, most of them proved to be empty except for traces of wood and vegetable matter-clearly ritual deposits. There was however one exception: a box [248] in the anteroom NT2 to the sanctuary, at the point indicated on the plan [194], more elaborate than the others, was divided by a grille into four compartments which contained four small button-like discs, ND5398-5400 a, b, two in gold and two in silver [249]. These strange deposits must have been an expression of some magic appropriate to Nabu whose divining-rod-the ziqpu used for taking bearings on the morning stars-must have been set up either in the courtyard or on the roof. An ancient Babylonian text quoted by Professor C. J. Gadd runs: 'If you plant the ziqpu for your observation on the 20th Nisan (March-April) at dawn, before sunrise, having the west to your right, the east to your left, the south in front of you, then one star (point of Cygnus) stands in the meridian before your breast, and another star (point of Capella) is rising heliacally. Nabu was saniq mithurti, adjuster of symmetry, and was responsible for the proper order of the days and hours.'54 Esoteric ritual of this kind was no doubt performed in every Nabu temple; precisely similar boxes were found in a sanctuary at T. Halaf (Guzana) in north Syria, most probably dedicated to the same god.



248. Top of the foundation box in NT2 (40 cm. square) divided into four compartments by a terracotta grille, lined with gypsum and sealed with a capstone let into the pavement. See p. 265.

It is likely that the special appointments and plan of Adad-nirari's temple served as a model for other similar sanctuaries both in Assyria and in Syria. Indeed one of the most interesting parallels is the temple at T. Halaf. This, known as the 'City Temple', was built some time after the conquest by Adadnirari who incorporated the city within his empire.55 The new sanctuary was built on top of the ruins of older Aramaean temples which had been altogether different in plan. This Assyrian building is strikingly similar in appearance to the one at Calah; many technical features of its construction are comparable, including the use of engaged half-columns of mud brick as on the façades of NTS1, 2. The shrine was rather smaller in dimensions but in conception the layout was the same. There was an ante-room approached from a large courtyard, then an oblong sanctuary leading up to the advtum or Holy of Holies which, as at Calah, was on an elevated podium approached in this case by seven steps instead of three. At T. Halaf however there was an important addition : on either side of the podium in the angles with the wall there were the stumps of basalt columns, originally perhaps surmounted by wooden shafts which may have supported a baldachin. If so, parts of the ceremonial may at times have been screened off from the ante-cella. No trace of this was found at Calah, but it is conceivable that the elevated podium may likewise in the course of the service have been screened from the congregation, as is the case during parts of the religious service in certain Oriental churches today.

Also comparable with the Nabu Temple at Calah is that erected to the same god by the last king of Assyria, Sin-shar-ishkun, at Assur.<sup>56</sup> There the temple was more regularly planned, since the builders were not hampered by having to follow older wall lines. The two shrines (one of them probably dedicated to Tashmetum) were separated by a pair of intervening chambers, but connected through doorways. There were two flights, each of three steps, leading up to the raised podium as at Calah. A third sanctuary, possibly for Marduk, was included in the same building.

We need not discuss in detail the Nabu Temple at Khorsabad, which is elsewhere mentioned frequently in this chapter for comparison with that at Calah.

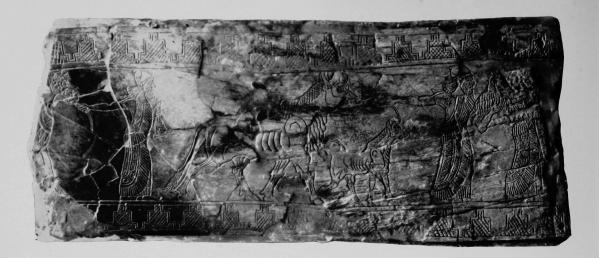


**249.** ND5398(B)-5400 Two gold and two silver 'buttons', 2·2 cm. in diameter, one from each compartment of a box (illustrated on the left) found in the antechamber NT2 of the Nabu sanctuary. See p. 265.

In general, it was obviously modelled on the older prototype though, like that at Assur, more regularly planned. It was built by Sargon, who must have directed its construction from Calah. Among many points of resemblance we may note the stone pavements with boxes inserted, and raised podium for the god's statue; but the podium was approached by a single instead of a double flight of six stairs. The engaged half-columns of mud brick were again a characteristic feature, as also the surround of long and relatively narrow corridors which are to be seen in all these temples. Nabu's sanctuary at Khorsabad, in keeping with Sargon's grandiose building plans, was the largest of the four which we have discussed; the one at Calah was about 3 metres shorter and 2 metres narrower.<sup>57</sup>

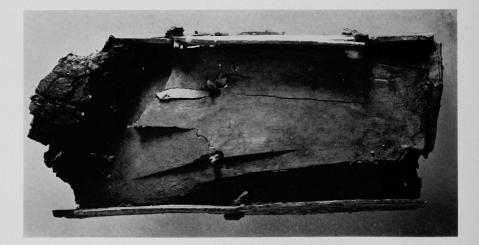
The overall dimensions of the ante-cella at Calah are of interest; for there would not have been room for more than about 150 persons to witness the religious ceremonies which took place on the podium. Only the privileged therefore can have taken part in the proceedings-king, nobles and priests of the cult; but a much larger concourse of people could have been admitted to the courtvard outside the temple gates. One of the engraved ivories discovered in the throne-room of Ezida, ND4202 [250], seems to depict a stage in one of the temple festivals. Here we see part of a procession in which elaborately robed tributaries or perhaps priests may be represented bringing offerings to the god. Dressed in full regalia, they are shod in sandals and wear turbans: one of them has a star embroidered on his shoulder; he carries a great bird and leads in a bull and a bull-calf to which, in earlier times, the Sumerians referred as 'the Bull Calf of the Sun'58 because the animal was once the attribute of a solar god. Later, however, this animal was incorporated within the name of the Babylonian god Marduk and here was appropriately presented to his son Nabu.

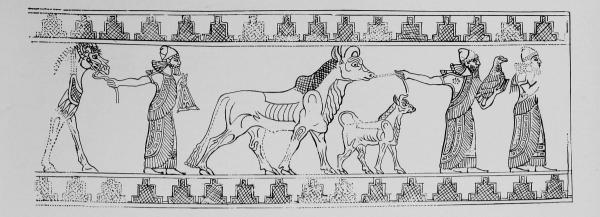
Another dignitary, also depicted on the ivory, walks a horse by the leading rein and carries what appears to be an embroidered towel: Assyrian contracts often specify as a penalty the presentation of two white horses to the god Assur;<sup>59</sup> and an extant letter written to the mother of Esarhaddon mentions



**250** (*Above*). ND4202. Ivory panel, partly burnt,  $24 \times 10.7$  cm. The scene illustrates a procession of foreign tributaries presenting gifts, perhaps on the occasion of the Nabu festival. The second figure from the right is clad like the others in elaborate gown which falls down to the ankles; he has a star embroidered (?) on his shoulders, carries<sup>-</sup>[a large bird in his left hand and leads a bull and bull-calf. Behind him another figure leads a horse and carries a towel. Border of crenellations. (See reconstruction on opposite page). Subject and details of style present many striking parallels with carvings on a basalt obelisk of Assur-nasir-pal II in the British Museum, with the black obelisk of Shalmaneser III and with the bronze gates of Balawat as indeed do the other scenes represented on [206-14]. Possibly the fact that nails were driven through the face of this ivory may indicate that it was repaired in the reign of Esarhaddon, who may well have regarded the subject as appropriate to the occasion of his Treaties which were found with it, in the throne-room of Ezida. See p. 267.

(*Below*). Back of panel showing the ruthless manner of driving nails through the front of the panel into the wooden backing, a part of which has survived and is visible on the left hand side of the picture.





Nabu, Marduk and Tashmetum as well as various offerings which include one ox, two white lambs, and a large bird.<sup>60</sup> The castellations which decorated the border of this panel also figure as an element of decoration in painted murals discovered on the walls of a palace of Adad-nirari in the outer town.<sup>61</sup> This panel, executed in the style of the 9th century, depicts a time-honoured festival and the scene is closely comparable with that illustrated on an obelisk of Assurnasir-pal, now in the British Museum, found by Rassam in 1853.<sup>62</sup> The fact that nails were ruthlessly driven through the face of the panel and thus disfigured it may however indicate that this was archaic work which at a later period had to be repaired.

Although, as we shall see, there was substantial evidence of repairs executed in the sanctuaries by succeeding monarchs, several inscribed objects in addition to the statues found by Rassam could be attributed to the reign of Adad-nirari III. A stone duck-weight, ND4319, found in the sanctuary of Tashmetum bears the name of Urigal-ilia who was *turtan* in the year 808 B.C., when Sammuramat was regent: the inscription appears to attest the standard weight for 5 *manah*. From just a decade later we have a contract tablet, ND5421, from room NT13, mentioning a loan of gold, probably by the temple, to various persons; a fragment of a grey stone bowl, ND5429 [251],'found in NT16 and engraved with the figure of a man wearing the tall hat which was the official dress of the royal musician; a more elaborate version of this headgear is represented on a relief of Sennacherib.<sup>68</sup> The Nimrud bowl mentions the name of a *kalu* priest, who in Babylonia was responsible for the chanting of incantations into the ears of the temple bull.

A more precise indication of the founder is given by an inscription in the pavement of the sanctuary of Nabu mentioning the name of Adad-nirari. This had been partly hacked away by some trophy hunter and was probably reset into the floor at some later period. But that the stone-paved floor as we see it in both sanctuaries is contemporary with Adad-nirari III there can be no doubt, for the sides were carefully keyed with the stone foundation-blocks which are



**251.** ND5429 (B). Stone bowl fragment, 11 cm. from rim to base, with part of a three-line inscription referring to the chief *kalu* priest 'who dedicated the stone'. The figure engraved on the bowl is depicted wearing the tall hat worn by Assyrian musicians; this headgear is appropriate to the incantation priest who perhaps carries in his right hand the *kalu* drum. Found in the debris of NT16. See p. 269.

stratigraphically proved to have been contemporary with that monarch. An inscription which was probably of the same date appears to have been chiselled out of the top of the podium in the adjoining sanctuary. The symbols of the cult are strikingly depicted on a rough brown pebble, ND4304 [252], which was found on the floor of the northern corridor, NT3. On it we see a priest saluting the wedge or stylus of Nabu, god of writing, which takes precedence over the filleted spade of Marduk. Of the three lines of inscription, two have defied interpretation, but one clearly mentions the god Nabu. This very rough pebble may have been valued for its magical properties on account of its unusual colour.

Almost all the expensive articles which must once have been contained within the two sanctuaries had been looted in 614-612 B.C., and most of what remained was removed by Loftus who had tunnelled along the line of the walls. But some significant objects were nonetheless recovered, including parts of the heavy roof beams. These, on examination by Forest Products Research, Princes Risborough, did not prove to be of cedar, as we had expected (for this is often mentioned in royal inscriptions), but of Aleppo pine, and one is tempted to wonder whether the kings of Assyria sometimes exaggerated the quality of their timber. Charcoal samples from the Nabu Temple roof were sent to the Physical Laboratory, Trinity College, Dublin, for examination by the C14 process. They yielded a date of 546 B.C.  $\pm$  140 years. Other samples examined in Philadelphia could be dated 740 and 693 B.C.—a most interesting confirmation of the probable date at which the burning occurred, namely in 614 B.C.

In the debris of NT5, the shrine of Tashmetum, we recovered the superblyengraved fragment of a thin ivory plaque, ND4200 [253], which depicts a kneeling

252. ND4304 (B). Brown pebble about 8 cm. across and perforated for suspension; engraved with a standing figure, saluting the stylus of Nabu and filleted spade of Marduk, three lines of inscription mentioning the god Nabu. Found in burnt debris on the floor of corridor NT3 opposite the entrance to the Nabu sanctuary.





**253.** ND4200(AM). Ivory panel,  $10.2 \times 7$  cm., engraved with the figure of a kneeling, winged bull, confronting a floral circle. Found in the destruction debris of the Tashmetum sanctuary NT5, antecella, just above the level of the pavement. Scale c. 1/1

winged bull confronting a floral circle; traces of gold-leaf overlay which may have belonged were found near it. Originally there must have been a second bull opposed and it is interesting to observe how the artist, in spacing the design, drew his circle with a pair of compasses: the outer one intersects the bull's horn, and the floral design was done last. I am uncertain about the date of this cleverly sketched ivory, although a winged bull, which is similar in style but not as sensitively drawn, occurs on a stone bas-relief of Sargon discovered at Khorsabad, and the poise of the head of a painted but unwinged bull from the same site is also similar.<sup>64</sup> The only other object found in the vicinity was a fragment of a prism which recorded that Esarhaddon (681–669 B.C.) had repaired the temple of Tashmetum.<sup>65</sup>

Leaving the principal sanctuaries, we may now cross the courtyard to room NT12 which appropriately faced the entrance to the shrine of Nabu whose tablet carriers, as we have already seen, stood on either side of NT2 [194]. The tablet room NT12 was a large apartment, measuring  $8 \times 4$  metres; it was paved with burnt bricks and contained a square recess in which there was a deep well of small diameter intended for the use of the scribes who prepared the tablet clay. So narrow was the mouth that only a boy could work the well; some 20 feet down it became dangerously airless, and we were never able to penetrate to the bottom. It is doubtful whether the risk and expense of pursuing this operation could be justified, and unlikely that anything of value would be found there. The tablet room proved to have been thoroughly looted in antiquity, for a large pit had been sunk into it from the late levels above the Assyrian. This disturbance can certainly be attributed to the activities of Hellenistic builders because some of the tablets were found lying on a bed of jus (gypsum plaster) and bitumen which represented the building debris from these late villages. But there could be no doubt about the original function of the room because many fragments of tablets as well as a few complete ones, the pitiful remnant of a once great collection, were found here and in the vicinity. Since most of the tablets were of sun-dried clay their disturbance had done them no good. When the Hellenistic occupants of the site dug into these rooms, mostly in order to tear up the pavements for the burnt bricks required in the construction of their graves, they cast aside in dumps these documents which were of no interest to them. Often the clay texts must have been exposed to rain before they were eventually shovelled back as the pits were refilled to make good the ground surface which had to be relevelled for building. This sequence of events makes it most probable that the texts which survived this vandalistic treatment found their

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**254.** ND55545 (B). Baked clay tablet, height 17 cm., with sixty lines of inscription, obverse and reverse views. The text is a hemerology or magical calendar concerned with the first eight days of the month *Tishrit*, specifying abstentions from particular forms of food as well as prohibition against various activities during the first seven days of the month. The observance of these regulations was important because the proscribed abstentions preceded a joyful festival on the eighth day. The tang at the top was horizontally perforated so that when the tablet was suspended on the wall a consultant had only to tilt it upwards in order to read the contents on the back if he desired to do so. The author was a priest of Assur-nasir-pal, so that the document was more than 60 years older than the Nabu temple library or tablet room NT12 in which it was found. See p. 274.

way back into the group of chambers in which they had originally been stored, and it is therefore likely that in addition to NT12, rooms 13, 14, 16 were also libraries and probably NT10 and 11. Historical texts were not uncommon; the earliest, ND5417, was a fragment of the annals of Shamshi-Adad V (824-810 B.C.) whose stela had, as we have already noted, been removed to the eastern wing of Ezida where it was found by Rassam in room NT1.<sup>66</sup> Next in order of time came historical fragments of Tiglath-pileser III, followed by the prism fragments of Esarhaddon and Assur-bani-pal as related above. It was fortunate for posterity that the librarians of Calah, jealous of their books, had kept them *in situ* despite Assur-bani-pal's orders to send copies of every ancient text to Nineveh; a royal instruction to Ezida in Borsippa ran: 'nobody must withhold the tablets from you.'

The bulk of the contents of NT12, 14–16 consisted, however, of religious texts. Their decipherment is a laborious and intricate task and it will be many years before all of them are translated. But their character is already sufficiently understood, and we are indebted to several epigraphists who have played their part in examining them. Most are magical texts of a type which we should expect to be associated with Nabu. They include incantations, prayers, hymns, liturgies, medical and astrological texts, omens, menologies and hemerologies, that is to say calendars of favourable and unfavourable days and the like. For the most part they seem to be based on the traditional forms of magic favoured by the learned scribes and priests of Babylon; many are copies of texts far older than the temple itself.

One tablet, ND5545 [254], published by P. Hulin,<sup>67</sup> well preserved because it had been baked in antiquity, has a note in the colophon which tells us that it was written by the hand of a man who was high priest of Assur in the reign of Assur-nasir-pal, nearly a 100 years before the Nabu library was founded. At the top there is a handle, horizontally perforated, so that the tablet could have been suspended by a cord tied to a nail in the wall. It would thus have been possible to consult the calendar without removing the tablet from the wall since the reverse was inscribed so as to be directly legible when the tablet was lifted upwards from the bottom. This contained special instructions for the month named *Tashritu*, the seventh month of the year, and informed the consultant upon what days he had for his own safety or advantage to abstain from perform-

**255.** ND4307 (B). Clay model of a sheep's lung, 9 cm. long, inscribed with omens. This had been imported from Babylonia into Assyria for the instruction of native 'diviners' probably in the ninth year of Merodach Baladan. From the convolutions of kidneys, livers and lungs, *haruspices* claimed to be able to forecast the eventual success or failure of proposed military operations. (*Right*) view of base. Found in debris of Nrf6.



ing certain actions. Some of the instructions have, to the modern mind, a comic turn. Thus the first and the fourth were bad days for eating garlic and onions; the eating of garlic on the second day was particularly dangerous, for that would involve a death in the family. It was dangerous to garden on the fifth day or to eat dates; on the sixth to have sexual intercourse with a woman or to climb up to the roof. On the seventh various disasters would attend the man who jumped a ditch, travelled, entered a village or looked down a well. Prohibitions against eating various kinds of food such as leeks, cress, beef, goat and pork were also specified for certain days and, as Mr Hulin has suggested, the ban on dates for the fourth day with its result-the shaking of teeth-may be based on the observation that dental decay resulted from eating sweet food to excess. Indeed, futile as many of these injunctions would seem to be, they were doubtless based on the recorded observation of actual incidents and in fact are the precursors of medical casebooks, the heralds of Greek medicine. The eight days of the month Tashritu with which this text is concerned were of special importance because they marked the inauguration of the new autumn cycle in the year: the first seven days therefore were appropriately marked by abstentions of various kinds, to be followed by a festival on the eighth, a day of ablutions, merriment and licence.68

Other texts belonged to a more purely medical series. One published by J. V. Kinnier Wilson<sup>69</sup> appears to be part of a 'Nimrud Catalogue' which, as the colophon states, included a total of 40 tablets and more than 3,000 entries of what might be termed clinical observations. There are allusions in this document to the parent establishment of Ezida at Borsippa (near Babylon) and a postscript states that a new edition was composed in the reign of Merodach-Baladan (C.721-710 B.C.) whose activities we have discussed elsewhere (p. 174). With this branch of medicine the ashipu priest was concerned: he prescribed treatment for fever, headache, bile, pregnancy. Other texts appear to diagnose, inter alia, malaria and tonic epilepsy, conditions which are ascribed to the activities of the gallu demon. Some of the prescriptions smack of the witches' concoctions in Macbeth. 'Take the beak of a black raven, stitch it up in a leather purse, place it round his neck.' Another tablet, ND5577, from the same library, published by E. E. Knudsen,70 is an incantation text which might be described as a sovereign remedy from Eridu for the purification of sick cattle and sick men who can neither eat nor drink because possessed by seven devils. It was bilingual-Sumerian and Akkadian. One more incantation text, ND5435, which was known as the seventh tablet of the shurpu series deserves mention because it gives us evidence that our modern transcriptions of many Babylonian words must convey the actual sound of the original, for the incantation itself runs:71

> nishu nihlu guhu hahu ruu'tu cold catarrh cough spew saliva a better opomatopoeic series.

Never was there a better onomatopoeic series.

More elaborate in form than any of the texts so far described was ND4307 [255], the clay model of a sheep's lung. This was what the Babylonian schoolmaster used in class for the instruction of pupils who were to become professional diviners. From the peculiar convolutions of kidneys, livers and lungs they claimed to be able to forecast the success or failure of proposed undertakings, especially of military operations. Professor C. J. Gadd, to whom I am

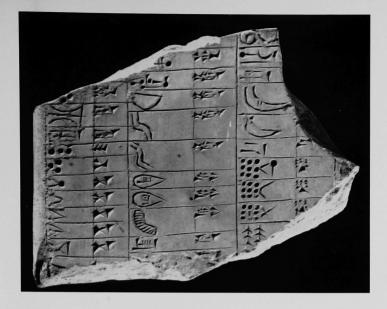


**256.** ND4311 (B) (*Left* obverse, *right* reverse). Lexicon originally inscribed in four columns about 11.7 cm. across. On the left is a series of pictographic and semi-pictographic signs in an archaic writing characteristic of Sumer in the early 3rd millennium B.C.; on the right, Babylonian equivalents of the 18th century B.C., time of Hammurabi. This and other fragments from Nimrud now in the British Museum, discovered either by Loftus or by Rassam are evidence of the interest taken in palaeography by the scribes of the Nabu temple. Found in the throne-room; other fragments ND4320, 4321 were discovered in a pit in the Nabu temple.

indebted for information about this text, has explained to me that a part of the inscription, now only half preserved, gave the number of features marked, name and office of the scribe and of his father, their place of abode, and the exact date—ninth year of a king of Babylon, whom I am tempted to identify as Merodach-Baladan, mentioned as sponsoring the publication of a medical text, ND4358, from the same room.<sup>72</sup> At all events, the model was imported from the home of this 'science' into Assyria for the instruction of native haruspices.

Finally among the learned texts we must take note of yet another remarkable fragment, ND4311 [256],<sup>73</sup> of a lexicon originally inscribed in four columns. On the left we have a series of stylized forms of pictograms in an archaic writing characteristic of Sumer during the Uruk - Jamdat Nasr period, c. 3000 B.C. The equivalent of each pictograph is 'frozen' in the Babylonian form current at the time of Hammurabi, the 18th century B.C. This would therefore seem to be an archaic lexicon based on an edition which was a 1,000 years older than most of the texts found in Ezida and is, as Professor Gadd has remarked, 'of great interest as representing the study of palaeography in the Assyrian school'. The study of this tablet is likely to provide some puzzles, because in several cases the Babylonian equivalent does not correspond with previously established correspondences for the ancient Sumerian equivalents.

Whilst most of the documents from NT12 were what one might expect to find in a religious library—texts of a magical character—learned literary compilations



were also held there, for they too were appropriate to the scribal craft. In particular there were large numbers of lexical texts, as well as historical prisms and fragments of annals. The disposition of all this material has thus led to the conclusion that at least six rooms, namely NTIO-I4 and 16, were scribal apartments. No doubt much of the actual writing was done in the clear light of the open courtyard outside the entrances to these chambers.

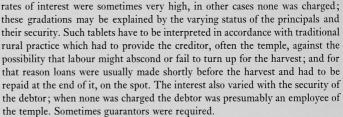
In these apartments also, probably in NT14 and 16, the temple business records and contracts were held; many of them were found in a pit sunk between these two rooms. Most of these texts have been examined by Miss Barbara Parker,74 and they provide an interesting commentary on the business and economy which came under the jurisdiction of Ezida. Many are loans or advances of money, that is to say of silver or of grain, to persons directly employed by the temple or to persons resident in distant places who ventured to borrow from it. In fact the temple acted as an agricultural bank which financed the farmer by lending seed and by providing the landlord with grain with which to feed his labour at the harvest. Repayment of the loans was usually, but not always, made at harvest time on the threshing-floor (ina adri). The rate of interest was often very high and involved a security of up to fifty per cent on the person himself or his family. In one document, ND5448, a man of the queen's guard pledged his wife as security; in others, ND5465, 5469, credit was given to three men on condition that they provided a number of harvesters equal to the number of homers of grain for which they were indebted-in the latter tablet ten harvesters for 10 homers. It appears that 1 homer of grain, an amount equivalent to about 200 litres more or less, was the normal rate of pay for a harvester. In barley this would perhaps work out at a ration of a little under twelve ounces of bread per day for the whole year, a bare sustenance for a poor man, who would doubtless have found other seasonal occupations enabling him to eat vegetables, fruit and occasionally meat.

Many of the smaller loans were recorded in sack-shaped clay dockets with an introductory phrase which signifies that they were promissory notes. Whilst the

257 (Right), ND5278. Burnt fragment of a small ivory writingboard, 8.2×3.3 cm. The incised scrabbling below the raised margin was devised for gripping the wax. Margin decorated with concentric circles, similar design enclosing six-petal rosettes on back of the board. Compare Sargon's waxed tablets illustrated and described in ch. x. Found in NT13. Scale c. 1/1

258 (Left). ND5274. Burnt ivory fragment about 2.8×2.4 cm. 'Cloisonné' or champlevé work depicting 'lilies' and papyrus flowers with paste incrustation in the style of the chryselephantine plaques representing a lioness killing a negro (see ch. IX, ND2547-8 and note 30 therein). Period of Sargon or Sennacherib. Similar fragments were also found in the throne-room of the Burnt Palace. ND5274 was found in the debris of NT13. Scale c. 1/1





sent an interesting cross-section of the avocations pursued in Calah. Either as creditors, or as debtors, or as witnesses, we find goldsmiths, bronzesmiths, blacksmiths, gem-cutters, cultivators, harvesters, millers, fullers, weavers, merchants, scribes, priests, night-watchmen, musicians, choristers, cupbearers, slaves and many officers, civil as well as military. This list, selected from a group of less than two dozen tablets from one particular archive, is a revealing picture of the complex nature of Assyrian society, supported as it was by a systematically organized agricultural economy controlled through the palaces and temples which had to arrange for the maintenance of many specialized trades. Many of these documents are dated between the years 668

In addition to the archives, many small objects were found in the neighbourhood of the scribal rooms; some of them have already been mentioned. Here we may notice a few more fine ivories. It is interesting that fragments of ivory boards originally overlaid with wax, much smaller editions of Sargon's books found in the N.W. Palace, were also discovered here: ND5278 [257] for example, with the usual raised margins and scored underside to grip the wax. Another group of fragments, ND5274 [258], is of particular importance because among them is a piece which illustrates 'cloisonné' papyrus and lilies in the same style



259. ND5261. Ivory figures in three-quarter relief, 3.5 × 2.2 cm., wearing long tunic with short sleeves, probably saluting a sacred tree. Found in debris of NT13. Scale c. 1/1

The professions of the persons recorded on these business documents repreand 652 B.C.



**260.** ND5276 (B). Ivory figure, burnt,  $6\cdot 2 \times 3$  cm., depicting a young man with little pointed beard in three-quarter relief, wearing cap with dot border, curled locks of hair, pectoral and short tunic; part of a wing projects to one side of him. Egyptianizing style in the Phoenician manner. From NT13. Scale c. 3/2

as the famous lioness killing a negro (p. 139); it doubtless belonged to a similar plaque, and is likely to have been contemporary. Other fragments, ND5261 [259], a bewigged boy, hand raised in salutation, and ND5276 [260], of the Phoenician school, with short beard, winged, and wearing pectoral and kilt, are also likely to be of the late 8th century. The close-fitting cap with its embroidered radial divisions is very similar to that depicted on an ivory, ND9436, found in Fort Shalmaneser SW37 (ch. XVII, p. 572, [525]); the two pieces are probably contemporary.

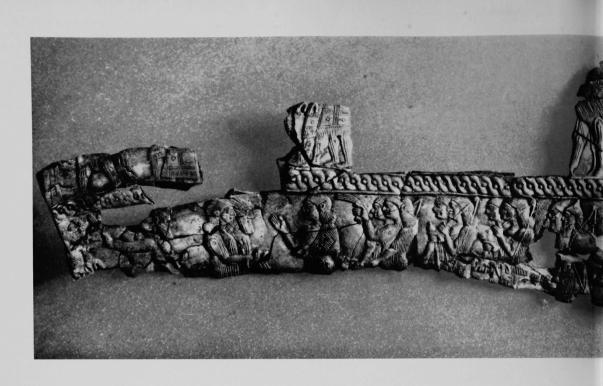
Perhaps the most striking miniature of all is a male head in the round with part of a capital on top of the head, ND5265, [261]. The hair-style is unusual, with finely scored parallel locks, fillet on the forehead and a single tress of spiral locks pendent from it. To this there is a most interesting parallel which, although not identical, for the hair-style differs, may have been executed in the same workshop; it comes from the site of Zinjirli on the borders of north Syria. The vigorous modelling of the face and the full mouth, and the tense vitality of expression, are a strange anticipation of the fully developed styles of classical Greek sculpture; but these pieces are probably Syrian; there is no known Assyrian sculpture to compare with them. The specimen from Zinjirli was found in the hilani building founded by a prince named Kalamu, together with various other ivories which were probably a part of the palace treasure inherited by Bar-rekub (c.730 B.C.), a vassal of Tiglath-pileser III. It is not unlikely that some of the Zinjirli ivories were made a decade or two earlier in the reign of Panammu II, when the place reached a high level of prosperity; the earliest possible date would be about 825 B.C. when Kalamu was on the throne. As we shall see when we come to examine some of the ivories from Fort Shalmaneser (ch. XVII), there are many other parallels from Zinjirli which are probably of late 8th century date.75

One more ivory, ND5395 [262], must claim our attention as unique, marvellously executed and purely Assyrian in character. This plaque was found in the debris over room 14, but its source of origin is more likely to have been the throne-room suite. The scene is cut in relief on an ivory strip no more than a few millimetres in thickness: the task of carving it was one of the utmost delicacy. Although fragmentary it has been possible to reconstitute the scene almost in its entirety; [262] and the skilfully drawn copy by Miss M. Howard [263] show how much has been restored from the original. This is the kind of scene which is familiar to us from the stone bas-reliefs on



261. ND5265. Miniature ivory head of a male, burnt,  $33 \times 18$  mm., in three-quarter relief, surmounted by a capital. This vigorous and beautiful carving can be closely matched by an ivory found at the north Syrian site of Zinjirli and was perhaps made in about 730 B.C. From NT13. Scale c. 3/2



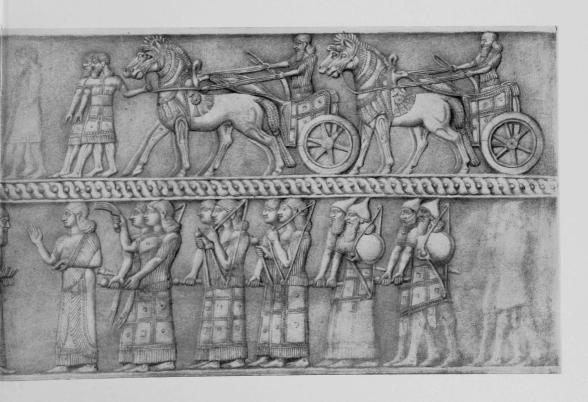




**263.** ND5395. Reconstruction by Miss M. Howard of the scene depicted on the fragmentary panel illustrated on [262]. Length of panel as reconstructed, approximately 17.5 cm. Faintly drawn portions are entirely reconstructed. The remainder is drawn on evidence—see also [262] where most of the original, with the exception of a few small pieces, can be seen in the photograph. The upper register depicts a palisade and chariots led by horses yoked in pairs; below, a procession in two files depicts one Assyrian prince or noble, accompanied by retainers greeting another. This object may have been made in the latter half of the 9th century B.C. and represents the finest style of Assyrian ivory carving. Found in burnt debris of NT14. See p. 279.



262. ND5395 (B). Ivory strip depicting a processional scene in relief, in two registers separated by a guilloche margin; veneer of exceptional delicacy, only 2-3 mm. in thickness; maximum width of the two registers is about 8.2 cm. This style of relief carving is rare and apart from this panel is confined to fragments mostly discovered in NTS4, adjacent to the throne-room. For reconstruction of the scene see[263]. Found in burnt debris of NT14. See p. 279. Considerably enlarged



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Assyrian palace walls. The top register, separated from the lower one by a guilloche border, illustrates chariots with a pair of voked horses and elaborate trappings and harness, which recall in many details those depicted on the long engraved ivory found in the throne-room [209]. A soldier on the left-hand side supports a palisade of the kind which also figures on stone reliefs.<sup>76</sup> Below we have a reference to some historic occasion: an Assyrian prince accompanied by his squires, bowmen, and soldiers advancing left in two files, greets another procession headed by a young man accompanied by a bearded notable. One is led to think of a meeting between the Crown Prince of Assyria and his brother, but this can only remain conjecture. The admirable carving and the execution of the relief matches that of the beautiful fragments found in the small apartments, especially NTS4, adjoining the throne-room, and the dominant impression is of a oth century style. The simple plumes of the crests on the horses' heads, the 'duck' harness at the back of the horses' necks, elliptical yoke-pole which has pointed rather than flattened ends, can be matched on the reliefs of Assurnasir-pal and on the Balawat gates of Shalmaneser III; the quiver attached to front of the chariot cab was an innovation by the latter monarch; wheels with six spokes indicate a date before Tiglath-pileser III and thereafter occur only once on an archaistic chariot of Sennacherib. There are, however, a few traits which agree with 8th century work: the low helmets with funnel-shaped tops are characteristic of Tiglath-pileser III and of Sargon; bows with duck terminals apparently occur only once on a relief of Assur-nasir-pal<sup>77</sup> and first became popular in the reign of Tiglath-pileser: on the other hand the type of circular shield, which on the Balawat gates appears to be Urartian, comes closer to the 9th century type than to that which figures on the monuments of Tiglathpileser. The reinforced, double pair of reins do not appear to occur before the time of the latter monarch. On balance, therefore, and remembering the fragmentary nature of this ivory, 9th century traits prevail, but a few are also characteristic of the 8th. It would be logical to argue an intermediate date, and to credit this ivory to the reign of Adad-nirari III, the founder of Ezida. We may not be far wrong in suggesting a date between about 850 and 800 B.C. for this remarkable work. In coming to this conclusion I have been carefully guided by my colleague from Nimrud, Savid Tariq el Madhlum, whose exhaustive study of the Assyrian bas-reliefs will, we hope, appear in writing before long.

The variety of articles discovered in Ezida, including pottery, of which few complete examples were found, spans the two centuries between about 800 and 612 B.C. with many pieces, more especially ivories, made midway between these two terminal dates. The period of Sargon's reign is probably represented by some of the *objets d'art*. An unusual piece which we may attribute to this period is the limestone head of a calf, ND5252 [264], the neck socketed for attachment to a body which is missing. The decoration had once consisted of black painted stripes: the pupil of the eye was made of a black stone with a surround of black frit, which had also been used as incrustation for the eyebrow. This object was part of a cache which included a number of fragments of burnt ivory; it was found in NT13, a room which had been severely burnt.

We have seen that the objects found in Ezida can be attributed to a wide range of dates. It is satisfactory that in restoration and repair of some of the buildings we can detect the hand of Sargon with some degree of certainty: this



**264.** ND5252. Limestone head of a calf,  $4.6 \times 4$  cm., the neck socketed for attachment to a body; painted and incrusted eye. From debris of NT13.

architectural work we may now examine before summarizing the sequences of occupation within it.

The section on folder v, which runs from the western wall of the outer courtyard in the Burnt Palace, illustrates a continuous dog-leg traverse which embraces also room 7 of the palace, the street between it and the Nabu temple, and the western corridor NT6 behind the sanctuary, podium and cella of Nabu, NT4. The most important stratigraphic link between the two buildings is, as we have previously noted, the great platform of phase E which is more clearly marked by a series of clav levelling bands as it increases in height. In the temple, phase E comprises the foundations, podium, pavements and statuary of Adad-nirari III, and in the palace the corresponding floor-levels can be detected by the magical figures buried beneath them as well as by certain well defined walls. The next phase F, in which pavements either directly overlie those of E as in the palace or re-use the older ones as in the Nabu and Tashmetum sanctuaries, is the one with which the ivories and the treaties, as well as many documents of the period from Tiglath-pileser III to Sin-shar-ishkun, the last king of Assyria, are associated. Also associated with phase F is the belt of ash and the burnt walls which mark the destruction in 614 B.C. or thereabouts. The problem is the date at which the period of reconstruction initiated in phase F occurred.

Here the critical evidence appears in the section east of the street beneath the west external wall of the corridor behind the Nabu sanctuary. The section shows clearly that a part of the great mud-brick platform of phase E where it abuts on the street had collapsed. Then, as D. Oates and J. H. Reid have explained,<sup>78</sup> the complete rebuilding of the western façade wall of the temple had become necessary:

'its premature decay was presumably caused by the exposure of the edge of the platform to the weather—along the entire length of the street. It will be seen from an examination of the section that this part of the platform had been removed, and replaced by four courses of limestone to form a base of more durable form; from the clear definition of the foundation trench it follows that this feature was secondary to the construction of the platform.

The upper limestone course, the only one to be dressed, was built of large stones which measured approximately 80 cm. cube; these were bigger than the stone base units of phase E and were very similar to the blocks used in the construction of the quay-wall.<sup>79</sup> The stone-work was capped by a clay levelling band to take fifteen courses of mud-brick; the bricks measured 36 cm. square with a course height of 11 cm. The colour of the mud-brick was the characteristic reddish brown of the Palace building.

The mud brick of the façade was decorated with the "niche and reed" type of repetitive motif' (cf. the plan of the façade to NT6 on [194]); 'it consists of three sets of reed-columns alternating with composite rabbeted niches of seven grooves.'

#### EZIDA AND THE NABU TEMPLE

The 'niche and reed' façade is so closely comparable to that of the Nabu Temple of Khorsabad (Dur Sharrukin) erected by Sargon (722–705 B.C.) that we can hardly do otherwise than attribute this reconstruction in phase F to him. And it is perhaps more than a coincidence that some of the stone blocks in these foundations compare closely in size with some of those forming the quay-walls which Tiglath-pileser III and his predecessors had erected about two decades earlier—an obvious quarry for Sargon if, as is not unlikely, demolitions were undertaken there owing to a shifting of the river.

To Sargon, therefore, we may with some measure of confidence attribute a substantial part of the rebuilding in phase F. The elaborate temple-façade and the simpler niches prolonged from them on the street which flanked the west side of Ezida were probably his work. The enormous western wall was a very powerful defence. The columned front to the Fish Gate was also, as we have seen, probably contemporary. Reverting to the Nabu Temple we may note the striking deviation of angle between the older sanctuary walls of Adad-nirari III and the decorated façade walls of Sargon.

Elsewhere in Ezida there is reason to suspect that the two subsidiary sanctuaries NTS1 and 2 with their mud-brick columns on dressed stone blocks at the entrance, and the hall NT1, were renovated if not originated by Sargon. In NTS1 and 2 there were votive boxes like those of the Nabu sanctuary in the pavement which was patched by Assur-etil-ilani; but nothing remained in them.

One other fragment of evidence attributed to Sargon was a limestone column base found in the courtyard north of NTS15, an architectural feature also characteristic of Khorsabad. The column stump was perhaps once associated with a portico of the type to which the Assyrians referred as a *bît hilani*.

Of the phases preceding E and F there were in Ezida hardly any traces, for whatever had remained of the earlier phase D had been engulfed or obliterated when the huge platform to the Nabu temple of Adad-nirari III had been erected. Only in the street was there sufficient evidence of wall stumps, surfaces, and substantially built drains to testify to the existence of some important building which might be attributed either to Assur-nasir-pal or to his son Shalmaneser III. Since the former monarch records that he built a temple to Nabu, this may well have been its traditional site : the work of his son is attested by his name on the lion gate beyond the north entrance to Ezida.

After the destruction of phase F there was a short period during which squatters (phase G) who had survived the disaster sought shelter in the ruins: a bread oven located in the sanctuary of Nabu shows however that its sanctity was not then respected. The next phase H marked some attempt, though a poor one, to revive its amenities; perhaps a roughly carved limestone altar discovered in the court outside the entrance to NTI was an attempt to renew the cult, for an earlier one had stood on a circular base outside the entrance to the Nabu sanctuary. Fragments of inscribed bas-relief torn out of the N.W. Palace of Assur-nasir-pal II in the ante-chamber to the Nabu sanctuary, as well as east of NTSI and 2, and a part of a wall inscription of that same monarch embedded in the door-sill of NTI, may belong to this sorry period of patching. These repairs may reflect the efforts which were also being made in other buildings, for example in Fort Shalmaneser (see ch. XVI), where it seems that in the year 613 B.C., after the first sack, there was a co-ordinated but short-lived attempt to

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restore order. In the sanctuaries NT4 and 5 there were unpaved trodden levels about 1 metre above the level of the older pavement [265], and in the much damaged throne-room a carefully constructed wall 1.20 metre above the floor of phase F belonged to the same period [201].

In the small court embraced by NTS4–7 and 3–5 there was a considerable succession of potsherds, the latest of which are Hellenistic, but not enough is known of the 6th and 5th century pottery of Assyria to say when this succession (phase 1) began. However, the discovery in various places of pyramidal seals, in chalcedony and other stones characteristic of Babylonia in the 6th century B.C., and the fact that many of the later Hellenistic pot types are obviously derived from the Assyrian, makes it certain, supported also by the testimony of Xenophon, that Calah, although in ruins, was not altogether deserted in the dark centuries immediately following on the destruction of the neo-Assyrian empire; and we may assume that Ezida continued to see some sporadic traces of occupation even in the neo-Babylonian period.

We know that the tradition of the older Assyrian gods died hard in Assyria, and that in Assur itself the national god Assur (Assor) as well as Nabu survived through the Seleucid into the Parthian period.<sup>80</sup> At Calah the clearest traces of the Hellenistic occupation, fortunately dated by a coin series in phase I, were found in a succession of villages south of Ezida on the very top of the akropolis. These better dated and more numerous remains we shall consider in the next chapter. Traces of a Hellenistic house were however found in the denuded north-west corner of Ezida, and potsherds of the period were not uncommon.

Some very important clues to the pre-Hellenistic phases were provided by the stratigraphy of the street between Ezida and the Burnt Palace. Here we were able to correlate the historical sequences separately observed in the two buildings. A substantial burnt-brick drain, marked in our section [folder v] belonging to phase D, running north to south, was clearly designed to serve an important building south of the Nabu Temple further up the hill. This we were constrained to investigate in a subsequent season (1957) and in the next chapter we will see what it proved to be.

265. Stratification of debris overlying the pavement within the sanctuary of Tashmetum, NT5, looking east. (1) At bottom, stone pavement of Adad-nirari III; (2) At 1.20 m. above it, occupation (trodden) level post 612 B.C., phase H-period of reconstruction; (3) above this, collapsed mud bricks which toppled into the room after the final abandonment of the building, probably in the 6th century B.C.; (4) left, behind the ranging pole, tunnel cut by Loftus in 1854-5; (5) right, mud plastered south wall of the sanctuary showing the mud bricks under it.



# CHART SUMMARIZING CORRELATIONS BETWEEN THE BURNT PALACE AND EZIDA-

NOMENCLATURE USED IN PRELIMINARY REPORTS

## PERIODS, RULERS, CHRONOLOGY

(Iraq XIX-XX) (Iraq XV-XVIII)

PHASE

A-C		Probably began before the middle of the 2nd millennium B.C. Earliest historical name: Shalmaneser I 1274–1245 B.C. Latest remains probably pre-Assur-nasir- pal II.
D	ТА	Probably began in the early part of the 9th century B.C., Assur-nasir-pal II— Shalmaneser III; pre-Adad-nirari III, c.879-810 B.C.
Ε.	18	Began c.810 B.C.; probably ended c.727 B.C. Inscriptions of Sammuramat the Queen Mother, and of Adad-nirari III (810-782 B.C.). Fragments of historical annals of Tiglath-pileser III, 745-727 B.C.
F	24	Probably began in last quarter of 8th century and ended with the fall of the Assyrian empire. Sargon, 722–705 B.C., responsible for much building whilst founding his new palace at Khorsabad (Dur Sharrukin). Repairs by Esarhaddon, 681–669 B.C.; by Assur-bani-pal, 668–626 B.C.; by Assur-etil-ilani, 625–623? B.C.; by Sin-shar- ishkun, 622–7612 B.C. Fall of Assur 614 B.C., of Ninevech 612 B.C. and probably of Calah also, resulted from a combined attack by the Medes and Babylonians led by Nabopolassar.
G	28	Began immediately after the sack in 614 B.C. when squatters took refuge, probably for a short period only, under the lee of the walls.
Н	3	Date uncertain. Probably separated by a considerable gap from preceding phase G and succeeding phase I. No historical names associated, no evidence of any prosperity. Xenophon and the 10,000 Greeks saw the derelict city when they marched past the abandoned quay walls in 401 B.C. in the dry bed of the Tigris which had shifted its course to the west.
Ι	4	Probably began in the second half of the 3rd century B.C. and ended a century later. Period coincides with the Seleucid empire and ends with the Parthian conquest some time after 146 B.C. Coins of this period include posthumous issue of Alexander the Great; Lysimachus of Thrace including posthumous issues of 260-220 B.C.; Philetaerus of Pergamum minted under Attalus I (241-197 B.C.); Seleucus III 226-223 B.C.; Antiochus III minted 206-203 B.C.; Alexander Bala 150-145 B.C.; Demetrius II Nicator (first reign 146-140 B.C.).

## ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

See plans and sections through Burnt Palace, Street, and Ezida on folding plates 1v and v, separately enclosed at end of Vol. II

ASSOCIATED OBJECTS Illustrations with chapters XIV-XVI

Wall stumps, patches of pavement in the Burnt Palace. Platform of phase B traced under corridor of Nabu Temple. Buckling and bending of platforms B-C in Burnt Palace indicates earthquakes. Well first dug in courtyard of Burnt Palace. Street between Ezida and Burnt Palace ran $E \times W$ .	Potsherds of Nuzi type. Kassite and Middle Assyrian seals in deposit of Ninurta Temple. Seal impressions of 13th century B.C. from deep sounding in east centre of akropolis. Copper axe, socketed, found by Loftus in cist grave deep under Nabu Temple, probably 18th century B.C.
Cobbled street leading from the outer town along the N. front of Ezida relaid by Shalmaneser III who built the Lion Gate at the point where it entered the akropolis. Street between Nabu Temple and Burnt Palace reorientated to run N×S instead of E×W; well-built burnt-brick drain in this street carried water down from a palace further up the hill. Palace AB at the extreme S.E. corner of the akropolis was probably founded during this period. Pavements and wall stumps including ante-room to throne-room in Burnt Palace, walls of which were reset at an angle of $7^{\circ}$ deviation from earlier walls and pavements. Layout of part of the E. wing and whole of the W. wing of Burnt Palace. Stumps of mud-brick walls under Ezida.	Objects of this period are rare. Inscribed bricks of Shalmaneser III re-used, not in their original position. Wall inscriptions removed from N.W. Palace and perhaps reset as thresholds in Ezida. Monolith of Shamshi-Adad V, 824-810 B.C., removed from Ninurta Temple to Nabu Temple, probably by Sammuramat, in the subsequent phase E. A series of incised ivories in the Assyrian style discovered in Ezida, and other fine Assyrian ivories in relief, mostly from NTS4 and NT14 may have been contemporary with this phase.
Burnt Palace walls rebuilt using the D foundations. Most distinctive feature of platforms was use of clay bands to correct levels of mud brickwork. Brick relieving arch carried over well in Burnt Palace courtyard reduced well-head to half its original dimensions. Huge mud-brick platform under Nabu Temple raised it over 3 metres above floor of Burnt Palace. Construction of Nabu and Tashmetum sanctuaries with mud-brick walls on stone foundations.	Pair of inscribed stone statues dedicated by Adad-nirari III and Sammuramat to the god Nabu and set up on either side of ante-room to sanctuary. Distinctive of the period are boxes with magical figurines of sun-dried clay including the winged <i>apkalle</i> and the warriors, under the floors of the Burnt Palace. Beginning of Nabu Temple library. Duck-weight, cylinder seals, pottery, and other small objects.
Existing plan of Burnt Palace laid out, throne-room of which was decorated with painted murals, red horizontal bands on white plaster, at end of period; decorated stone thresholds are in style of Sargon. Massive stone drain in street between Burnt Palace and Ezida. Extensive repairs by Sargon in Ezida include setting up of the mer- men at the Fish Gate. Part of Nabu Temple platform which flanked the street rebuilt by Sargon on four courses of stone foundations; façades of 'niche and reed' motif in style of Khorsabad, also engaged half-columns in mud brick. Throne-room in Ezida probably built in this period. Repatched pavements include inscribed burnt bricks of Assur-etil-ilani. Extensive evidence of burning including deep deposits of ash over much of Ezida and Burnt Palace.	Many of the ivories belong to this period. Many other objects of all kinds, including fragments of glass vessels, pottery, metal, cylinder seals. Large numbers of tablets, literary, religious, historical, commercial, kept in the temple libraries. Treaties of Esarhaddon dated 672 B.C. found in the throne-room of Ezida together with engraved ivory panels illustrating the tributaries of Assyria. Latest tablet of all found in entrance behind Fish Gate dated c.616 B.C. within a few years of the final sack. Most of the ivories burnt black as a result of the fire which consumed many buildings in the year 614 B.C.
Most of the roofs had probably been stripped. No repairs or rebuilding attempted. Bread oven in the sanctuary of Tashmetum.	Assyrian pottery identical with that used in the preceding period.
Some parts of Ezida, Nabu Temple and Burnt Palace were repaired, but occupation was of a poor character. Possible that some repairs represent a last attempt to restore order in 613 B.C. Floors sometimes about 1 metre above preceding level; sanctuaries may have been maintained, but in a poor condition. Traces of continuous occupation at north end of Ezida. Throne-room of Burnt Palace derelict; carved stone thresholds torn out of it and re-used, one of them as a threshold in a gated passage, 39, to the west of it. Throne-room of Palace AB similarly saw some im- poverished occupation at a level of 1 metre above the Assyrian floor level.	Pyramidal drop pendants of chalcedony and seals of other stones; stamp seals; glazed pottery. Objects of this period are rare. Some pottery on the site ав matches Achaemenian ware from Susa. 'Eye-of-Horus' amulets.
Houses consisting of mud-brick walls founded on ash levels high up in the Burnt Palace cut across the tops of the surviving Assyrian walls. Glass-making furnace dug down deep for shelter into the ruins of Burnt Palace Room 47 was Hellenistic. Graves composed of burnt-bricks collected from the Assyrian ruins and others of terracotta found high up over Burnt Palace and Ezida (also cist graves in the villages). Large grain silos dug down into these areas. Evidence of architectural activity comes mostly from a series of six Hellenistic villages on the akropolis, south of Ezida. Establish- ment of these villages within the citadel, c.240 B.C., probably due to insecurity of conditions under the Seleucid empire which was threatened by the rise of the Arsacid dynasty of Parthia after 249 B.C. Crude stone altar in courtyard at entrace to NTS1 in Ezida, probably of this period, indicates that worship may still have been practised here; cults of Assur and Nabu were perpetuated at Assur down to the Parthian period.	Series of coins including silver tetradrachms mostly from the village settlements on the akropolis south of Ezida. Stamped amphorae from Rhodian and Thasian wine- jars. Hellenistic terracotta figurines include mother and child types, Graves include pottery, seals, pendants and metal as votive deposits. A few archaic objects including a cylinder seal of the Agade period were collected by the inhabitants of these villages. Representative series of pottery includes red-painted ware; stamped and incised ware; glazed pottery; coarse cooking ware; grey ware; <i>unguentaria</i> and lamps. Similar ceramic occurs at Beyce Sultan and Tarsus in Anatolia; at T. Halaf in N. Syria, at Nineveh and in other Assyrian cities, but is for the most part distinct from that contemporarily used in Babylonia.



**266.** Contour map of the mound (1957) showing location of the Akropolis Palace (building AB) at the south-east end of the mound, top right hand corner of map, squares D12-13.

# CHAPTER XV

# THE AKROPOLIS PALACE (AB): DECLINE AND FALL OF CALAH

THE year 1957 was the last in which we were engaged on an extended dig within the akropolis, for thereafter we were fully occupied in the low-lying outer town. There is indeed no better place from which to take leave of our work in the inner city than the south-east pinnacle looking over the far-flung plains of Assyria and the gleaming waters of the Tigris. Here in the clear morning light, shortly after sunrise, we had many times felt that sense of well-being and exhilaration which comes on the verge of discovery. But there was a darker aspect to our reflections, for as we surveyed the distant remains of Assyrian habitations and their adjoining pastures, it was easy to imagine the last days of the empire, nearly 26 centuries ago, when the citizens of Calah were nearing the end of their labours, filled with apprehension at the declining tide in their affairs.

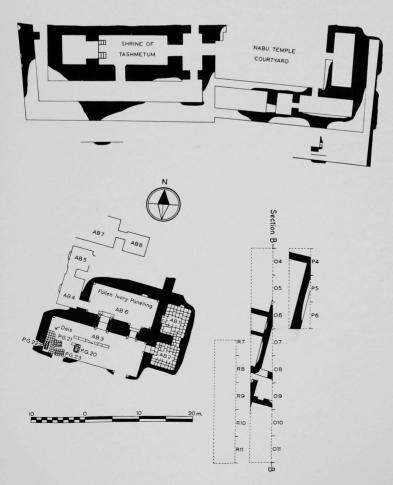
Once again we felt constrained to follow in the tracks of Layard, who had here correctly identified the remains of a building as a palace of the 7th century B.C. But we had yet to find out how this was related to the other great constructions in the south-east sector—the Burnt Palace and Ezida with its Nabu Temple, where we had now completed our excavations. For, as we have previously seen, a great brick drain which ran down the roadway between those buildings into Shalmaneser Street could only have been constructed for the purpose of evacuating the waters from some important edifice on the summit of the mound where Adad-nirari III had, together with the Queen Mother Sammuramat, left so many traces of their activity.

The site of this high-lying building situated just below the 56-metre contour may be seen on the map of Nimrud [266], second only in elevation to the Ziggurrat itself. Although much smaller in dimensions than the N.W. Palace, and relatively modest in scale by Assyrian standards, it nonetheless occupied a considerable area of ground; the throne-room, the largest of its apartments, measures internally  $18.5 \times 7.2$  metres with a party wall 3 metres thick. Only those who have experienced the labour involved in excavating a chamber of this size can appreciate the magnitude of the task which clearing such an edifice involves, not to speak of the effort which must have been expended in the building of it. One cannot avoid the conclusion that the

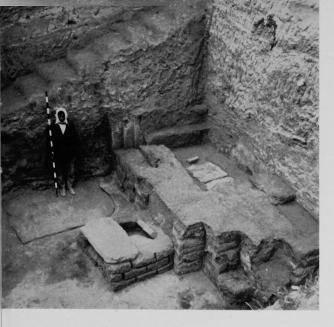
Assyrians had in their decline become the vicims of their own megalomania. Even to conserve what their ancestors had built was a liability which in the last decades of the empire had outgrown their capacity. The core of the building which we were able to excavate occupied an area no less than 28 metres square; in fact it probably once extended as far as the eastern and southern confines of the *tell*, and if that were so, the entire building must have covered a plot of ground about 80 metres square, approximately equivalent to that covered by the state apartments of the older N.W. Palace.

The pressing work which confronted us elsewhere, however, deterred us from undertaking the very costly business of completely re-excavating this corner of the mound, and indeed it is doubtful whether the comparatively small additions to our knowledge of the site which might have accrued would have justified so expensive an effort in view of the much greater immediate rewards promised by a dig in the outer town.

But what we achieved did result in some positive gains. Layard and Loftus had partially dug out the outline of eight chambers, including ABI-6 on the accompanying plan [267].<sup>1</sup> Beginning work in a hollow left by Layard, we concentrated principally on the complete re-excavation of the four rooms ABI, 2, 3, 6. It was evident that little interest had been taken by our predecessors in this building owing to the fact that it was devoid of sculpture, although the mudbrick walls of the well-built chambers ABI and 2 had been lined with orthostats



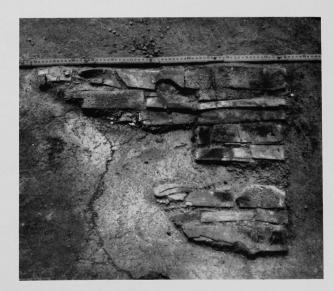
267. Plan of the Akropolis Palace (AB) showing its position relative to the Nabu Temple and location of trenches R, O and P. (Nimrud 1957).



**268**. West end of the throne-room AB3 showing the Assyrian mud-brick dais with intrusive graves of the Hellenistic period: PG20 off extreme left, PG23 unopened beneath the survey-pole, PG21 in middle foreground, PG22 in far corner of the room.

and paved with limestone. The thorough excavation of the large halls AB3 and 6, however, yielded some important discoveries, namely rich intrusive graves of the Hellenistic period at the hitherto unexcavated western end of AB3 [268] and a remarkable ivory screen in AB6 which had fallen from the inner face of the northern wall [269].

These two rooms were the most important in the building, and remains of typical stone 'tram-lines' in AB3 proved that it had once been the throne-room, as was also indicated by the presence of a mud-brick dais against its western wall, reconstructed probably in the last days of the empire. The smaller auxiliary hall AB6 connected to the throne-room by two doorways is typical of Assyrian palace plans, an arrangement frequently illustrated in the older N.W. Palace at Nimrud



**269.** Part of the ivory screen as found, lying in ash on the floor of AB3. This consisted of rectangular strips of ivory, the components of square panels which were nailed on to a wooden backing. See p. 269.

and in the North Palace of Assur-bani-pal at Nineveh, where the flanking chambers are also comparable.<sup>2</sup>

The two doorways on the southern side of the throne-room must once have opened on to a large courtyard which would have been connected with a series of chambers partially excavated by George Smith at the extreme south end of the mound.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, the palace must also have extended as far as the eastern flanks of the akropolis where we found the remains of substantially built Assyrian walls in trenches 0 and P; in 09 there was a room with a typically Assyrian niche [**267**]. The orientation of the walls in these areas, although approximately similar to that of the palace, differed considerably from that of the Nabu Temple and Ezida. This change in orientation of the palace and its dependencies was probably dictated by that of much older buildings which must lie deeply buried below the late Assyrian levels in the highest and oldest sector of the akropolis.

The palace itself was constructed with the materials conventionally favoured by the Assyrians : walls were of mud-brick covered, as Layard noted, by a thick coat of white plaster. It is interesting that in rooms 1 and 6, there were recessed niches which were the usual form of 'wind-door' or cupboard : the stone lines in AB3 proved that this was a palace. Much care had been devoted to the doorways,  $2 \cdot 3$  metres wide, closed by double doors which swung over stone-paved thresholds in deep stone-lined sockets. Their most interesting features were the rabbeted entrances with triple recess clearly shown on [**270**] which are faithfully reproduced on some of the small ivories depicting 'the lady at the window'.

Sunk into the brick pavements of AB3 and 6 and in the stone pavements of 1 and 2 there was a series of square votive boxes at the places indicated on the plan. Some, which had once contained vegetable matter, were empty; others contained traces of the small prophylactic figures of armed spearmen, bearded warriors in sun-dried clay, of which the best preserved was ND6189, still covered with its white *jus* plaster, though the head was much damaged. Among the twelve deposits in these four rooms the most interesting objects were miniature sets of copper spears and crescent-tipped standards;<sup>4</sup> they were of a type commonly found in the 8th and 7th centuries B.C. both in Assyria and in Babylonia : parallel finds were made both in the Nabu Temple and in Fort Shalmaneser.



270. Triply recessed entrance to room AB6 (east jamb, north side of door) showing top of a votive deposit box in south-east corner. There is a ledge at the bottom of the recesses which are reproduced on ivories depicting the 'lady at the window'.

None of the 9th century bird-headed winged *apkalle* were found here; presumably therefore this series of warrior figures is of a later date. But, significantly, in chambers excavated by George Smith at the south end of the mound a set of the 9th century *apkalle* was found.<sup>5</sup> His description of the architectural features, which included square pilasters and recessed entrances, small stone orthostats (similar to those in ABI and 2) and traces of stone pavements, are so much in keeping with what Layard and we ourselves observed in AB that we are justified in regarding this as evidence of a continuous building as far as the southern edge of the mound.

There, George Smith made a discovery which may be connected with the elaborate drain constructed for this building in the long north-south street between Ezida and the Burnt Palace. This consisted of a brick-vaulted chambertunnel which ran north by south right up to the end of the mound. It is possible that the brick-vaulted chamber, rather more than man-high, photographed by Rassam in 1878, was a solidly built conduit constructed at the time when the palace was founded, for the purpose of diverting some of the drainage in a contrary direction from that drawn off in the street further south. Its construction is closely comparable with that of a rather smaller vaulted brick drain which we had discovered in the Governor's Palace (ch. II, p. 40 and [7]) where the water was evacuated into Shalmaneser Street. But, on the other hand, Rassam may have been right in supposing that this vault, preceded by an ascending passage, was the grand entrance to the royal mansions since an interesting parallel may now be drawn with the vaulted entrances built by Esarhaddon as an ascending approach to the south side of Fort Shalmaneser (see p. 466).6

Finally, George Smith noted in his excavations that 'the walls were coloured in horizontal bands of red, green, and yellow on plaster; and where the lower parts of the chambers were panelled with small stone slabs, the plaster and colours were continued over these'.<sup>7</sup> It seems probable that simple bands of mural painting reflect the inexpensive attempts at house-decoration during the last decade of the empire when the monarchy, unable to afford carvings or figured murals, was nonetheless reluctant altogether to abandon some attempt at display.

In the auxiliary hall AB6, however, there was one remarkable decorative feature along the inner face of the northern wall. Here, lying on the floor over the entire length of the room, we found extensive traces of plain burnt ivory panels which had formerly been fixed to the wall face by wooden struts at either end. At intervals along the wall, the ivory had been carved in separate square panels which must have been dowelled to the wooden framework and perhaps also fastened to it with some adhesive substance; indeed, the lower part of the wall had been overlaid with bitumen.

The palace itself had been destroyed in the flames which had consumed all the buildings at this end of the akropolis in the final sack, 614-612 B.C.; the deep beds of ash as well as the carbonized walls told the same story. In the ivory screen-room the flames had evidently been fanned through the narrow channel, about 15 to 20 centimetres in width, which separated the panelling from the wall itself. Mr David Oates, who surveyed the building, has aptly described what must have happened:

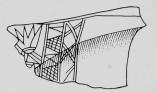
<sup>6</sup>. . . the combination of the ventilating shaft and the hollow-backed ivory screen provided a forced draught, and the resultant fierce heat fused the bitumen-coated wall plaster into a molten mass. The screen fell forwards on to the floor, where we found many of the ivory panels shattered, but in their original pattern, while the molten plaster flowed over and around the wooden framework, and on cooling preserved its impression, with fragments of its charred timbers, in a mould of hard, sulphurous clinker.<sup>78</sup>

The great ivory screen [269] which once rose to a height of about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  metres, gives meaning to the Old Testament phrase: 'the ivory house which Ahab made.' No doubt the white ivory wall must have appeared to be of a sumptuous magnificence. The fact that the panelling masked a recess in the wall behind it indicates that it was set up when the building was renovated towards the end of its lifetime. Perhaps King Assur-etil-ilani (c.625–623 ? B.C.) was responsible for this work, since small bricks found in the pavement corresponded in size with those used in his time, and a few inscribed in his name were found out of place in the debris.<sup>9</sup> The rough workmanship of the small dado slabs in rooms 1 and 2 are also indicative of the same period. Had the screen been erected a century earlier it is hard to believe that the monarchs of the time could have failed to order some form of decorative carving on the ivory. The plain, unadorned panelling was however a noble remnant of a great tradition.

Although there was clear evidence of late repairs, the date at which the building was first erected is problematic, for no inscriptions were found directly associated with it, though a broken inscription of Shalmaneser III was found leaning against the north wall of the throne-room where Layard's workmen had probably left it. Two exceptionally small bricks of Shalmaneser III,  $29.5 \times 9$  centimetres, which bore a three-line inscription referring to the *risiptu* casing of the Ziggurrat were also out of place. The only other written material was a fragment of a prism, ND6209, probably of Assur-bani-pal, in the fill of AB3.

There are, however, two important clues which suggest an early date for the foundation. We had in a previous season observed that there were six stepped foundation courses in the older southern boundary wall of the Nabu Temple. Since these foundations and the pavement level immediately above them could be proved stratigraphically to belong to phase D of Ezida (see table on p. 286), they must be earlier than Adad-nirari III, that is, before 798 B.C. when that building was erected. Moreover, this phase D pavement level almost exactly corresponded with the floor level of our Palace AB which, as we have already seen, was to be associated with a brick drain connected with a street first built by Shalmaneser III. But since this monarch built the great palace known as Fort Shalmaneser in the outer town as his personal residence, it is unlikely that he would also have erected this relatively small Palace AB. We therefore have to fit the foundation of our palace into some period between Shalmaneser III and Adad-nirari III. It is possible that Shamshi-Adad V was the founder, but it is more tempting to suggest an association with his wife, Sammuramat, the powerful queen mother of Adad-nirari, whose name figures on the statuary of Ezida. We know that Sammuramat was instrumental in elevating the status of Nabu in Calah. She it was, perhaps, who had removed the statue of her husband Shamshi-Adad V (824-810 B.C.) to Ezida, and it is possible that





271. ND6051 (B). Winged sphinx and lotus design engraved on a white limestone oliphant (?), length 8.3 cm. found in Assyrian debris on the south side of AB3.

the adjacent palace may have been completed towards the end of his reign after he had overcome the troubles which had beset him in the beginning. In the absence of more decisive evidence, therefore, we may suggest a date in the last quarter of the 9th century B.C., a period at which a number of unused inscribed bricks of Shalmaneser III, surplus to requirements in the Ziggurrat, may well have found their way to this building.

Few objects of the Assyrian period were discovered in this much plundered area. But Layard found a finely carved head of a female in white alabaster with traces of paint on it, probably not later than the 8th century B.C. This figure is closely comparable with that of a winged sphinx, ND6051 [271], engraved on an oliphant made of a veined, polished, white limestone, a fragment of which we found in Assyrian debris at the side of room AB3; the two pieces must have been contemporary.<sup>10</sup> A socketed iron spear-head, ND6059, and an iron arrow-head, ND6069, of the same material, the former from room 2 and the latter from the dump, are typical of the weapons in use during the 8th and 7th centuries B.C.<sup>11</sup> To the same two centuries may be assigned an interesting collection of cylinder seals and stamp seal amulets, some of which were deposited as antiquities in a Hellenistic grave, PG21, at the western end of the throne-room. Since these objects must have been collected by their owner as antiquities as well as for their prophylactic value, we cannot be certain of their exact source of origin. But these engraved seals, some of them skilfully cut, were no doubt recovered both from the palace and from Ezida by the Hellenistic villagers who foraged deep in the old Assyrian levels in search of building materials. They reflect the quality of personal seals during the two centuries between about 800 and 612 B.C., the period to which the substantial remains at this end of the akropolis may be attributed.

Among the Assyrian seals of special interest are ND6023 [272] from ABI, of glazed limestone, depicting an archer with recurved bow shooting a cobra; ND6028 [273], found outside the west wall of AB4, a fine rock crystal seal with crescent, winged disc surmounting pillar-like trees, star, and worshipping figures—the subject must be derived from middle Assyrian scenes but probably the seal itself belongs to the neo-Assyrian period; ND6086, a worn serpentine cylinder, probably of the 7th century B.C., depicts a galloping horseman preceded by a mythological figure carrying a tree. The poise of the horse and rider

recalls a seal found at the Iranian site Sialk, which may be of about the same date.12 ND6082 [274], of mauve quartz, which depicts a warrior and winged griffins, is in the fine style of the early 8th century, whilst another, ND6083 [275], which depicts a pair of high-necked vases resting on tables on either side, an armed bowman, and an attendant fanning the pots, is probably typical of the 7th. From the same Hellenistic grave PG21 which contained the three above-mentioned seals, we have a remarkable steatite cylinder of the Agade period, ND6098[276], an antiquity some 2,200 years older than the owner of the grave. The design represents a bearded hero riding a buffalo and a second hero killing a roaring lion; the inscription in the reserve reads KU.KU, presumably a divine name, if not that of the owner-the exact significance is unknown; a little gazelle is depicted between the heroes. This subject, common on Akkadian seals of the 24th and 23rd centuries B.C., can be closely matched by one discovered at Mari on the middle Euphrates;<sup>13</sup> but it may well have belonged originally to some dignitary who was living at Calah, whatever its name was at the time, in the oldest part of the akropolis which seems to have been occupied more or less continuously since the beginning of the 3rd millennium B.C. That it was eventually a prized possession of some notable in the Hellenistic period reflects the archaizing interest in antiquities manifested in Seleucid times.

Many other Hellenistic graves were discovered elsewhere on the site, but PG21 was the richest of them. It abutted directly on to the mud-brick dais or bench which projected 2 metres from the west wall of the throne-room and stood to a height of 85 centimetres. This dais was probably all that remained of the usual podium which confronted the tram-lines in the throne-room. It was furthermore cut away by PG22, while two other graves, PG20 and 23, were in the immediate vicinity, as shown in the plan on [267]. Although these graves can be dated some four centuries after the abandonment of the palace their construction still reflects the standard types of burial best known in the Assyrian period from the religious capital at Assur.<sup>14</sup> PG20 was an earthen coffin, a double interment; PG21 consisted of brick-lined walls surmounted by stone slabs for roof; PG22, 23 were pit graves lined with burnt bricks. Such evidence proves the longevity of burial customs, especially in centres like Calah with very ancient traditions, where the notables remained as avid as ever in their desire for valuable small possessions, even after their lives were spent.

These four Hellenistic graves can with some confidence be dated c.200 B.C., as we shall see when we come to examine the evidence from the late villages in the vicinity; four centuries therefore elapsed before the ruined throne-room was turned into a graveyard. This intervening period is poorly represented on the akropolis at Nimrud; but both in the throne-room itself and in Ezida, as we have seen in the preceding chapter, there is some slight evidence for occupation in neo-Babylonian or Achaemenian times. This period (H in the table at the end of ch. XIV, p. 286), was in fact marked in the throne-room itself by the remains

<sup>272-6 (</sup>*Right*). Cylinder seals from the Akropolis Palace, building AB, at the south-east end of the mound [274, 275, 276] were part of a collection of antiquities deposited in a Hellenistic grave, PG21, found in throne-room AB3. See p. 295-6.

**272.** ND6023 (B). Cylinder seal, length 2·2 cm., glazed limestone (?). Archer attacking snake. c.8th century B.C., found on the Assyrian pavement ABI.





273. ND6028 (B). Cylinder seal, length 1.5 cm., translucent rock crystal. Scene: winged disc of Assur above sacred tree on pedestal, pillar surmounted by crescent, star, lozenge, and on either side two standing figures. Perhaps Middle Assyrian period, early 13th century B.C. (?). Found in Assyrian rubbish debris near outer face of west wall in AB4.

274. ND6082. Cylinder seal, length 2.3 cm., of mauve amethystine quartz, end chipped. Standing warrior attacking winged bull (?) or griffin, rampant, a similar monster behind him. Probably 8th century B.C. Found with [275] in grave PG21.

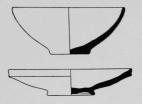




**275**. ND6083 (B). Cylinder seal, length 3 cm., black steatite. Two standing figures on either side of two tables which support water pots, fan, staff, bow. 7th century B.C. From grave PG21 in AB3.

276. ND6098 (B). Cylinder seal, length 2:5 cm., black steatite, inscribed KU.KU; finely engraved with design of two bearded heroes, one throwing a lion, the other throwing a steer; between them a gazelle. Typical of the Agade period. c.24th century B.C. Compare for example a seal from Mari, A. Parrot, *Syria*, XXIX 1952, p. 198, fig. 9. From Hellenistic grave P621, in AB3.

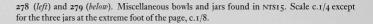


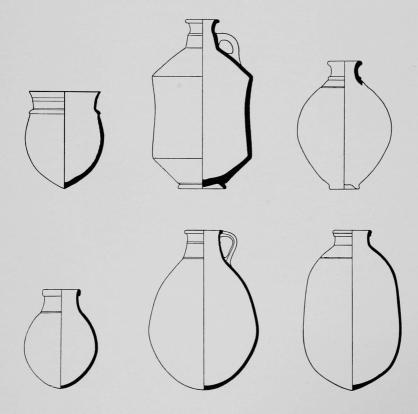


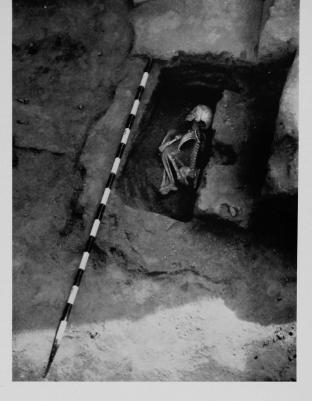
277 (Left). Two types of Achaemenian bowls found in AB3.

Scale c. 1/4

of some poorly built mud-brick partition walls which were constructed against the older Assyrian main walls, and divided the Assyrian chambers into smaller rooms some of which were faced with Assyrian bricks 40-42 centimetres square. The level of these buildings was about I metre above that of the Assyrian, and thus corresponded closely with the rise of occupation in Ezida itself, for example in the Nabu temple. It is impossible to say precisely when the ruins were reoccupied and for how long that phase of reoccupation lasted, but that it happened at some time between about 500 and 300 B.C. is probable since there are a few pot types which are very similar to Achaemenian wares discovered at Susa.<sup>15</sup> Archaeological investigation has revealed many traces of Cyrus II on Babylonian sites such as Ur and Erech, and the new fashions that appeared in the south must have been reflected in the various northern pot-fabrics, although within Assyria, only at Assur does there appear to be any substantial attempt at rebuilding on a scale consonant with royal authority. Two types of Achaemenian bowls [277] of a greenish buff and pinkish clay respectively, are therefore important in the little-known history of Mesopotamian ceramic at this time; both are from this level (on a pavement I metre above the Assyrian floor in AB3),







280. PG11. A typical Hellenistic grave, oriented E.×W., showing crouched skeleton; under the hands a posthumous silver drachm of Alexander the Great, ND6400, 325–300 B.C. The rectangular grave pit was cut into the top of the Assyrian wall, and surrounded on three sides by a single course of burnt bricks which carried the roofing slab. The level of origin was 4 or 5. See pp. 296, 301.

at which two glazed frit 'Eye of Horus' amulets, ND6031 and 6036, commonly worn contemporaneously in south Babylonia, were also found. To the same period we may perhaps assign some of the pyramidal and conical stamp seal pendants, specimens of which were found at various places, though never in a well-dated context, for example in the Palace AB, in Ezida, and at the northern end of the outer town associated with 6th or 5th century graves which had been cut through the walls of the ruined palace of Adad-nirari III. Finally, to this period we may also assign with some confidence a collection of pots and a lamp [278–9] beneath a Hellenistic house-floor in a western courtyard of Ezida, NTS15.<sup>16</sup> It is of particular interest that one of these vases (top left in [279]) was obviously derived from the older Assyrian palace-ware beakers. Although not as well made, it shows that the tradition of pottery was not lost even in these dark times, and the continuity is even more strikingly proved by a revival of some of these light fabrics in the Hellenistic period.

The fact is, therefore, that for over three centuries after 600 B.C. Calah was in poor shape and the akropolis only sporadically inhabited; indeed Xenophon in 401 B.C. did not use its ancient name; he called it Larissa and implied that the akropolis was deserted, though not the outer town, since a few inhabitants climbed up the ziggurrat, doubtless with some misgivings, to watch the 10,000 Greeks march past. What a motley rabble that gallant, footsore host with its camp-followers and baggage must have been!

There was however another reason, quite apart from the fact that, with the disappearance of an Assyrian army headquarters, Calah had ceased to have any strategic importance, to account for the reluctance of the surviving populace to









persist in occupying the akropolis. The place had become a city of ghosts haunted with evil memories of wholesale massacre and destruction, beyond the repair of Babylonian exorcisers. Fear of something more dangerous than a living enemy may have made the superstitious folk of the time averse to sleeping within the citadel. And although it is true that here and there we find a few traces of impoverished squatters beneath the surviving walls not long after the sack, at least three centuries, in which memories of the holocaust were dimmed, were to elapse before a persistent attempt was made to settle over the ruins of the old abandoned palaces.

At all events, after the final sack in 612 B.C., Calah ceased to be of any historical importance and if an attempt was made to revive it as a city, the effort was unsuccessful. Its first signs of regeneration were as a village, and our last efforts on the akropolis were aimed at finding out what had happened there after the Achaemenian patchwork had finally disintegrated. The gap in time was considerable, for the first evidence of revival is not earlier than the middle of the 3rd century B.C.

Most of the Hellenistic remains above the throne-room and its adjacent hall had been removed by Lavard, whose interest was understandably concentrated on the Assyrian buildings. Nonetheless, we were able, as we have seen, to trace something of this period in a part of AB3 which he had left undug; and from our work elsewhere we were eventually able to offer a precise date for the graves which remained there. Fortunately, the ground on the edge of the akropolis east of the palace had not been disturbed at all, and there, in two long trenches 0 and P cut by our expedition in 1957, we were able to trace a succession of six Hellenistic villages which we numbered I to 6 from the top downwards [see folder VII]. The houses of these occupants were of mud brick, quite well built, but on a scale which cannot compare with the vast architecture of Assyrian palaces. It would be fairer to compare them with the Assyrian private houses in the area known as TW53 (ch. XII), to which they were not much inferior. Irregularly planned and somewhat haphazard in layout, they are reminiscent of the unpretentious but not unprosperous peasant abodes in the district today. Walls were carefully plastered, and floors were of beaten mud, sometimes paved with bricks gleaned from the older ruins; there were brick drains, courtyards, small living rooms, simple kitchens with clay hearths, and conical mud-brick bread ovens of the type native to the country. Associated with the houses, for the most part outside

**281–4.** Specimens of silver coins from the Hellenistic villages at the south-east end of the akropolis. The series, which has provided valuable dating evidence, has been published in detail by G. K. Jenkins in *Iraq* XX, **158**f. See p. 301.

281 (Above left). ND6191. Silver tetradrachm of Lysimachus. Obverse: head of deified Alexander. Reverse: Athena holding victory in right hand and leaning left arm on shield; diagonal spear. Mint uncertain. Asia Minor 297–281 B.C., level 6.

282 (*Left*). ND6196. Silver tetradrachm of Seleucus III, head on obverse; Apollo with bow and arrow seated on omphalos on reverse. Mint: Antioch 226–222 B.C. From level 6.

them, there was a sequence of graves containing crouched [280] and flexed skeletons dug under the level of the floors; cist graves in the construction of which both burnt brick and some stone were used; inhumations and pot burials, of the types described in the throne-room (cf. p. 296 above). In the graves there were votive deposits which included pottery, beads, amulets and seals, while the houses themselves yielded similar articles including a few metal objects of iron as well as bronze, such as a socketed spear and iron arrow-heads of good quality;<sup>17</sup> there were also many bone spatulae with double-edged, tanged blades, sometimes described as awls—all-purpose instruments which could have been used for piercing holes in skin and cloth, for scoring pottery, possibly as forks and for the preparation of food.

These houses, however, have a historic interest far beyond the value of their contents thanks to the introduction of an asset unknown to the Assyrians, namely coins. A small coin hoard in the earliest of these settlements, level 6 [see folder VII] and thereafter a sufficient series associated with the sequent levels has enabled Mr David Oates to offer sure grounds for fitting these Hellenistic villages into the space of approximately one century beginning about 240 and ending about 140 B.C. Apart from two drachms of Alexander the Great typical of the currency minted both during his life-time and down to about 300 B.C., the earliest set of coins is a cache of silver tetradrachms of Lysimachus, king of Thrace [281]; on their obverse appears the head of the deified Alexander wearing diadem and the horns of Ammon, a reminiscence of his celebrated visit to the shrine of that god at the Libyan oasis of Siwa in the distant wastes of north Africa. Of these coins, two were minted between 207 and 281 B.C. whilst two others were posthumous and to be dated about 250-200 B.C. It has to be remembered that coins in ancient as in modern times often continued to be minted and circulated long after their first issue; a classic example is the present-day use of the Maria Theresa dollar in certain parts of East Africa; in the same way, the family savings of the villagers in Hellenistic Nimrud were partly in good denominations of ancient silver. From the same hoard however a silver tetradrachm, ND6196 [282], bearing a fine head of Seleucus III (226-222 B.C.) and another, ND6197 [283], probably of Attalus I of Pergamum (241-197 B.C.), were in an excellent state of preservation and cannot have long been in use.18

While the date of the beginning of the sixth settlement remains uncertain, the *terminus post quem* for its destruction by fire is indicated by the coin of Seleucus III. The next level, 5, begins c.220–210 B.C. (bronze coin of Antiochus III); since a stamped Rhodian jar handle, ND6072, probably made c.190–180 B.C. and found in debris of the Palace AB, may be associated with it we have an approximate terminal date for the *floruit* within this level. This was a prosperous village,

283 (*Above right*). ND6197. Silver tetradrachm of Attalus I (?). Obverse: Head of Philetaerus wearing laurel leaf. Reverse: Athene seated, with spear and shield, as on the coins of Lysimachus, but with her outstretched right hand placing a wreath on the name of Philetaerus. Probably period of Attalus I, 241–197 B.C. From level 6.

284 (*Right*). ND6193. Silver drachms of Aradus. Obverse: bee. Reverse: stag in front of palm tree. 170/169 B.C., found in PG15, a grave which was dug down from level 4.













285 (*Left*). ND6025 (Birmingham City Museum and Art Gallery). Recumbent cow in the round, bronze, length 4-2 cm. Possibly of Assyrian origin; found in Hellenistic grave PG5, immediately below level 6.

286 (*Right*). ND6061. Bronze signet ring,  $2 \times 1.6$  cm., bearing the device of a Winged Victory, Hellenistic. Found below level 5 in trench P6, Palace AB.

for it contained the second richest tomb in the settlement PG5, that of a woman buried in a burnt-brick cist grave roofed with stone slabs; the votive deposits within it included a fine bronze or copper figurine of a recumbent cow, ND6025 [285], a large collection of beads in variegated stones and four silver pendants, one of them representing a dog with loop suspension on its back. The contents of this and of a contemporary grave in the palace, PG21, previously mentioned (p. 295 above), appear to reflect the long and prosperous reign of Antiochus III the Great (227–187 B.C.), whose authority much enhanced Seleucid prestige and it is therefore curious that only one of his coins has survived here, for at Dura his issues account for nearly half of the total Seleucid coinage.<sup>19</sup>

Level 4 began C.180 B.C. and is marked by the attractive coinage of Aradus, 170-169 B.C., with bee on the obverse, gazelle and palm-tree on the reverse [284] (other specimens have occurred elsewhere at Nimrud), and by one example of Alexander Bala (150-145 B.C.), ND6401, whose coinage was also found at Khorsabad. Level 3 was in fact but a phase of level 4 and began after 150 B.C., while level 2, with a copper coin, ND6402, of Demetrius II Nicator (146-140 B.C.) possibly began after 145 B.C., to be followed by level 1 with no legible coins and probably not of long duration. To level 5 of the Hellenistic sequence, and appropriately found with the coins, we must assign a bronze signet ring, ND6061 [286], bearing the device of a Winged Victory. Nearly all the seals however, both cylinder and stamp, were antiquities treasured as heirlooms. Among them, ND6087 from PG21 [287], an ovate seal pendant of red serpentine engraved with a nude four-winged figure of the *lilith* vampire, possibly late Assyrian or Achaemenian, is strangely Greek in appearance; this and a contemporary steatite scaraboid, ND6079 [288], engraved with lion and bird, seems an anticipation of the elegant *cachet* displayed by subsequent Hellenistic gem-cutters. ND6088 [289], a carnelian duck-amulet, probably Assyrian, a type that goes back to Sumerian times, was found in the same grave.

Corresponding with this period of about a 100 years of uninterrupted Hellenistic occupation, we have a total rise in levels from bottom to topmost floor of about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  metres, or a little over 8 feet 2 inches. This measurement of accumulated debris against a known period of time is of great interest to the archaeologist, and for comparable accumulations is a yardstick worth considering. Moreover, at Nimrud itself, on the north-east end of the akropolis, we have yet another measured sequence wherein the ratio of time to depth is almost identical. In the private houses, known as TW53, there was a similar rise in level of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  metres or about 8 feet 2 inches during the period c.700-612 B.C.<sup>20</sup> This near concordance obtained from two house sites at periods of history separated by about four and a half centuries is a significant



287 (Above right). ND6087 (B). Red serpentine seal-amulet, engraved with four-winged figure of a nude four-winged 'lilith' vampire. From grave PG21, Palace AB.

**288** (*Centre right*). ND6079. Steatite seal-amulet, scaraboid,  $1.4 \times 1$  cm., engraved with figure of lion couchant and bird. From grave PG21, Palace AB.

**28**9 (Below right). ND6088. Duck amulet, carnelian,  $1.7 \times 1.4$  cm. found in Hellenistic grave PG21, Palace AB.

criterion of archaeological measurement, and it follows that we may confidently apply this time-depth ratio to accumulations of a similar domestic character elsewhere in Assyria. But it is important to make this proviso: that living conditions must have been of a similar, domestic character, and that the quality of materials used for construction must have been predominantly of mud brick.

This caveat implies that we have to discriminate when attempting to relate a given depth of debris to a fixed time-scale, as may be seen from a comparison of the very different results obtained from sites of a non-domestic character. Thus in the Palace AB to the west of the Hellenistic houses, floors did not rise at all during a period of about two centuries down to 612 B.C. because effective royal control kept the building swept and garnished. But in the next period between 612 B.C. and c.240 B.C. there was a total rise of about 2-7 metres or 8 feet 10 inches: this time span of about 370 years included one, probably short-lived, Achaemenian occupation between two periods of abandonment. To say that this represents an average rise of about 2 feet 4 inches per century, as it does mathematically, is in fact an arbitrary assessment, for in a long period of disrupted occupation, with no constant factor of wear and tear, the rate of accumulation is altogether irregular.

Lastly we have to reckon with the fact that at the south-east end of the akropolis, after the abandonment of the latest settlement and covering the period from about 140 B.C. to A.D. 1950, we are confronted by an altogether different set of phenomena. All human habitation had then ceased on this spot which was only used for grazing. The rise in ground level over these pastures which consisted of a humus, often not more than 40 centimetres or 1 foot 4 inches in depth, amounted to less than 1 inch per century.

To sum up, we have arrived at three widely differing results for three different kinds of demographic conditions, averaged out over a period of one century, which may be expressed as follows: royal occupation within a palace, rise nil; pasture land, rise less than one inch; I semi-urban Achaemenian occupation using mud-brick dwellings, preceded and succeeded by periods in which buildings are derelict and walls fall in, with occasional rubbish dumps deposited from elsewhere, rise 2 feet 4 inches; Assyrian and Hellenistic village occupation in mud-brick houses, rise a little over 8 feet. There are, moreover, other types of occupation which would yield very different results again. What is of value, however, is the figure arrived at from a measured span of life in a continuous



series of Hellenistic mud-brick villages which involved a more or less total rebuilding every twenty years. The Hellenistic houses on the akropolis reflect a domesticity uncontrolled by municipal authority. Gone was the Assyrian corps of dustmen, sweepers and scavengers whose business it was to keep the streets clean and buildings in sufficient repair: each Hellenistic generation saw one demolition of its dwellings.<sup>21</sup>

While the best stratified evidence came from the house levels excavated in trenches 0 and P, some material was also gleaned from above the throne-room and its adjacent hall AB6, and there were one or two interesting additions to be made therefrom to the catalogue of Hellenistic material. We have already noticed (p. 298 above) the traces of impoverished occupation which during the Achaemenian or neo-Babylonian period made use of the surviving Assyrian walls. Thereafter followed a considerable gap which has been well defined by Mr David Oates:

'This [irregular layer of mud-brick] produced an undulating ground surface unsuitable for building, and during the early phases of the adjacent Hellenistic village, levels 6 and 5 in the trenches, the depression that marked the site of the throne-room seems to have been used as a rubbishpit. The fallen mud-brick is covered with a considerable layer of the grey-green accumulation, composed of broken plaster, ash and organic material, that we have come to recognize as the typical sediment of village occupation.'<sup>22</sup>

Within this debris one significant object was found, a Rhodian jar handle, ND6072 [290], with a rectangular stamp bearing an eponymous name,  $\epsilon \pi \iota II \rho a \tau o \phi a \nu \epsilon v s$ , which probably corresponded in date with level 5 in the houses.<sup>23</sup> It was during this time that villagers made use of this waste ground for the four graves PG20–23 noted above. At the east end of the throne-room, founded on the debris of level 5 and destroyed by fire 'were the walls of a small, irregularly built house, with vestiges of brick paving, and bread ovens in what appears to have been the courtyard'. Associated coins and pottery agreed with finds in level 4 of the houses. There followed a series of three rebuildings in rapid sequence which again corresponded with that observed east of the palace, and it was significant that the last of them, in level 2, was, as elsewhere, violently destroyed and replaced by the poverty-stricken occupation of level 1.

A small collection of less than half a dozen fragments of terracotta figurines illustrate the plastic styles which obtained in Hellenistic times for such models. There was a very crudely made squatting female figure, ND6042, with arms

290. ND6072(B). Wine-jar handle of a Rhodian amphora with rectangular stamp bearing a radiate head and the inscription  $E\pi\iota \ \Pi\rho aro\phi a\nu\epsilon vs$ , a name which which occurs on the series from Pergamum between 200 and 180 B.C. Found in debris from level 5, south side of AB3.



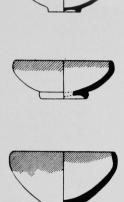


**291.** ND5202 (B). Terracotta figurine, hollow, height  $17\cdot 2$  cm., Hellenistic type depicting mother and child; traces of a white plaster which once overlaid the surface. Other fragmentary variants of the type were found in the house area; this one, probably early 2nd century B.C., was found in a pit cut into the south wall of the sanctuary NTS2, Ezida.

crossed below the breast. More assured in style were fragments of human figurines, made in a mould, slipped and painted. One complete specimen, ND5202 [291], found in a rubbish pit in Ezida, best illustrates the type. It was hollow and depicted a mother clothed in a long *chiton*, the skirts of which trail to the ground; other similar types clearly depict an under-garment, the *himation*, which is sometimes draped over the head. The mother supports in the crook of her left arm a singularly unattractive naked child whose legs are clasped to her waist by her right hand. While the subject is a common one at Dura and Seleucia, this example shows divergences in style and is more crudely made; doubtless it reflects a different, north Mesopotamian tradition. Traces of a white *jus* plaster remained on this figure, a technique which must have been derived from the older Assyrian treatment of prophylactic figurines.

We come finally to what has been archaeologically the most important addition to knowledge recovered from Hellenistic Nimrud: the pottery. For this work credit is due to David and Joan Oates who for the first time have established a dated corpus of Mesopotamian ceramic which can be precisely fitted within the century 240–140 B.C. These unspectacular village settlements have thus contributed a new chapter of ceramic history which can be comparatively related with a large body of hitherto imprecisely dated material gathered, unstratified, from many other sites in Mesopotamia and north Syria.

The detailed examination of this pottery has already been fully published elsewhere and is well worth the attention of specialists.<sup>24</sup> Here we may be content to illustrate some of the principal types discovered, and to see what



292 (Left). Hellenistic pottery.

293 (Below). Hellenistic pottery: 'fish plates'.

Scale c. 1/3

Scale c. 1/3

historical and economic conclusions may be drawn from the distribution of these wares. Most of the pottery was locally made and while, as was to be expected, much of it was of a comparatively crude manufacture, usually wheelturned and comprising cooking vessels and food vessels required for purely domestic purposes, there were also some delicate examples which showed that even in this country village, distantly situated from the Seleucid capitals, potters endowed with a high degree of technical accomplishment were still available. Dominant was a buff or reddish buff pottery [292] often coated with a wash of red slip or decorated with red paint usually applied rather carelessly round the rim, sometimes dipped to produce a scalloped effect; sometimes the paint was orange, red, brown or purple in tinge and had been allowed to trickle down the body of the pot. This local matt red-painted ware is common in the neighbourhood at sites such as Nineveh, T. Billa, Balawat and Abu Sheetha where Xenophon crossed the Upper Zab, and further afield has been noted at T. Halaf in north Syria and in the Habur valley. The commonest shapes are bowls with carinated rims, flat-based or ring-based; 'fish-plates' [293]; vases with high necks, many with rounded bases; and jugs with handles which now become much commoner than in Assyrian times and reflect the prevailing trend of Hellenistic pottery. Other shapes include ovoid pilgrim-flasks, pipe-lamps, and one specimen elaborately decorated with a palmette handle. There was one complete specimen of a long-necked unguentarium or oil flask [294], common elsewhere in northern Mesopotamia. One example was found in a Hellenistic grave at T. Arbit<sup>25</sup> in the Habur district, while others occur as far afield as Tarsus. Another delightful discovery was a baby's painted feeding-bottle with incised and impressed decoration and tiny tubular sucking-spout or nipple comparable with a specimen found in the agora at Athens whereon the baby's teeth-marks could be clearly identified; on an example now in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, there is a representation of a small crawling child. That this fashion in babies' bottles should have spread from metropolitan Athens to an outlying village of Nineveh is an extraordinary tribute to the distant impact made by Hellenistic invention on Oriental domesticity.

While, as a whole, the pottery could be sharply differentiated from the types used farther south in Babylonia, there were some beautifully made bowls with rounded bases in grey, buff or reddish clay which are identical with types in southern Babylonia usually described as Achaemenian<sup>26</sup> or Parthian. These bowls are typical of the best Seleucid plain wares of Mesopotamia. There were other specimens of a local variety which are of particular interest because in technique, though not in shape, they are clearly derived from the finest Assyrian palace wares. Of these one of the finest is ND5004 [295], a bowl now in the Institute of Archaeology, University of London, a fine buff ware, very light in weight, with a pink band round the shoulder which is decorated with triangular notching. In this and kindred wares we have proof that in spite of the devastating sack of the Assyrian capital, the finest techniques of Assyrian pottery



294. Hellenistic pottery: oil flask.

Scale c. 1/3

had not been lost four centuries later. True, the new ware turned up in a different guise, for the old goblet shapes had disappeared, but skill and 'knowhow' survived. That can only mean that the seed of the humbler artisans was not destroyed and that there remained a nucleus of families to carry on the traditions of their forefathers, so powerful is heredity in communities when trades are handed down from father to son. In this way the potter's art confirms that however devastating invasions may be, whether of Babylonians, Medes, Mongols or others, the sons of the soil survive on the land, keeping alive amidst change a fundamental continuity of method especially in avocations such as agriculture, domestic architecture, and potting, which are the basis of both urban and of rural life.

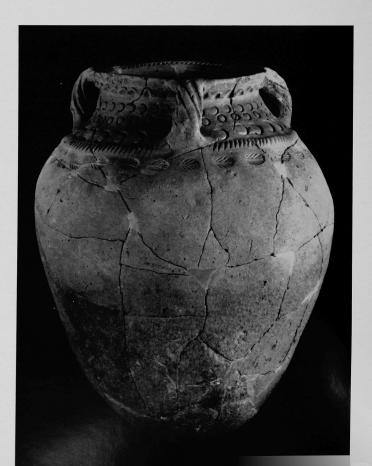
A large storage jar, ND6622 [296], with three twisted handles and impressed decoration is also characteristic of another type of Hellenistic pottery; this ware is best represented by a series of sherds bearing designs executed from impressed stamps including triangles, circles, plants and palmettes, which at a distance produce an effect of 'cockle-shells' in relief [297]. Similar stamped ornament was observed on the Hellenistic pottery of T. Halaf, and there are some antecedents for it in the earlier Achaemenian wares of Babylonia. On Assyrian pottery stamped designs occur, but rarely: the spoked rosette impressed on the neck of the fine ram rhyton, ND1273 (early 7th century B.C.), found in one of the private houses (ch. XII, p. 191 and note 12, [124]) is a notable example.

All the types mentioned so far can be matched, as we have seen, at various sites in Mesopotamia and north Syria though some are confined to Babylonia. One class of ware characteristic of the Hellenistic period in the Greek cities of the eastern Mediterranean, and occurring also at Samaria and at Dura, the powerful Seleucid centre on the Euphrates, is very rare, namely, the black or red-varnished pottery which one would regard as characteristic of Greek ceramic. There were, however, a few examples of the varnished ware common to Tarsus and Antioch and a single red-varnished sherd in level 3, while five of a rather poor black varnish also closely matched the pottery of Tarsus. Ring-based bowls with rouletting and isolated palmette stamps on the base were typical of contemporary eastern Mediterranean sites, and one of them appears to repeat a pattern of spoked palmettes which found its way to Babylon. A two-handled jar [298], varnished and decorated with impressed concentric circles, was certainly an import; other related types, were more probably local imitations. An open bowl decorated with vertical grooves painted red, and other sherds of similar type from Balawat and Abu Sheetha, are reminiscent of the 'Hellenistic Pergamene' ware and probably belong to the very end of our sequence. The rarity of these black and red varnished wares in Mesopotamia, as has been noted by D. and J. Oates 'makes it quite certain that such pottery was never manufactured there as it was in the regions of Tarsus and Antioch'. Finally, it may be noted that a number of glazed wares were also found, albeit in small proportion; bottles with small handles on the shoulder were not uncommon; the glaze at Nimrud 'was originally a deep blue-green which in weathering produces a



295. ND5004 (Institute of Archaeology, London). A bowl of fine buff ware, diameter 27'2 cm., with a notched decoration and pink band round shoulder. From a Hellenistic grave at the south end of Ezida, probably contemporary with level 2, c.145–140 B.C. See p. 306.

296. ND6622. (Institute of Archaeology, London). Large storage jar, height 56.5 cm., with three twisted handles; gritty buff clay, decorated with impressed circles, necks and foliate designs. From level 2 (Hellenistic) in AB3, c.145–140 B.C. See p. 307.





297. Examples of Hellenistic stamped and painted sherds. *Top*, and *bottom right* (with handle), from a Hellenistic pit at Balawat; *middle*, from a robber trench in NT16; and *bottom left* from below level 6 in AB. The stamps are tear-shaped and veined; clay is buff. The type was probably in use throughout the Hellenistic period. See p. 307.

298. Top of two-handled 'varnished' jar. Diameter c. 9.5 cm. Fine buff clay; matt, black paint or varnish shading to brown where thin; flaked and worn. Impressed decoration; an imported piece, the only example of its kind in Nimrud; from level 2 in disturbed soil near the edge of Layard's cut. Probably contemporary with the bowl shown in [295]. See p. 307.





299. ND4011. Cream glaze; soft, yellow paste.

Scale c. 1/3

surface varying from blue-green to light blue, and even a rather silvery blue that is at times almost white. No true dark green glazes have been found at Nimrud. A yellow glaze is sometimes used. The clay is often a yellow colour and of a very soft granular texture.<sup>27</sup> The glazed, two-handled bottle, ND4011 [299], is undoubtedly related to Achaemenian and neo-Babylonian pottery of a type frequently found at these periods in south Babylonia; variants of this form in the Hellenistic and Parthian periods were widespread. Two interesting blue and yellowish glazed bottles were found with a burial in a copper bath at Ur by Woolley, who confidently assigned it to the Achaemenian period.<sup>28</sup>

We have seen that this interesting series of pots can be fitted into the period 240-140 B.C., but we do not know how much of it had been current before that time, and cannot yet offer an early terminus for it. But at the end of this series, in the rather poor level I, there was a marked change which coincides with the Parthian conquest. A rare form of bottle, decorated with incised dot and line pattern and concentric circles, belongs to this level which also includes a number of glazed wares and sherds decorated with incised zigzags and comb decoration.<sup>29</sup> This decided alteration in the character of the pottery associated with the topmost settlement, level 1, and the indications of date afforded by the coins in level 2 and the burning of the village, provide us with another historic landmark. The last impoverished settlement on top of the mound must reflect the end of the Seleucid régime and the general upheaval caused by the Parthian conquest, the first stage of which was the capture of Seleucia-on-Tigris by Mithridates I, probably in 141 B.C., followed by that of Babylonia in 140/139 B.C. What happened thereafter at Nimrud and whether it was then altogether abandoned we do not know. At all events, there is no further sign of life on top of the akropolis, although in that neighbourhood Balawat and villages on the Zab prospered. In fact, level I appears to represent the immediate aftermath of the conquest before life had become stabilized once more. Parthian rule may in Mesopotamia have been the equivalent of the pax Romana elsewhere. In the Seleucid period the populace had, for the sake of security, lived on the top of a mound which had become inconveniently high, especially for the porterage of water-for it is not unlikely that the deep wells on the akropolis had then become partly brackish as they are today. Similar conditions had obtained about 2000 B.C. on the Habur, for example at T. Brak where the inhabitants, at extreme inconvenience to themselves, inhabited the top of an ancient mound no less than 40 metres above the level of a bandit-infested plain.30 The final abandonment of the akropolis is therefore, surprisingly, a measure of the new security which was due to the end of the struggle between Parthians and Seleucids for the possession of north Mesopotamia. The new symbol of that change was Hatra in the western steppe on the other side of the Tigris, where the sequel to Hellenism was brilliantly displayed.

The Seleucid interlude in Mesopotamia has thus unexpectedly been illuminated by the contents of the not unprosperous villagers who lived in settlements 6–2 on top of the mound. And before we take leave of them we should 300. ND4385. Wine-jar handle, length 14 cm., of a Thasian amphora, stamped  $\Theta A\Sigma I\Omega N$  and  $H\Sigma$  (abbreviation of a proper name). The design may represent a bunch of grapes (see enlarged detail below). From a Hellenistic rubbish pit dug down near the well in the north court of the Burnt Palace. Scale c. 1/1

mention one small discovery which comes as a powerful flashlight on the farflung trade between east and west at the time. From a late rubbish pit which had been dug down near the well in the north court of the Burnt Palace we extracted the handle of an amphora, ND4385 [300], a fragment of a reddish buff wine jar stamped with a Greek inscription which read :  $\Theta A\Sigma I\Omega N$ , the equivalent of 'made in Thasos'—and an abbreviation of a proper name. . . .  $H\Sigma$ . This fragment of pottery excites the imagination more than any other Hellenistic relic, for it is at Nimrud a unique testimony to the distant export of Greek wine from the island of Thasos, below Thrace at the northern end of the Aegean, in the 2nd century B.C. This type of handle cannot be precisely dated, but the probability is that it falls within our Hellenistic sequence, c.200 B.C. Indeed, historically it seems likely that the import of Greek wine into Mesopotamia would have been blocked by the Parthians c.140 B.C.; in any case the Thasian export trade may well have met with a severe setback following the Roman conquest of Greece in 146 B.C., against competition from high-class Italian wines such as Falernian.31

The symbol stamped on the handle, a bunch of grapes, probably denominates the locality of the vineyard, and the  $H\Sigma$  may be an abbreviation of the name of the wine merchant. The wines of Thasos were famous alike for their strength and for their bouquet, as we know from the Greek author Athenaeus; and from the 5th century onwards, besides being traded within Greece, they were exported to the Black Sea and all over the Mediterranean.32 Stamped Thasian jar handles have been found at many sites in Anatolia such as Troy, Pergamon, Smyrna and Gordion; on the eastern Mediterranean seaboard at Antioch, Samaria and Gezer; at Dura and Babylon on the Euphrates; and now at Nimrud on the Tigris. This export trade to the east was no doubt stimulated by the conquests of Alexander the Great and his Seleucid successors who carried with them these fruits of Greek invention, which Oriental palates were no doubt quick to appreciate. Indeed, Xenophon's soldiers in 400 B.C. had themselves tasted the syrupy wines of Kurdistan. Various passages in the Anabasis tell us of these experiences: 'the whole Greek army was now together again. They camped where they were and found a number of comfortable houses and plenty of food. There was a lot of wine, so much so that the people stored it in cellars which were plastered over the top.'33 And in a subsequent book describing the marches in Armenia: 'In these quarters they had all kinds of good food-meat, corn, old wines with a delicious bouquet, raisins and all sorts of vegetables,'34 while further west in the same country 'there was also wheat, barley, beans and barley-wine in great bowls. The actual grains of barley floated on top of the





bowls, level with the brim, and in the bowls there were reeds of various sizes and without joints in them. When one was thirsty, one was meant to take a reed and suck the wine into one's mouth. It was a very strong wine, unless one mixed it with water, and, when one got used to it, it was a very pleasant drink.'<sup>35</sup> Xenophon's observations incidentally give us an excellent picture of the good fare which could be supplied in the prosperous townships of the Orient at this time: 'In every single case they would have on the same table kid, pork, veal and chicken, and a number of loaves, both wheat and barley.'<sup>36</sup> We may be sure that the villagers of Hellenistic Assyria were capable of providing similar meals on festive occasions.

Society in the Near East was therefore well conditioned for the consumption of Greek wine, and we may guess that some of the Greek coin earned by the villagers from the sale of their agricultural produce at Nimrud was spent on what must have been a most expensive drink on account of the long transit some 1,300 miles from its source of origin. More puzzling is the problem of how it survived the journey in coarse clay jars sealed only with clay stopper and mud. But the Thasians were expert in the art of pickling in brine and must have known how to apply the proper preservatives;<sup>37</sup> light additions of sea water are mentioned; there was white as well as red wine, and it is not improbable that the consignments were fortified both before dispatch and on being received. The problem was, before the use of corks, to prevent the wine from fermenting on the journey, and old wines were consequently rather rare. But we have to remember that there are certain wines such as Madeira and sherry which in the 18th century A.D. were sent in East India merchantmen to India and back as ballast because 'the long and slow rocking of the wine during the double journey aged and improved it'.38 However that may be, the wine of Thasos, like that of Rhodes, evidently arrived sufficiently mature and found a profitable outlet in eastern markets.

Finally we have to consider on what routes this long-distance traffic would have passed. It seems a priori probable that such large containers filled with liquor would have been carried as far as possible in ships in order to reach such sites as Antioch on the Mediterranean littoral, where specimens of stamped amphorae have been found. The fact that Greek pottery, including specimens of the Seleucid types known at Nimrud, has been discovered at Tarsus, at Tell Rifa'at (Arpad), at Byblos, and at Hama on the Orontes is a pointer to the ports of entry;39 it seems hardly likely that they would have made the formidable journey overland through Asia Minor, though some specimens travelled as far as Gordion. Indeed, the weight of some of the largest amphorae must have been considerable, for some are estimated to contain as much as 20 litres 875 cl. (over 41 gallons), about the equivalent of a modern' Jerrycan'.40 We may therefore assume that this wine was carried in Greek bottoms as far as the Syrian coast. But from then onwards it must have travelled on the backs of pack-animals, probably mules, overland, and in this section of the transit we are entitled to infer the route from the distribution of Hellenistic wares similar to those found at Nimrud. Here the key sites are T. Halaf on the Upper Habur, Carchemish where pots with red paint 'trickle' ornament are known, and finally Sultantepe in the district of Harran.<sup>41</sup> Thence they are likely to have been carried south on a direct road running through to the Jebel Sinjar where a well-used track

bifurcates towards a bend of the Tigris some miles above Nineveh. At some point on the north Syrian road, caravans must have diverged; if bound for the Euphrates markets, with destinations such as Dura and Babylon, Carchemish would have been the most convenient junction for trans-shipment—in small freighters down river—but it is not unlikely that some of the trade would have passed overland through the Habur valley from T. Halaf, for the Habur itself only becomes easily navigable in its lower reaches below Hasaka; from there onwards, boats could without difficulty join the middle Euphrates. Nor must we leave out of account the marshy Balikh valley, a centre rich in Hellenistic sites all the way from T. Abiadh to the Euphrates, in the district of Rakka, where Alexander the Great had founded the city of Nicephorium. These tracts of territory will amply repay investigation by any archaeologist interested in the north Mesopotamian ramifications of ancient trade.<sup>42</sup>

As regards Hellenistic trade along the Tigris, we know that it had penetrated the Upper Zab valley for at Abu Sheetha, 43 a crossing point for traffic bound for Erbil, we have abundant evidence of Hellenistic pottery including one sherd incised with the Greek letters xp-a small testimony to the spread of Greek writing which was contemporaneously used in the municipality of Nineveh. Farther south, the Lower Zab valley must also remain a profitable area for future exploration. It is, however, notable that between the north Mesopotamian cities and Seleucia-on-Tigris-the Greek capital of Mesopotamia-where evidence of the wine trade has yet to be found, we have a sharp dichotomy in the coinage: the Nimrud coins are almost entirely from Syrian mints, not from Seleucia, which tended to send its currency eastwards, namely to Susa in Iran. Between Babylonia and the Mesopotamian reaches which had formerly belonged to Assyria, there was therefore in Hellenistic times a sharp division marked by the no-man's-land of difficult territory between Lower Zab and Divala. Links with the south consequently remained tenuous in spite of some similarity of fashion which, as we have seen, is indicated by certain types of pottery. Here was a sharp differentiation between two separate areas of administration, underlining the traditional difficulty of enforcing a unified control over the two halves of their river valley.

The contrast between north and south at the time is probably due to the disappearance of Assyrian power which left a vacuum between Tigris and Euphrates.<sup>44</sup> This was only partly filled by the subsequent Achaemenian government based on Iran, which concerned itself with the ancient Babylonian centres of the south, and perhaps deliberately neglected the destroyed military cities of the north. In the Seleucid era, this policy remained unchanged to judge from the coinage-distribution already briefly mentioned, and fully described by G. K. Jenkins in his discussion of the numismatic discoveries at Nimrud:

<sup>4</sup>... the bronze currency in use at Nimrud presents a pattern strongly similar to that given by the very abundant evidence from Dura-Europos. ... At Dura the bronze coins appear to have come almost exclusively from Syria and primarily from Antioch. In view of the fact that there existed an important mint during the Seleucid period at Seleucia on the Tigris in Babylonia it is perhaps somewhat surprising that none of its products seem to have found their way to Nimrud, any more than they did

—at least in any very significant quantity—to Dura further west. Furthermore it appears from what other evidence we have that the tendency was for coins minted at Seleucia on the Tigris to travel, in so far as they did travel, eastwards to Susa, where they account for a far greater proportion of the bronze coins found there than they do at Dura. Nimrud, on the other hand, formed part of what we may call the same currency-area as Dura, having closer links with Syria and Antioch than with Babylonia.'<sup>45</sup>

The archaeological evidence has in fact shown that with the disintegration of the Assyrian empire, the former capital cities, Nineveh, Calah and Assur, lapsed into comparative insignificance: their economies and trade were merged within the Syrian and north Mesopotamian orbit. In the Hellenistic villages of Calah, we have thus been able to take our stand as provincials, only lightly controlled by the new powers that possessed the land. Gone were the days of Assyrian imperial grandeur when wealth poured into the capitals. But there were compensations for the loss of authority and the lapse of an extravagant way of life which had only been acquired and maintained by incessant war and mobilization of labour. The inhabitants of Calah—now known in Greek as Larissa—freed from the corvée, lived in irresponsible security, sufficiently remote from the main streams of conquest to relish the delights of freedom from wealth: as Juvenal has put it—vacuus cantabit coram latrone viator: an empty-pocketed traveller will sing in the presence of bandits.

# ABBREVIATIONS

## NOTES



## ABBREVIATIONS

AAA	Annals of Archaeology and Anthropology, Liverpool
AAAE	W. STEVENSON SMITH: The art and architecture of ancient Egypt
AAAO	H. FRANKFORT: The art and architecture of the ancient Orient
ABSA	Annual of the British School of Archaeology at Athens
ADD	C. H. W. JOHNS: Assyrian deeds and documents
AfO	Archiv für Orientforschung, Berlin
AJ	The Antiquaries Journal, London
AJA	American Journal of Archaeology, Princeton
AKA	BUDGE and KING: Annals of the kings of Assyria
ANET	J. B. PRITCHARD (ed.): Ancient Near Eastern texts relating to the
	Old Testament
AS	Anatolian Studies, London
ASBM	S. SMITH: Assyrian sculpture in the British Museum from Shalmaneser
	III to Sennacherib
BASOR	Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research, Baltimore
BMQ	British Museum Quarterly, London
CAH	Cambridge Ancient History, Cambridge
CIS	Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum
CNI	R. D. BARNETT: A catalogue of the Nimrud ivories with other examples
	of ancient Near Eastern ivories in the British Museum
IEJ	Israel Exploration Journal, Jerusalem
ILN	Illustrated London News
JEA	Journal of Egyptian Archaeology, London
JHS	Journal of Hellenic Studies, London
JNES	Journal of Near Eastern Studies, Chicago
JRAS	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, London
JTS	Journal of Theological Studies
LAR	D. D. LUCKENBILL: Ancient records of Babylonia and Assyria
MAC	Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome, Rome
MAO	G. CONTENAU: Manuel d'archéologie orientale
MDOG	Mitteilungen der Deutschen Orientgesellschaft, Berlin
MDP	Mémoires de la mission archéologique de Perse, Paris
MVAG	Mitteilungen der vorderasiatisch-aegyptischen gesellschaft, Berlin
$N \ \mathcal{C} A$	V. PLACE: Ninive et l'Assyrie avec des essais de restauration par Félix
	Thomas
N & B	A. H. LAYARD: Nineveh and Babylon
N & R	A. H. LAYARD: Nineveh and its remains
OIP	Oriental Institute Publication, Chicago
PEQ	Palestine Exploration Quarterly, London
PPS	Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society, Cambridge
PRU	C. F. A. SCHAEFFER (ed.): Le palais royal d'Ugarit
RA	Revue d'Assyriologie, Paris
RCAE	L. WATERMAN: Royal correspondence of the Assyrian Empire
Tell Halaf	MAX F. VON OPPENHEIM: Tell Halaf
	II Die Bawerke. Langenneger, Müller and Naumann. Ed.
	Naumann. Berlin 1950
	III Die Bildmenke Ed Moontrat Porlin rozz

III *Die Bildwerke*. Ed. Moortgat. Berlin 1955 IV *Kleinfunde aus historischer zeit*. Ed. Hrouda. Berlin 1962

## ABBREVIATIONS

Til Barsip	F. THUREAU DANGIN ET M. DUNAND: Til Barsib
UVB	Vorläufiger Berichte über die von der Notgemeinschaft der Deutschen
	Wissenschaft in Uruk unternommenen Ausgrabungen, Berlin
WVDOG	Wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichungen der Deutschen Orientgesellschaft
ZA	Zeitschrift für Assyriologie, Berlin

## NOTES

#### page note Foreword

21 I Sin-balatsu-iqbi. C. J. Gadd, *History and Monuments of Ur*, pp. 220-4 and his notes 45-7 on p. 260 for references to the source inscriptions at Ur. It is interesting that the king of Babylon, Shamash-shum-ukin sent a defamatory letter concerning Sin-balatsu-iqbi to Assur-bani-pal the king of Assyria. See *RCAE* pt 1, no. 426, p. 297.

#### Chapter I

- 29 I The title applied by the Ottoman Turks to the governors of the largest provinces within their empire.
- 33 2 N G R II, p. 10.
- 33 3 op. cit. II, p. 8.
- 36 4 The ivories found by us in Layard's dumps, chamber v of the N.W. Palace, were published by M. E. L. Mallowan in *Iraq* XIII, pl. i, nos. 2, 3; pl. vi, nos. 3, 4; and in *Iraq* XIV, pls. xii-xv.
- 36 5 Cow suckling calf was a subject much favoured by the ivory worker; many examples of the type were found at the site of Arstan-Tash in N. Syria: for the references see *Iraq* XIII, p. 13. Subsequently we discovered several burnt and mutilated fragments of similar ivories in room 510 of Fort Shalmaneser; see ch. XVI (p. 436).
- 37 6 The Nimrud collection of ivories including those found by Layard in the N.W. Palace, and by Loftus in the Burnt Palace has been exhaustively described by R. D. Barnett, *CNI*; see also loc. cit. pl. v for illustrations of fragmentary cows and calves found by Layard in rooms v, w of the N.W. Palace, and Catalogue on pp. 173, 174 with discussion of the subject on p. 143.
- 37 7 The inscription was published by D. D. Luckenbill, *LAR* vol. III, §§ 137-8.

#### Chapter II

- 40 I R. Campbell Thompson, *The Prisms of Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal*, p. 27, lines 23-7.
- 41 2 Copper baths at Zinjirli, see Von Luschan and W. Andrae, Ausgrabungen in Sendschirli, vol. IV, taf. L, location in room L.6 and p. 303f., vol. V, taf. 57 and pp. 118, 119, 171. Discussion of the date, and of the Ur coffins by R. D. Barnett, Iraq XVIII, p. 114f. and illustrations on pls. xvi, xvii.
- 42 3 Isaiah xiv, 31.
- 42 4 H. H. Figulla, *Iraq* XV, p. 91, on a business document, probably of the reign of Abisare, king of Larsa, 19th century B.C.
- 45 5 Catalogue by D. J. Wiseman, *Iraq* XII, p. 184*f*. and with J. V. Kinnier Wilson, *Iraq* XIII, p. 102*f*.

## NOTES TO PAGES 45-51

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- 45 6 C. H. W. Johns, ADD II, p. 137, quotes cases of eponyms who held both titles; he suggests that a shaknu was in these examples also bel pihati of the district, of which his eponymous capital was the chief town.
- 45 7 H. W. F. Saggs, in *JTS* (new series), X, pt. 1 (1959), pp. 84-7, has drawn some interesting conclusions on this question. He also gives references to the relevant studies by various authorities including E. Forrer, *Die Provinzeinteilung des Assyrischen Reiches*, p. 49*ff.*, and E. Klauber, *Assyrisches Beamtentum*, 100.
- 45 8 Iraq XIII, p. 107, ND417.
- 47 9 Iraq XIII, p. 113.
- 47 10 For the problems concerning the location of Kurba'il see D. Oates in Iraq XXIV p. 16, note 26. It probably lay somewhere to the north of Nineveh and at this period seems to have been within its administrative province together with towns in the district of Khorsabad.
- 48 11 Published by D. J. Wiseman in Iraq XIII, p. 21f.
  - With this seal compare a finely carved red chalcedony seal from Babylon, 12 F. Wetzel, E. Schmidt, A. Mallwitz, Das Babylon der Spätzeit, p. 38, no. 23, taf. 46 p, where a similar subject, the carrying of the winged disc-the sun (?)-across the sky, appears to be represented. The seal in question is ascribed in the catalogue to the Sargonid period. Unfortunately the central portion of the design is obliterated, but the surviving fragment of the wings in the sky is identical with the Nimrud example. The mythological figures wear a helmet with flower at the top; the winged Nisroch figures correspond with the lion-headed, horned, winged griffins at Nimrud. Another interesting parallel is a whitish chalcedony cylinder published by R. D. Barnett in Iraq VI, p. 1 and pl. i, found by Sir Leonard Woolley in the surface soil at Al Mina. Doubtless the original context of this seal was with the earliest of the Al Mina levels X-VIII, for which Miss J. Du Plat Taylor has proposed a revised date of 825-720 B.C. (in Iraq XXI, p. 62, summarized on p. 91) which fits well with the evidence from Assyria. The scene on the Al Mina seal is a blend of Assyrian with Syrian or Phoenician elements, as Barnett has noted; hawk, papyrus and ankh also occur there. See also H. Frankfort, Cylinder Seals, pl. xxxv K, BM89145, for a similarly detailed, fine style of cutting. The Nimrud seal was published by Barbara Parker in Iraq XVII, pl. xi, no. 1, with commentary and references on pp. 97-8. The iconography is closely comparable with a scene represented on an orthostat from Tell Halaf, cf. A. Moortgat, Tell Halaf III (1955), Die Bildwerke, taf. 104.
- 49 13 Discussion on date of Proto-Corinthian pottery, see T. J. Dunbabin in  $\mathcal{J}HS$  LXVIII (1948) p. 59*f.*, and for the Greek pottery at Al Mina  $\mathcal{J}HS$  LVIII (1938),  $\mathcal{A}\mathcal{J}$  XVII no. 1 (1937),  $\mathcal{J}HS$  LIX, LX and John Boardman in  $BS\mathcal{A}$  52 (1957). It should, however, also be noted that in a grave at Assur of the Middle Assyrian period there was a *pyxis* engraved *inter alia* with a pair of cocks perched in the branches of a pine (?), cf. WVDOG 65, Abb. 161, p. 135. This now appears to be the earliest representation in Mesopotamia of the barnyard fowl; the earliest evidence from Egypt occurs in the 18th dynasty.
- 49 14 ND222, see Iraq XII, p. 190.
- 49 15 The copper or bronze (?) fibula, ND258A, was published by David Stronach in *Iraq* XXI, pl. li, no. 9.
- 51 16 Iraq XIII, p. 109, ND433.
- 51 17 See ch. xv, p. 300f.

## NOTES TO PAGES 53-72

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Chapter III

53 I See ch. v, note 11 to p. 82.

Chapter IV page note

> 62 I NDI082, the panel depicting Assur-nasir-pal II, is of great importance as being one of the ivories attributable to the early 9th century B.C.; the raised relief style and technique of cutting is very different from that of the panels of the 8th century found elsewhere. In this earlier ivory there is a summary treatment of detail which is blunter in outline and less precise in cutting, as will be seen by comparison with some of the ivory panels from Fort Shalmaneser illustrated in ch. xvII.

> > ND1083 (Met. Mus., N.Y.). I am uncertain about the date of this rare type of open-work ivory which must be later than Assur-nasir-pal II. The subject closely resembles the figure of a rampant winged sphinx depicted on stone bas-reliefs on the Herald's wall at Carchemish, probably not earlier than the reign of Asadaruwas, c.820 B.C. and perhaps not later than Araras, c.780 B.C. For discussion and illustration see *Carchemish* I, pl. B.15 and III, pp. 186, 261, 266. R. D. Barnett has cogent arguments against Woolley's relatively high dating of the wall in question. This ivory was illustrated in *Met. Mus. Bulletin* (April 1952), p. 235, in an article by Charles K. Wilkinson entitled 'Some New Contacts with Assyria'. It is obviously related in style to some of the open-work ivories depicting lions, oryx, stag found in Fort Shalmaneser, latter half of 8th century B.C., but the sphinx is not represented in that set and this may be a forerunner of that later style and may be assigned to the last quarter of the oth century B.C. Compare the illustrations in ch. XVII.

64 2 See ANET 'The Epic of Gilgamesh', p. 84, lines 91f.

65 3 Iraq XIV, pp. 24-44.

- 4 In a celebrated inscription on a baked clay cylinder discovered at Assur: LAR I, para. 254. 'I brought cedars, boxwood and allakanish trees from the countries which I have subdued, trees the like of which none of the kings, my ancient fathers, had ever planted, and I planted them in the gardens of my land. I took rare plants, which were not found in my own land, and caused them to flourish in the gardens of Assyria.' This cylinder was selected by a Committee which the Royal Asiatic Society appointed in 1857 to discover what measure of agreement had been obtained in the decipherment of Assyrian. The translation by Rawlinson, Hincks, Fox Talbot, and Oppert established beyond doubt that the clue to these inscriptions had been solved.
- 69 5 See for the latter inscription Iraq XIV, p. 67, ND1128.

72 6 ch. XVI, p. 406.

- 72 7 C. H. W. Johns, An Assyrian Domesday Book or Liber Censualis of the district round Harran in the seventh century B.C., copied from the cuneiform tablets in the British Museum, p. 28.
- 72 8 The problem is examined in the Schweich Lectures for 1955.

#### NOTES TO PAGES 74-81

### page note

#### Chapter V

- 74 I Gadd, Stones of Assyria, Appendix pp. 9-10. The stone cist grave was found by Loftus in 1854 encased by the mud-brick platform which underlay Ezida, and up to 1955 was still visible in a tunnel cut by him through the east wall of the throne-room in the Burnt Palace. In the grave there was a remarkable pronged and socketed copperaxe, exactly comparable with one found by me at Chagar Bazar, cf. Iraq IX, p. 187 and pl. xli. The Nimrud axe is illustrated in Handcock, Mesopotamian Archaeology, pl. xxviii. See also ch. XIII, note 36 to p. 223 below. For mention of these two axes and a similar one from Kültepe, see M. E. L. Mallowan, Twenty-five Years of Mesopotamian Discovery, p. 20f.
- 74 2 The distance from Calah (Nimrud) to Assur as the crow flies is approximately 46 miles; allowing for crossing the river and deviations on the track it probably involved a journey of between 50 and 55 miles for the Assyrians. It is therefore interesting to learn from the ancient records that Kakzu, an important religious centre about 25 miles south of Calah, was not reckoned to be more than one day's journey, and this included a crossing of the greater Zab. See H. W. F. Saggs in *Iraq XX*, p. 211, Nimrud letter XLV. It follows therefore that Calah-Assur must have been reckoned as a two-days' march.
- 74 3 See AKA I, p. 219.
- 75 4 With which a clay seal impression, ND891, possibly of the 13th century B.C. or thereabouts was associated, see *Iraq* XII, p. 175.
- 76 5 See AKA I, p. 188.
- 79 6 See Xenophon, *The Anabasis*, book III, ch. 4, line 7 and translation by Rex Warner, Xenophon, *The Persian Expedition*, p. 118. The then deserted city which he named Larissa was clearly Calah, as is indicated by the distances, location and itinerary.
- 79 7 We know from an inscription that Adad-nirari I (1307-1275 B.C.), who was responsible for rebuilding the main stone quays at Assur, restored a work first begun by Puzur-Assur in the 18th century B.C. LAR I, para. 83.
- 81 8 Iraq XIV, p. 30, line 24.
- I am indebted for this translation to Professor C. J. Gadd who has also 81 9 pointed out that if the cubits had been ordinary, not 'great', the measurement would have agreed closely with ours, 30 ft as against 33 ft. The first to record a translation of this inscription was George Smith, Assyrian Discoveries (1875), p. 264. See also LAR I, para. 804. The location of the palace of Tiglath-pileser III, with its frontage on the river, is doubtful, unless it was a repair and enlargement of the old 'Centre Palace' of Adadnirari III. R. D. Barnett and M. Falkner, The Sculptures of Tiglathpileser III p. 2f. discuss this problem, and agree that his palace extended to the west side of the mound, but it seems to me unlikely that Layard's 'Central Palace' was part of the same complex as the Centre Palace, for it is most improbable that any building in the citadel had so great a lateral extension, and the two buildings are differently orientated. It is conceivable that this monarch refers to a building as yet undiscovered on the west side of the outer town. The statement in loc. cit. p. 6, note 3 that the quay-wall exposed by me 'was in fact, evidently, not a quay-wall at all, but the stone foundation of Tiglath-pileser's palace' is erroneous, and ignores the archaeological evidence which was previously

## NOTES TO PAGES 82-87

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given in *Iraq* XV, pp. 38-42, and in *Iraq* XVI, pp. 111-14, and is again set forth in detail in this chapter. See also ch. VIII, note 6 to p. 109.

82 10 For Felix Jones's estimates see *JRAS* XV (old series). Our measurements (1957) are as follows: n. side, 2,205 metres; w. side 1,470 metres; s. side, 2,205 metres; e. side 1,780 metres; a total of 7 6 kilometres for the entire circuit, approximately 4.75 miles. This encloses approximately an area of 330 hectares or about 815 acres, a fraction lower than that given by him.

82 II E. Ebeling, Neubabylonische Briefe aus Uruk, Heft 3, no. 240, K.40. I owe this reference to Mr H. W. F. Saggs. My own experience of the same rate of brick-laying was at Chagar Bazar, north Syria, in 1935.

#### Chapter VI

- 85 I Layard,  $N \in B$  p. 129, schematic section opposite p. 123 also shows the location of a vaulted chamber  $100 \times 6$  ft and 12 ft high which he found empty, inside the Ziggurrat, see p. 126.
- 86 2 The fragments were found in 1956 (ND5571); remains of charcoal still adhered to some of them. Height of inscribed piece (joined from two parts) 17 cm.; width of inscribed surface 10 cm.; 15 lines. Among these fragments there were also parts of the elbow, clasped hands, and other unidentified pieces requiring further investigation.
- 86

3 The statue, ND5500, was published by J. Laessoe in *Iraq* XXI p. 147*f*., where it is dated to 827 or 826 B.C., see [38] in this chapter. It is interesting that of the four cities which Shalmaneser on the Black Obelisk claims to have captured in his 21st year, at least two are probably mentioned in this text: Da-na-[bi] and [Ma-la-]ha. (For the latter reading I am indebted to P. Hulin, who was recently able to re-examine the stone.) For a second, smaller statue of Shalmaneser, found in Fort Shalmaneser, Room NE50, see ch. Xv1, p. 401. To summarize: the statues of Shalmaneser III in the round discovered up to date (1963) are:

- (1) standing, ND5500, mentioned above;
- (2) standing, ND10000, from Room NE50, mentioned above;
- (3) standing, a basalt figure inscribed, found at Assur, see WVDOG, 23, Abb. 34, p. 37, now in the Istanbul Museum;
- (4) seated, a basalt figure now in the British Museum, WVDOG, 23, Abb. 38, p. 38, from Assur, perhaps once located in the Gurgurri gate (?), but see thereon C. J. Gadd, Stones of Assyria, pp. 148-9.

Translations of the inscriptions on (3) and (4) will be found in *LAR* I, paras. 674–92. A stela of inferior limestone from Kurkh depicts the king in relief, see *ASBM*, pl. i.

- 87 4 In a lecture given to the British School of Archaeology in Iraq, at the Annual General Meeting, in 1954.
- 87 5 Thureau-Dangin, *Huitième Campagne*, line 6 (where *Anushat* is to be read *Ninurta*).
- 87 6 Layard, N & B, p. 351, and C. J. Gadd, The Stones of Assyria, p. 129. The only known statue of King Assur-nasir-pal II in the round was found in the temple of Ishtar-belit-mati; it is illustrated in Layard, Mons. of Nineveh (2nd series), pl. 52.
- 87 7 N & B, p. 348; see illustrations opposite this, and p. 351 for the arrangement of the sculpture at the entrances.

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- 91 8 See ch. xv and [276] therein.
- 91 9 ND3485 found between large oil (?) storage jars in ZTE30, cf. Iraq XV, part 2, p. 148.
- 91 10 ND5481, 5486 mentioned in Iraq XIX, part 1, p. 20.
- 91 11 The tablet is noted in the *British Museum Guide to the Assyrian and Babylonian Antiquities*, p. 186, no. 95, K.382. For the date see Margarete Falkner, 'Die Eponymen der Spätassyrischen Zeit', *AfO* XVII, p. 100*f*., who has plausibly adduced evidence for this date; it is certain that he was post-canonical, that is after 648 B.C.
- 91 12 The letter is published in RCA, part I, no. 493. Further evidence that the Ninurta Temple was being maintained in the late 7th century B.C. is furnished by a docket ND7065 discovered in room SE10 of Fort Shalmaneser (see ch. XVI, p. 378). The docket recorded the receipt of 200 wooden poles for the temple, was sealed with a pseudo-Egyptian design of cobra and sun-disc commonly used in the late 7th century B.C., and probably dated to the reign of Sin-shar-ishkun.

#### Chapter VII

- 93 I The greater part of the sculpture from the N.W. Palace may be seen in the British Museum. The richest collection of illustrations is Layard's own drawings in the two great folios entitled 'Monuments of Nineveh', published by John Murray in 1849 and 1853. The two standard works on Assyrian sculpture are: C. J. Gadd, The Stones of Assyria, and E. F. Weidner, Die Reliefs der Assyrischen Könige. More recent publications are: R. D. Barnett, Assyrian Palace Reliefs; and with Margarete Falkner, The Sculptures of Assur-nasir-pal II, Tiglath-pileser III and Esarhaddon.
- 93 2 Layard, Nineveh and Babylon; Monuments of Nineveh (2nd series).
- 93 3 Black against hachuring represents the parts of the building previously discovered by Layard and reinvestigated by us. Solid black not in contact with hachuring represent additions and are entirely new.
- 94 4 Shalmaneser III built a magnificent throne-room of his own, in Fort Shalmaneser (see ch. xvi) and no doubt regarded this as his principal royal seat when residing in Calah.
- 94 5 Allowing nearly a square yard per person, a generous allocation.
- 96 6 See, for example, the pair of great halls 64, 65 opening off the great court 106. A. Parrot, Les Fouilles de Mari : Cinquième Campagne, Syria XX, 1939, pl. xi.
- 96 7 Layard, N & R I, p. 133.
- 96 8 See also *Iraq* XIV, pt 2, p. 126, for references by H. Frankfort for the recurrence of these rails elsewhere.
- 97 9 See Iraq XIX, pt 1, pl. iii.
- 98 10 See also on this subject, C. J. Gadd, *The Stones of Assyria*, p. 132. Layard cut away the plinth from the bottom of most of the sculpture and for this we have to allow another 6 in. (0·15 metre), which gives a total height of not less than 12 ft (3·65 metres).
- 98 11 Layard, Monuments of Nineveh (old series), pl. 30.
- 99 12 II Kings, xix, 37; Isaiah xxxvii, 38.
- 102 13 See Iraq XVI, pt 1, p. 85f. for the references.
- 102 14 See ANET, p. 436f, a late Babylonian psalm, which contains sentiments of rebellion against the injustice of the world: 'In a dream I saw a certain

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man... a tamarisk (branch), a purification vessel he held in his hand. Enlil, the dweller of Nippur (good is the bosom of Enlil) has sent me to purify you.' See also Frankfort, *The Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man*, Gudea's dream about a winged monster and *ANET*, p. 437, for a reference in an Akkadian tablet to the beneficence of the *Lamassu* in the 'Gate of the Great Lamassu' at Babylon.

- 102 15 See E. F. Weidner, loc. cit. 172, and Abb. 95.
- 103 16 Gadd, Stones of Assyria, pl. 3 for photographs (opp. p. 12).
- 103 17 See also ch. VIII.
- 104 18 N & B p. 350 for an illustration.
- 104 19 N & R II p. 269.
- 105 20 Sargon at Khorsabad: see for instance the great sun-dried brick piers on the residence of Sin-ah-usur, OIP XL, pt 2, pl. 70, and p. 30, fig. 2, the Loggia of Palace F. Sennacherib in the 'Palace without a rival' which he constructed at Nineveh incorporated 'A portico, patterned after a Hittite palace, which they call in the Amorite tongue a *bit-hilani*.' See D. D. Luckenbill, *The Annals of Sennacherib*, p. 97.
- 106 21 But so far no cedar has been identified at Nimrud by any forestry expert. All the roof beams in the Nabu Temple, for example, have been proved to be pine. Cedar has however been satisfactorily identified in connection with the Sin Temple of Sargon at Khorsabad, see *OIP* XXXVIII, p. 97.
- 106 22 This is the conclusion accepted by general architectural opinion, Place, Loud, and others. See especially *OIP* XL, pt 2, p. 20.

It is difficult to calculate exactly how high the walls of the throneroom once stood. Loud noted at Khorsabad that the walls of the great hall in a palace of Sargon were 3 metres thick (just under 10 ft) and had a minimum height of 14 metres (just under 46 ft). As the outer and inner wall thickness of the throne-room in the N.W. Palace at Nimrud was 7 and 5 metres respectively (19.8 ft and 16.5 ft) we cannot doubt that here too the walls must have been extraordinarily lofty. The matter is however, complicated by the fact that there was a staircase to the roof which may possibly have supported at least in part an upper storey. It can however hardly be an exaggerated hypothesis that the walls were approximately three times as high as they were thick. See also ch. xv1 p. 443 and note 104 where the evidence of fallen mud brick in the great throne-room of Fort Shalmaneser gave reason for supposing that the walls may have been nearly 12 metres high.

106 23 Xenophon, Anabasis, Book III, ch. 4, and see the discussion in ch. v.

107 24 See also ch. I, [I]

107 25 See ch. x.

#### Chapter VIII

- 108 I The throne-room in the new palace which this monarch built for himself in Fort Shalmaneser was not ready for use until the 13th year of his reign. See ch. XVI, p. 445.
- 108 2 LAR I, para. 715.
- 108 3 See ASBM, pl. ii and C. J. Gadd, Stones of Assyria, pp. 149-50 and ch. XIV, p. 261.

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- 4 Shalmaneser III built the great Fort which we subsequently discovered in the outer town, see ch. XVI. This huge building, which covered an acreage almost three times as large as the N.W. Palace, also contained a throne-room as spacious as the one in the N.W. Palace (chamber B).
- 5 He founded a palace in the area due south of the N.W. Palace. A part of this building was discovered by Layard; see  $N \leq R$  II, p. 14*f*.; inscriptions in *LAR* I, paras. 739-43. Another palace of Adad-nirari III, with paintings on the walls similar to those described by Layard, was discovered by our expedition in 1953 in the north-west corner of the outer town, see *Iraq* XVI, p. 153*f*.
  - We do not know exactly where this palace was sited, but it was probably south of that of Adad-nirari III (marked Upper Chambers in Layard's plan, N & R, plan I, opp. p. 332), somewhere in the area known as Central and Centre Palaces. R. D. Barnett and M. Falkner have discussed the problem in The Sculptures of Tiglath-pileser III from the Central and South-West Palaces at Nimrud, pp. 1-7 and fig. 3. It seems reasonable to suppose that the large collections of sculptured slabs which Layard found stacked and ready for removal from this part of the mound had been conveniently gathered together near to their place of origin. Barnett's note 3 on p. 6, which claims that the quay-wall which we excavated 'was, in fact, not a quay-wall at all but the stone foundation of Tiglath-pileser's palace' is erroneous. The evidence, which I have discussed in ch. v (with illustrations) proves beyond doubt that this was a continuous quay which flanked the Tigris along the west side of the akropolis, see the contour map [1] in ch. I, which indicates the length of quay excavated; wherever we dug in the low-lying ground on the west side of the akropolis we brought to light evidence of this long and continuous stone waterfront. See also ch. v, note 9 to p. 81.
- 7 The four monarchs who intervened between Adad-nirari and Tiglathpileser III may have lived in the outer town; Fort Shalmaneser is a possible location, but since this was a ceremonial and military building, endowed with great store-rooms, it is less likely to have served as a permanent residence, particularly in the 8th century when it was a relatively old building; it was repaired and restored for Esarhaddon.
- 109 8 For the chancery, see ch. XI.
- 109 9 This at present is the best available evidence for the inscriptions on these weights, a subject on which a number of discrepant statements have been made. Compare R. D. Barnett, CNI, p. 4-5, 134; British Museum Guide to the Babylonian and Assyrian Antiquities, 1922, pp. 170, 171 and no. 91223 on p. 171. Their discovery was first reported by Layard in N & R I, p. 128, and see also N & B, p. 601; CIS II, p. 1, 1-15. The entire set is worthy of a fresh examination and republication.
- 109 10 ND2163, weighing 250 grammes and 7 milligrammes, a fraction under half a *mana.*, cf. ch. XI, note 8 to p. 170, and *Iraq* XV, p. 36, and XVI, p. 123.
- 112 11 Ch. I, p. 37. A tablet found in ZT4, ND2620, recorded nine tusks held in store—possibly at Nimrud—see also ch. IX, note 21 to p. 134, *Iraq* XXIII, p. 38 and ch. XVII, p. 483 and note 33.
- 112 12 AKA, p. 247, lines 35-8.
- R. D. Barnett, CNI, p. 134 note 4, for this important reference: Layard N & R I, pp. 341-3, for the discoveries.

#### NOTES TO PAGES 113-115

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- 113 14 Iraq XIII, pp. 12-20, contains the catalogue of the principal ivories found in this hoard. One of the masks was found in room JJ, the other in HH
- 113 See Iraq XII, pp. 1-43, 'The Excavations of the British Museum at 15 Toprak Kale near Van', by R. D. Barnett who suggests on p. 37 that most of the shrine's contents, except the red ware, belong to the end of the 8th century. The style of the two ivory winged griffins, or Nisroch figures, loc. cit. pl. xv, agrees with that of similar figures found in Fort Shalmaneser (ch. XVII, p. 594) which may also be dated to the latter half of the 8th century B.C. Barnett, loc. cit. pp. 32-3, argues that the founder of Toprak Kale was Rusas I, son of Sarduris II/III, c.733-714 B.C. and suggests that the ancient name of the city was Rusahina on account of an inscription alleged to refer to the damming of the lake to the east of Toprak Kale for the purpose of irrigating gardens in the neighbourhood. But A. Goetze, Kleinasien, p. 198, note 2, regards as untenable the view that Toprak Kale was founded by Rusas I. The site may perhaps be identified not with Rusahina but with Du-ush-pa, or Tush-pa, mentioned respectively on two bronze shields found there-see Barnett, loc. cit. pp. 13-14. One shield from Toprak Kale, now in Berlin, appears to have been dedicated to the god Haldis by Rusas II, cf. Goetze, loc. cit. ibid. and if so should be dated c.680-646 B.C., following Adontz, Histoire d'Arménie p. 193. Hence it is probable that some of the objects found at Toprak Kale came from the precincts of the temple which belonged to the god Haldis, and this may justify Clayton's proposed identification of a shrine -Barnett, loc. cit. p. 10.
- 113 16 Compare Iraq XIII, pl. v (Nimrud), Iraq XII, pl. xii, no. 5 (Toprak Kale) with masks found by Tahsin Özgüç at Altintepe and illustrated by him at the Assyriological Rencontre in London during July 1963. A date towards the end of the 8th century B.C. is indicated for all three groups. But we must await further discoveries before we can assert with confidence where this style originated, for Syria and Assyria, as well as Urartu, will have to be considered in this connection. A remarkable figure of an ivory lion represented as seated with head turned to the left and mane indicated by widely separated criss-cross markings, also found at Altintepe, may perhaps have the best claim to be specifically Urartian, for it is executed in a style rare in Syria or Assyria.
- 17 ND805, 810, Iraq XIII, p. 118, the former dated to the year 717 B.C., 113 and p. 116, for the docket ND486 mentioned above, dated 715 B.C.; the weight of the wool recorded in this tablet amounted to 55 talents, i.e. 3,300 manas; another tablet in the same room was a register of 1,250 manas of wool, over half a ton, if the metrology is correctly applied. ND807 referred to a herd of 35 sheep.
  - 18 R. Campbell Thompson, The Reports of the Magicians and Astrologers of Nineveh and Babylon, p. lii, no. 94, MDOG XXI, 1904, s. 12. Alabaster vase from Assur inscribed 'property of Tashmetu-sarrat wife of Sennacherib, who added her personal image, the image of a scorpion'.
- 10 ND785, now in the Iraq Museum, Baghdad, under the number IM55752. 115 See also ch. XVI, p. 395, which refers to the discovery of standard townwall stone foundation tablets in NE26 of the north-east quadrant of Fort Shalmaneser-probably dislodged from their original position by Esarhaddon.
- 20 E. Dhorme, RA XLI, 1947, 'La Mère de Nabonide'. 115

#### NOTES TO PAGES 115-123

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- 21 First it is important to note that a similar type of jewel consisting of an engraved scaraboid in a silver mount was found at Khorsabad, which perhaps points to a date either in or shortly after the reign of Sargon. since the city must have declined in wealth after his death. See V. Place Ninive et l'Assyrie, vol. III, pl. 76, no. 5 and II, p. 257. See also M. Dunand, Fouilles de Byblos I, pl. cxxxvi, no. 1171, for an object described as a 'scarabée anepigraphie, en pâte bleue, monté sur une bague d'or', unstratified. Compare with this a pendant engraved with a different subject (a lion), see Ausgrabungen in Sendschirli V, taf. 38e and p. 73, and taf. 159e S.3042 described as a silver signet with rams' head terminals, encasing a dark stone. Method of suspension is closely similar to that of the Nimrud jewel, but the chain is missing. Another more precious object of the same type in gold was also discovered at the same site, loc. cit. taf. 45n, p. 166, and p. 101; this object was found at the entrance Gk to the 'Kalamu' building J, see Ausgrabungen in Sendschirli IV, taf. L. Since a tablet dated to the year 676 B.C. was found in the burnt ash which marked the destruction of the building, in the adjacent room J.2, loc. cit. p. 136, this jewel may be prior to that date and may be a near contemporary of the Nimrud specimen. Unfortunately however, there is much uncertainty about the dating of many of the Zinjirli finds which no doubt accumulated in various periods. Some of the gold treasure on that site must however belong to the last quarter of the 9th century since there is a golden pencase inscribed with the name of Kalamu, who was a contemporary of Shalmaneser III. For illustration and discussion see Sendschirli, loc. cit. taf. 47f. and pp. 102, 167.
- 116

22 loc. cit. taf. 56*b*, *e*. See also the previous note about dating of the Zinjirli objects which probably represent treasure accumulated by its dynasty from the late of century B.C. onwards.

116 23 The depths at which the successive pavements were situated varied in different rooms; in general there were three main Assyrian levels: earliest of Shalmaneser III; middle perhaps down to the end of Sargon's reign, possibly later; latest second half of 7th century B.C. High up, often as much as 5 ft above the earliest, there were traces of a post-Assyrian trodden level, probably representing that of the Achaemenian and Hellenistic epochs. It is important to recognize that neither the central block nor the domestic wing of the palace showed any evidence of the extensive burning which took place in practically every other building on the akropolis in 612 B.C. This is additional proof that these two wings had ceased to be of importance, and were probably only sparsely inhabited after about 650 B.C.

118 24 For the inscription see Iraq XIII p. 115, ND484.

- 119 25 See description and discussion by Barbara Parker in *Iraq* XVII, ND772, p. 108. It is possible that this finely engraved stamped seal was carved in Sargon's reign, but it may be later, for the same subject treated in a more cursive style however occurs on *bullae* in the reign of Assur-bani-pal.
- 119 26 D. J. Wiseman, Iraq XIII, pp. 24-6.

#### Chapter IX

123 I See description of the plant remains by Dr Hans Helbaek, in Appendix 1. Yet another perishable object that had survived was a beautiful example

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of shoe-making, detected by Dr Helbaek-a fragment of the sole sewn to the upper in the most delicate technique (see appendix 1).

- For the figure-of-eight studs represented on the monuments as compon-2 ents of the horses' harness see, for example, Botta et Flandin, Monument de Ninive, tome I, pls. 39, 64, 73, 76, 77, all of the reign of Sargon II (722-705 B.C.). They also occur on the horses of his son, Sennacherib (705-681 B.C.), cf. ASBM, pls. xliv, xlvi, lvi; but as in the well AB they were found in the debris which contained the ivory board inscribed with the name of Sargon, there is a better case for associating these shell ornaments from Nimrud with this monarch. As far as I am aware the figure-of-eight trappings are never represented before the Sargonid period. Studs also appear as horse trappings on the sculpture of Assurbani-pal, but these are either simpler or more elaborate in form and never seem to represent the three convex ridges which we find on the shell studs themselves, cf. R. D. Barnett, Assyrian Palace Reliefs, pls. 59, 87. I am unable to find parallels for the more elaborate shell palmette studs which were found with them.
- E. Herzfeld, Iran in the Ancient East, fig. 254 and p. 140, alleged that they 3 were found in Tepe Giyan and considered that they may have been used as shield-buckles. This theory has yet to be proved or disproved. H. Bossert, Altanatolien, no. 612, shows a bone disc with a guilloche design from Alishar Hüyük; see AS IV, p. 106, fig. 5, no. 4, for their discovery by Seton Lloyd at Sultantepe, where, however, the material was bone, loc. cit. p. 107. See also note 6 below for shell fragments of the 9th century, discovered in F.S.
- 4 See the battering ram of Tiglath-pileser III, the cab of which is decorated 125 with concentric circles, ASBM pl. xiv.
- 126 Arslan-Tash, pls. xxx, 29; xxxi, 31; and xxxi, 33 for a seated sphinx. There are several variant types more or less closely allied to the figure on the Nimrud blinker, but none of these is precisely similar. The Nimrud specimen is executed with greater finesse.
- 126 The date proposed by Thureau-Dangin for the Arslan-Tash ivories 6 depends on an Aramaic inscription containing the name of Hazael, supposed by him to have been the king of Damascus, who clashed with Shalmaneser III in 841 B.C., see Arslan-Tash, loc. cit. pp. 138-9. But there were other monarchs who bore that name which was not uncommon, including a king of Arabia contemporary with Esarhaddon, LAR II, para. 551. H. Frankfort, AAAO, p. 192 and note 148 believed that the Arslan-Tash ivories were dated too early and could not have been separated from the Khorsabad lot, which they so closely resemble, by as much as a century. Indeed (loc. cit. p. 260, note 134), neither for Arslan-Tash nor for Samaria does he accept a date prior to the 8th century. See also the discussion in ch. XVII, p. 506f. Note, however, that the discovery in Fort Shalmaneser of a fragmentary Phoenician inscription (found in 1962) on ivory, mentioning the name of Hazael, may confirm Thureau-Dangin's claim that this was indeed the contemporary of Shalmaneser III. Further, in 1962 and 1963, fragments of shell bosses were found in F.S. inscribed in Neo-Hittite hieroglyphs with the name of Irhuleni, king of Hamath, a contemporary of this king of Assyria. The identification was made by R. D. Barnett, see his article in Iraq XXV, and ch. XVI, p. 452 and [372] therein. The presence of such objects of the 9th century from western Svria also strengthens the claim of the ivory with the name of Hazael found in the same building to relate to a 9th century monarch.

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126 7 Ausgrabungen in Sendschirli IV, p. 336, Abb. 248; V, p. 101, Abb. 122; V, Abb. 152, 153, for other bronze ornaments.

- 126 8 Barnett, CNI, pl. lxiii, s. 146, described as a horse's nosepiece on p. 202 (apparently found by Loftus in the S.E. Palace (Burnt Palace)). The author, loc. cit. p. 101, suggests that this may have formed a part of the same harness which included the two ivory cheek-pieces here discussed, from well NN of the N.W. Palace. If so, this is a pointer to the approximate contemporaneity of parts of the two collections. See also however discussion in ch. XVII, pp. 538, 595, where parallels to the B.M. pieces may be as early as c.775 B.C.
- 127 9 The prototype of this figure appears on the Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III, in an identical posture, except that here the head is tilted back, and the tail curled round the rump, Layard, *Monuments of Nineveh*, pl. 56, third register from the top.
- 127 10 Lachish III, pl. 41 no. 5, from locus J 16:1036 destroyed in 700 B.C.
- 127 11 M. C. Richter, *Kyprus*, pl. cxli, no. 4. A series of these cheek-pieces, including one with an eye-design, is published in the *Swedish Cyprus Expedition* IV, pt 2, p. 147, fig. 26, nos. 25–9. See also *ILN*, June 2, 1962, pp. 894–6 and figs. 7–8, for further examples from Salamis in Cyprus, alleged to be of the 7th century B.C.
- 127 12 Houses in the area known as TW53 (ch. XII).
- 128 13 C. J. Gadd, The Stones of Assyria, p. 165 and pl. 15 centre. Nineveh Gallery, British Museum 124783, also shown in ASBM, pl. xliv and AfO XI, 231. There are also examples in Luristan, see A. U. Pope, A Survey of Persian Art, vol. IV, pl. 36B.
- Nonetheless I feel some doubt about this conclusion, and the question 130 14 of staining of these particular pieces must remain open until such time as it is possible to conduct a chemical examination of them. I understand that certain red ivories in the Metropolitan Museum, New York, which Frankfort referred to as stained (AAAO, p. 192) are in fact not pigmented, but have experienced some chemical change which accounts for their tone. This may also be the case with the two ivory cheek-pieces from Nimrud, which, as I have explained in this chapter, could have been infected by the proximity of decayed wood. I do not however see that the polychromy of the Mona Lisa can be accounted for in any other way: black on hair, eyebrows, on the eyes; not on the face; a slight tinge of red was observed on the lips when the head came out of the well; all this must surely have been intentional deliberate staining. Stained ivories were indeed found in Fort Shalmaneser (ch. XVII). Homer, Iliad IV, 141, had seen Carian girls at work staining ivory cheek-pieces or blinkers.
- 131 15 G. Loud, The Megiddo Ivories, pl. 4.
- 131 16 Schaefer und Andrae, Kunst des Alten Orients (1942), p. 578.
- 131 17 This ivory head is now appropriately housed in the Iraq Museum, Baghdad.
- 132 18 See H. Payne and G. M. Young, Archaic Sculpture from the Acropolis. The earlier the statuary, the more obvious is the Oriental influence. Moreover, since in many buildings at Nimrud, e.g. Ezida, the Burnt Palace and Fort Shalmaneser, collections of ivories were still visible as late as 612 B.C., the Oriental originals may well have been seen by contemporary Greek artists. There are however many Greek ivories which must be contemporary with some of those from Nimrud, e.g. a rich

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collection dating from the early 7th century B.C. and later, was found in the sanctuary of Hera Limenia at Corinth, cf. H. Payne, *Perachora* I, 1950, *Perachora* II, 1962, edited by T. J. Dunbabin, p. 403 f. and pls. 171–89.

- 132 19 ND2227-30.
- 132

20 See Frankfort, AAAO, p. 260, note 35. But note that the destruction of the palace did not occur at the end of Sargon's reign as there stated; subsequent evidence proved that this event occurred in 614 B.C.

134 21 See ch. VIII, p. 112 and ch. XVII, note 33 to p. 483; tablet ND2620 found in ZT4 of the N.W. Palace, see Barbara Parker in *Iraq* XXIII, p. 38, refers to nine ivory tusks held in store, possibly in Calah, possibly elsewhere, and it is interesting that this document like many others in the same collection is likely to date either to the reign of Tiglath-pileser III or to that of Sargon, a period at which ivory-carvers are likely to have been active.
134 22 *Tell Halaf*, vol. III, see especially pp. 5–31. Historical and stratigraphical

22 Tell Halaf, vol. III, see especially pp. 5-31. Historical and stratigraphical evidence alike combine to suggest that most of the sculptured monuments were erected before the reign of Adad-nirari III who sacked the city. Kapara, the Aramaean prince, who adorned his palace with older orthosttas, and added other sculpture of his own, was probably in power shortly before 800 B.C., that is during the last quarter of the 9th century. On this subject after more than 30 years of argument there is now a general measure of agreement, and H. Frankfort in his last book AAAO, p. 256, note 42, concurred; see also H. J. Kantor, 'Syro-Palestinian Ivories', JNES XV, no. 3, p. 171f. The opinions of W. F. Albright, who in AS VI(1956), p. 75f. has opted for dates between 950 and 875 B.C., are in this matter not well founded. The statement that 'the Kapara art of Gozan . . . shows no traces of influence by Assyrian art of the 9th century B.C.' is objectionable. The basalt carvatid goddess carrying her ritual vessel by the handle (Moortgat, loc. cit. pl. 133) appears to be an Aramaean version of the magical lamassu figures; camel rider, charioteers, birds, pillars and palmettes on the orthostats; bull-men figures carrying the winged disc across the sky; roaring lions; all these subjects are familiar to neo-Assyrian art. The Aramaeans of Gozan, who lived in a religious and political milieu very different from that of Assyria and had few skilled artists at their disposal, naturally arrived at a very different scheme when they ornamented their palaces. But it is hard to believe that in doing so they were not, in their remote outlandish country, influenced by the imperial decorations of Assyrian monarchs who had purposely devised a lavish show of sculpture on the façades of their palaces in order to impress their smaller neighbours. See also my note in Iraq XIX, p. 17, criticizing Albright's hypothesis. In the Tell Halaf sequence two graves found deep down beyond the north-west corner of the hilani palace are of critical importance for the chronology. The earlier one, which contained gold ornaments, an ivory box with geometric decoration and jewellery, is differently orientated from the one adjacent to it, and is apparently older than the Kapara Palace terrace above it. Moortgat has strongly emphasized one important piece of evidence concerning this grave, namely that the trilobate golden earrings found in it are of a type peculiar to the reign of Assur-nasir-pal, and consequently a date in the upper half of the 9th century should be assigned to it. This is an important argument, but we have to remember that archaic types of jewellery are more likely to persist in the provinces than in the metropolis and, as von Oppenheim himself pointed out, Tell Halaf p. 223, objects from earlier times were

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often deposited with the dead. It is therefore quite possible that this grave belongs to the time of Assur-nasir-pal's son, Shalmaneser III (850-824 B.C.) and in my opinion this supposition makes for a better sequence dating at this site. It may, however, be noted that the trilobate earring in a slightly modified form persists through the reigns of Tiglath-pileser III and Sargon II. The second or later cremation burial, although apparently plundered, had ivories associated with it and according to Moortgat, loc. cit. p. 12, a golden lunette-shaped plaque. This plaque was decorated with two rampant goats on either side of a tree-trunk with four volutes, the tree surmounted by a palmette with coloured incrustations. The ivories, all of them fragmentary, are of types that can be matched at Nimrud, Hama, and elsewhere. It is important to note the unequivocal statement in Tell Halaf II (1950), p. 100, that this later grave belongs to the period of the 'Temple-Palace', i.e. of Kapara, unlike the earlier southern grave which was related to the preceding period. It is, however, surprising that the superstructure of both graves is alleged to have been visible, that is, obtruded above ground at the time when they were constructed. Such a practice is, as far as I am aware, unattested in the ancient Near East before Achaemenian times. At all events it would seem that the latter grave cannot possibly have been earlier than Kapara and, as we have seen, may be dated c.825 B.C. Statuary was buried alongside both graves which seem to have contained cremation burials. The publication of Tell Halaf IV, with its account of the small antiquities, has not provided any additional evidence for the date of these and other burials and buildings. It will suffice to remark that much of the pottery from Tell Halaf, previously described by Hubert Schmidt in Oppenheim's small book on Tell Halaf (Gerald Wheeler's translation), p. 311 and fig. 4 consists of types of palace and other wares which at Nimrud occur in the 8th century and also down to the end of the 7th century B.C.: doubtless these latter speciments come from the period of Assyrian occupation of Gozan. Further discussion of T. Halaf, see also ch. XIII, note 18 to p. 211; ch. XIV, note 18 to p. 239; ch. XVII, p. 473, note 146 to p. 558, and note 123 to p. 530. Finally, it should be noted that Savid Tarig el Madhlum in a doctoral thesis for the University of London (1964) has drawn attention to many traits in the sculptures of T. Halaf that appear for the first time in Assyria during the reign of Tiglath-pileser III. The soundest historical conclusion to be drawn from this observation seems to be that as new provinces of Syria came under direct Assyrian control at that time, there was a deliberate borrowing from Syrian modes.

- 135 23 *Tell Halaf* III loc. cit. p. 116 and taf. 135–5, and for the advanced style and date late in the 9th century see especially p. 25.
- 135 24 OIP XL, Loud and Altman, Khorsabad, pl. 51.
- 135 25 Compare, for example, the savage-looking ivory ladies attributable to the 9th century B.C. in Moortgat, *Tell Halaf* III (1955), Abb. 12.
- 135 26 Compare Iraq XII, pl. xii, no. 5, with Iraq XIII, pl. v.
- 135 27 See ch. XVII, p. 476, note 15.

136 28 One of the most striking stylistic parallels, probably nearly contemporary, is the stone lion which supported the column of the temple *in antis* at the north Syrian site of Tayinat, cf. H. Frankfort, AAAO, p. 175 and pl. 156. See also *JHS* LXXI (1951), p. 159; Arslan-Tash, pl. xliii, nos. 89–91; reliefs at Khorsabad showing lions as terminals on furniture, cf. Botta, Mon. de Ninive I, pl. 22.

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- Oscar Reuther, Ausgrabungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft in 137 29 Babylon III. Die Innenstadt von Babylon (Merkes), Abb. 90.
- Antonio Minto, Marsiliana d'Albegna, Tav. xvi, no. 2. The ivory figurine, 137 30 height 0.5 cm. (rather larger than the Nimrud specimen) was found in a fossa tomb surrounded by a stone circle, at Banditella. This nude maiden holds a little vase under the right breast. The posture and subject is Oriental, but it is true that in style and technique of cutting this piece is Occidental, i.e. not in any way a copy. The treatment of the hair is also different, for it fastens in a long plait behind her back.
- 138 Parts of many boxes with empanelled scenes obviously similar in style 31 were found by Loftus in the Burnt Palace, cf. Barnett, CNI pls. xvi-xxv, and one by the Expedition illustrating musicians, ND1642, see ch. XIII, [168].
- 138 32 Man XXV, no. 87.
- For emblems surmounting head-dresses of the gods compare the rock 138 33 carvings of Sennacherib at Maltai, RA XXI, no. IV (1924), p. 185-97. Note also the circlet surmounting the head-dress of Ahuramazda on the rock relief at Bisitun: drawing in King and Thompson, The Sculptures and Inscription of Darius the Great on the Rock at Behistun in Persia. pl. xiii. The most relevant parallel, however, may be the disc which surmounts the crown of the god Adad on the stele which was probably dedicated by Tiglath-pileser III in the temple at Arslan-Tash q.v. pl. II, no. 1 and p. 25.
- See also ch. x, for the discovery of inscribed wax in the well AB and 139 34 other forms of stylus.
- Ursula Schweitzer, Aegyptologische Forschungen, Heft 15, Löwe und 143 35 Sphinx im Alter Aegypten, taf. III, no. 5.
- 143 36 Schweitzer, loc. cit. taf. XII and S.51.
- Layard, Monuments of Nineveh (2nd series), pl. 65. Many other parallels 143 37 could also be cited. Perhaps the most striking is the famous stone lion of Babylon, found by Koldewey near the Ishtar gate. This is sometimes believed to be of Hittite origin. Since the subject is now known to have been widely spread, I see no strong reason to doubt that it is a work of the neo-Babylonian period, but possibly unfinished. Illustration in Koldewey, The Excavations at Babylon (translated by Johns), p. 162, fig. 101. A cylindrical ivory now in the British Museum, CNI, pls. xlii-xliii, depicting the same theme, was also found in the Burnt Palace and is no doubt contemporary with the plaques from the well. It is important, moreover, to recall that a small fragment of an ivory plaque with incrusted papyrus and 'lilies' almost identical with those illustrated on the Nimrud plaques was discovered many years ago in the S.W. Palace of Sennacherib at Nineveh. See the illustration in CNI, pl. cxxxiii, T.7 and p. 224 with reference to L. W. King, JEA 1914, p. 237, pl. xxxv. Other fragments of 'cloisonne' ivories depicting papyrus and lilies were found in the Burnt Palace, ND1140 and in NT13 of Ezida, ND5274. See ch. XIV, p. 278, [258]. See ch. x.
- 38 143
- We may suspect that bronze bowls, possibly decorated, were being 143 39 produced in Cyprus at about the same period, for rim fragments of two bowls 'mention "the governor of Kartihadast, servant of Hiram, king of the Sidonians". The bowls were dedicated by the governor of Kartihadast to Ba'al of Lebanon. The king can be identified with Hiram II of Tyre who paid tribute in 738 B.C. to Tiglath-pileser III. Kartihadast

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can be identified with Kition', *Smedish Cyprus Expedition* IV, pp. 436–7. Frankfort, *AAAO*, p. 195, following Dussaud, *Les Civilisations Préhelleniques*, p. 309, was wrong in affirming that there were fourteen bowls. Fourteen decorated bowls, probably not inscribed, came from a different site, see Colonna-Ceccaldi, *Monuments de Chypre*, p. 295. For this information I am indebted to Mrs Judy Birmingham of the University of Sidney.

- 144 40 H. Frankfort, AAAO, p. 194.
- 144 41 L. W. King, *JEA* (1914), p. 237, pl. xxxv, also illustrated in *CNI*, pl. cxxiii, T.7.
- 145 42 Layard, Monuments of Nineveh (2nd series), pl. 23. But although the fittings are similar, the fly-whisk thereon is not identical: it has no representations of human figures. For a comparable elaborately bound palmette tree see Loud, Khorsabad, pt. I, OIP XXXVIII, fig. 41, p. 34.
- 145 43 S. Smith, Early History of Assyria, first called attention to the significance of this scene at Khorsabad, but doubt has been expressed about his interpretation of the text. For the discovery of tree trunks encased in metal at Khorsabad see OIP XXXVIII p. 97–8, and for the ivory panel depicting a tree similar to the one found on the Nimrud fly-whisk, OIP XL, pl. 55, no. 63.
- 145 44 See ASBM, pl. xxix, Sargon, and R. D. Barnett, Assyrian Palace Reliefs, pl. 105, Assur-bani-pal.
- 147 45 See ch. VII, p. 103.

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- 150 I See ch. XVI, p. 464.
- 151 2 N & B, pp. 176-200.
- 151 3 N & B, p. 176. Cooper's woodcut is on the same page.
- 152 4  $N \in B$ , p. 179, centre, illustrates the types of studs, buttons and harness fittings, identical with objects also found by us in this well and in NN. See ch. IX, [65].
- 152 5 The use of the hinge at this early date has been attested by the discovery of a hinged copper bangle in a grave at Assur of the neo-Assyrian period. See A. Haller, *Die Gräber und Grüfte von Assur*, taf. 17e, and p. 68, Grab 785, described in the catalogue on p. 199 as *Kupferner Beinring mit Scharnier*.
- 152 6 The technical description of the boards and detailed measurements have been given by Miss Margaret Howard, with copious illustrations, in *Iraq* XVII, pp. 14–20.
- 152 7 It is a remarkable coincidence that only three years later, in 1956, Rodney Young discovered in a tomb at Gordion ring-handled bronze bowls which bore smears of bees-wax scratched with Phrygian (?) alphabetic inscriptions. See *Expedition*, the *Bulletin of the University Museum of the Univ. of Pa.*, Fall 1958, vol. I, no. 1.
- 152 8 But the Etruscans had become aware of this invention, perhaps as early as 700 B.C., or a little later, see p. 187*f*.
- 153 9 See Iraq XVI, p. 100 and note 1 for the references.
- 153 10 Mardrus and Mathers, The Thousand Nights and One Night, vol. II, p. 396.
- 156 11 AfO XIV, 1941-4, p. 177.

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- 156 12 As on the Assur-nasir-pal stela, Iraq XIV, p. 30, alternatively the name for juniper (*is*)*dapranu* is also suspect, for it is said to have been used for making doors together with cedar and cypress. Walnut would have been far more suitable for that purpose. But D. J. Wiseman has plausibly suggested in *Iraq* XVII, p. 4 that (*is*)*tashkarinu*, hitherto without any satisfactory identification, may have the best claim to be walnut.
- 156 13 King Lear, act I, scene 2.
- 156 14 Quoted from a lecture given by Dr C. J. Gadd at the Annual General Meeting of the British School of Archaeology in Iraq in November 1954 to whom I am indebted for much other information about Nabu-zuqupkena. The first datable tablet with his name is one of 716 B.C., the latest of 683 B.C. About 25 fragments in the surviving tablets of the royal library at Nineveh are signed with his name. See also ch. XIV, p. 265 and note 54 to p. 265.
- 157 15 See D. J. Wiseman in *Iraq*, loc. cit., for this estimate and other information about this form of literature.
- 157 16 Iraq XXIII, B. Parker, 'Administrative tablets from the N.W. Palace, Nimrud', p. 41, ND2653.
- 157 17 This was the work of Miss M. Howard, and was done in the laboratories of the Institute of Archaeology, University of London. Those interested in the technical details should consult her fully illustrated article in *Iraq* XVII, pp. 14–20.
- 157 18 According to Dr H. H. Figulla, *Iraq* XV, p. 91*f*., a tablet discovered at Ur, dated to the 19th year of Rim-Sin, refers to the supply of oil for leather hinges; but other authorities do not believe that this translation is valid and indeed we have no evidence to suggest that hinges were invented in western Asia before the 8th century B.C.
- 158 19 R. Campbell Thompson, The Reports of the Magicians and Astrologers of Nineveh and Babylon, no. 192, p. lxvii.
- 158 20 Iraq XV, p. 148, ND3483, published by D. J. Wiseman.
- 158 21 Ausgrabungen in Sendschirli V, Abb. 148 and taf. 52, pp. 108-9.
- 158 22 Good illustration in H. Frankfort, AAAO, pl. 162.
- 158 23 G. Contenau, Manuel d'Archéologie Orientale IV, p. 2215, fig. 1244.
- 158 24 Iliad VI, 169.
- 159 25 Herodotus VII, 239 (translated by Henry Cary).
- 159 26 Furtwängler und Reichold, Griechische Vasenmalerei II, taf. 88, 110, 136 illustrate these vases.
- 159 27 Odyssey XII, 175.
- 159 28 Inscription quoted from A. T. Olmstead, History of Assyria, p. 79.
- 159 29 References to the use of the wax tablet in the old Babylonian period in Syria and in Palestine are given by D. J. Wiseman in *Iraq* XVII, p. 11 and note 95.
- 160 30 See note 7 above.
- 160 31 Reference in Iraq XVI, p. 107, note 1.
- 160 32 Fragments of miniature ivory writing boards were also found in the throne-room of the Burnt Palace (ND1140) and in NT13 of Ezida (ND5278 [257]), see p. 278.
- 160 33 For the pyxis see A. Minto, Marsiliana d'Albegna, tav. xviii, and also a curious ivory object of uncertain use illustrated in C. D. Curtis, Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome, V, pl. 15, figs. 1–3. The man spreadeagled on his back under the lion wears a Phoenician-style kilt with a kind of triangular cod-piece in front. This

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was found in the Barberini tomb at Praeneste. See also Randall MacIver, *Villanovans and Early Etruscans*, pl. 40.

- 160 34 For example on a limestone bifrons lion, ND3397, *Iraq* XVI, pl. xxvii, and [117] in ch. XI.
- 160 35 Hinged bronze girdle in the Barberini tomb at Praeneste, see C. D. Curtis, *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome*, V, pl. 34. It should be noted that whilst iron was used by the pre-Etruscan Villanovans, there is no evidence for the use of gold or silver, and apparently no tradition of ivory carving before the 8th century B.C. Parallels for the other Etruscan articles here mentioned are illustrated in Minto, *Marsiliana d'Albegna* as follows: six-foliate rosette opposite p. 222, fig. 14(c); bronze bell, tav. xl; horse's headpieces, opposite p. 270, fig. 29; ivory seal with spiked chair, p. 236, fig. 19(a) which is comparable to a design illustrated on a stamp seal ND3201, probably of the 7th century B.C. from the Burnt Palace at Nimrud; see Barbara Parker, *Iraq* XVII, pl. xviii, no. 4 and p. 107, and [95] in ch. x.
- 160 36 Good photograph of the Urpalla relief in *Iraq* XVIII, pl. xxx, no. 1, and see also the informative article therein by Mrs K. R. Maxwell-Hyslop entitled 'Urartian Bronzes in Etruscan Tombs', and R. D. Barnett in *JHS* LXVIII, 1948, pp. 9, 10, article entitled 'Early Greek and Oriental Ivories'.
- 160 37 Minto, loc. cit. tav. L.
- 160 38 K. R. Maxwell-Hyslop in Iraq XVIII, p. 152, fig. 1.
- 161 39 See K. R. Maxwell-Hyslop, 'Notes on some distinctive bronzes from Populonia', PPS XXII, 1956, pp. 126f. Also Hencken, 'Carp's Tongue Swords in Spain, France and Italy', Zephyrus VII, 2, 1956, p. 142 for the date of Villanova, Facies I.
- 161 40 Illustration of the Marsiliana board in Iraq XVII, pl. iii.
- 161 41 These points have been well made by San Nicolò in Orientalia XVII, 1948, pp. 59–70. 'Haben die Babylonien Wachstafeln als Schriftragen gekannt?' The correctness of his theories has been completely vindicated by the discoveries at Nimrud.
- 162 42 See ch. IX, p. 139.
- 162 43
- De summe m

De summo planus, sed non ego planus in imo Versor utrimque manu, diverso et munere fungor

Altera pars revocat, quidquid pars altera fecit.

For bone styli from Greece, illustrating this description, see *Perachora* II, 1963, p. 445 and pl. 189 in which A358, 359 may be compared with the copper stylus from Nimrud, ND264A [96].

- 162 44 C. J. Gadd, *History and Monuments of Ur*, p. 96. But some think that the word *kunukku* in this context may refer to heavy inscribed stone tablets with which the king might have been stoned to death. In any case this was a scribal murder.
- 162 45 A. Christensen, L'Iran sous les Sassanides, p. 381, on the authority of Tabari.
- 162 46 Quoted from Archaeologia LV, 1895, which contains an article on wax tablets, with special reference to a set which had been found at Cambridge. This paper by T. M. McKenny Hughes, although written many years ago, is still a most valuable and authoritative discussion of the subject.
- 162 47 Quoted by C. J. Gadd, loc. cit.
- 162 48 See also p. 151 above and N & B, p. 190.

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163 Similar evidence was given by the excavation of Fort Shalmaneser, 49 e.g. in room sw7 where parts of valuable ivory bed-steads had been stacked after the sack in 614 B.C. by persons who themselves were unable to make use of them, see ch. xvi, p. 413.

## Chapter XI

- 164 I This ravine had served as a convenient slope along which to drag the great stone lion and a bull which Layard removed on rollers. See  $N \subseteq R$ II, p. 73f.; 300 men pulled the ropes, p. 88; it took two days to haul each of the stone monsters from the mound to the river. The passage describing that remarkable operation is most entertaining and well illustrates Layard's ability to perform wonders against seemingly hopeless odds with the aid of the most primitive tackle and human material. The same ravine was used for dragging down other sculpture at the close of the excavations in 1851, N & B, p. 202f.
- 166 2 Marked 'upper chambers' in N & R, plan I opp. p. 332.
- 166 3 See H. Lenzen, Vorläufiger Bericht, Uruk-Warka, winter 1953-4winter 1954-5, Berlin, 1956. In the Bît Resh area a postern gate of the temple known from the texts to have existed in Seleucid times was found to have been washed away by a *madi* at the critical point where it should have been situated. Other evidence of the same kind was observed by Lenzen elsewhere at Warka. The absence of a gate in the north wall of the temenos at Ur is perhaps due to a similar form of water-erosion, see C. Leonard Woolley, A7, III, October 1923, no. 4, pl. xxv, opp. p. 312: 'the central part [of the north-west wall] seems to have been destroyed many times by floods and rebuilt'. For plans of the temenos with a substantial part of the north wall missing, and contour map by F. L. W. Richardson, where the contours agree with a similar phenomenon, A7, XII, October 1932, no. 4, pl. lviii, opp. p. 355.
- See Til Barsib, plan B. 'Le Palais Assyrien', rooms XXIV-XXX, XLVII. The 167 4 arrangement is by no means identical, but allowance has to be made for the fact that each suite had to be adapted to its particular location. Bathrooms occur on both sites.
- 5 Catalogue of the documents on this page, see D. J. Wiseman, Iraq XV, 169 p. 148.
- 6 Alabaster vases similar to those found at Nimrud, from Assur. See W. 170 Andrae, Das Wiedererstandene Assur, taf. 73 b and c, the former of veined alabaster with two handles similar to the veined specimens from Nimrud; the latter with a hieroglyphic inscription containing the name of an Egyptian officer and priest. See also loc. cit. p. 159 where it is stated that on some of the vases there are cuneiform inscriptions of Sennacherib and Esarhaddon, and it is alleged that they were brought to Assur as booty from Phoenicia. There is a magnificent specimen inscribed with the name of Esarhaddon in the museum at Istanbul. See also WVDOG, 66, p. 20, Abb. 3e, identical with ND3555; according to von Bissing's interpretation of the inscription thereon, this vessel was made in Egypt, cf. loc. cit. p. 22.

22

170 ND2163, bronze lion-weight inscribed with Phoenician characters on the 8 170 base, room 14. This, see also ch. VIII, note 9 to p. 109 weighed 250 grammes 7 milligrammes, a fraction under half a mana. The heavier registered

See ch. v, p. 78, [30]. 7

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weights found in this range of rooms were: ND2505, basalt duck-weight inscribed 10 mana, of Assur-nasir-pal, room 14; ND2074, basalt duck of Assur-dan III from room 19; ND2056, basalt duck-weight, room 24; ND2057, limestone duck-weight, room 24; ND3220, limestone duckweight inscribed 25 (?) mana, room 24; ND3221, basalt duck-weight, room 24. All of them need further investigation and should provide an interesting check on the relation of ancient Assyrian to modern weights. Iraq XVIII, letter XXVII, pp. 43-4, 55.

- 9 173
- ND3476, see Iraq XV, p. 147. See also Iraq XXVII, letters LXXII-LXXXIV. 173 10
- On the assumption that I homer = about 180 litres, 100 litres = 2.75τт 173 bushels. D. J. Wiseman in Iraq XV, p. 146, ND3469.
- D. J. Wiseman in Iraq XV, p. 147, ND3480. 173 12
- H. W. F. Saggs in Iraq XVIII, letters xxv, xxvi. 13 174
- Iraq XVIII, p. 55. Saggs aptly quotes II Kings, xviii, 32, in which the 14 174 Rabshakeh official conveys the Assyrian offer to the people of Jerusalem to transport them to a fruitful 'land like (their) own land', and comments that 'the terms promised by the Assyrians for submission were likely to have been so seductive that the Jewish leaders wished to have the negotiations carried on in a foreign tongue'.
- H. W. F. Saggs in Iraq XVII, proposes also an alternative translation 15 174 but admits that the word ka-ra-ni (mesh) could be the plural of wine (p. 128 note) and there are others who would accept this rendering which indeed bears the stamp of probability. The letters concerning Tyre and Sidon are nos. XII, XIII of the same publication.
- For example, in the city of Kashpuna, loc. cit. letter XII. 16 174
- Loc. cit. letter XVI and p. 152. 174 17
- 174 18 Iraq XVII, p. 21f.
- II Kings xx, and Isaiah xxxix. 19 175
- C. J. Gadd, article in Iraq XV, pp. 123-34, entitled 'Inscribed barrel 20 175 cylinder of Marduk-Apla-Iddina II' published this document in full detail with translation, transcription, and commentary.
- The original location of the cylinder found at Nimrud was first discussed by 175 21 C. J. Gadd in Iraq XV, pp. 131-2, who tentatively ascribed it to a temple abutting on the E-anna Ziggurrat. H. Lenzen after further detailed work at Warka replied in Iraq XIX, pp. 146-50, preferring the site of another temple which had not yet been discovered when the former article was written. This latter building, described in the cylinder as dedicated to the god Ningizzida and situated in the 'lower courtyard', seemed to Lenzen to have the stronger claim. See further H. Lenzen in UVB, Berlin, 1956, and review of the evidence by M. E. L. Mallowan in Bibliotheca Orientalis XV (1958).
  - 22 Fully published by C. J. Gadd in Iraq XVI, pp. 173-201. The completest set of joins has been reconstituted as Nimrud Prism D illustrated in loc. cit. pl. xliii. Much of the information was already known from fragments of other sets which Sargon had placed in Assur and in Nineveh, and there are correlative texts from Khorsabad. But the Nimrud prisms have many interesting variants and additions, and the remarkable passage concerning Babylon written in 710-709 B.C. in Col. VII, D, is new. A broken piece of a nine-sided prism, ND3411, was also found in the chancery room 4, and provides evidence that copies of inscriptions in Sargon's name were being sent out from Calah by Assyrian and Babylonian scribes for export to cities in the south, particularly Erech, see loc. cit., p. 199. Location of this tablet was noted by D. J. Wiseman in Iraq XV, p. 139.

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- 176 23 H. W. F. Saggs in Iraq XVIII, letters xxxi, xxxii, pp. 47-8, 55-6.
- 176 24 On the complicated and unresolved problems of the chronology of the last kings of Assyria see C. J. Gadd, AS VIII, pp. 69–72. We have adopted the dates proposed by H. W. F. Saggs.
- 176 25 This tablet was found in room 16, ND2319, see *Iraq* XVI, p. 41. The *limmu* Bel-iqbi is dated 616 B.C. by M. Falkner in *AfO* XVII. The same *limmu* name occurs in a tablet ND5550 found in Ezida, see *Iraq* XIX, p. 5.
- 177 26 On the significance and function of the *limmu* see Sidney Smith in CAH III, p. 92f. and his chapter entitled 'The Practice of Kingship in Early Semitic Kingdoms', p. 54 in Myth, Ritual and Kingship, ed. by S. H. Hooke (1958). See also A. Poebel, 'The Assyrian King List', in *JNES* I, no. 3, July 1942.
- 178 27 Iraq XVI, p. 30. ND2091, 2095 and pp. 35, 36.
- 178 28 Iraq XVI, ND2307, pp. 30, 37-9.
- 179 29 Driver and Miles, The Assyrian Laws, p. 271.
- 179 30 If Sharru-na'id may be identified with Bel-sharru-na'id, who was also *abarakku* then 629 B.C. is a possible date, see *AfO* XVII.
- 179 31 CNI, pl. lxxxvii S.292t and p. 213, catalogue. See also for discussion of others of the same name, loc. cit. pp. 48, 161. In view of excavations sub-sequent to those of Loftus however, it appears that this object might have been made at any date in the 7th century prior to 614 B.C., when the Burnt Palace was sacked: most of the ivories discovered in that building are blackened from smouldering in the ashes. The hypothesis made by me, to which Barnett, loc. cit. p. 49, refers, that the S.E. or Burnt Palace was sacked on Sargon's death, must now be discarded in view of more recent evidence, see chs. XIII-XIV.
- 179 32 P. S. Rawson in Iraq XVI, p. 168, 'Palace Wares from Nimrud'.
- 181 33 See description by A. J. Sachs in *Iraq* XV, p. 167. See also Wiseman, *Iraq* XV, p. 139, ND3413.
- 182 Examples of ivories in a somewhat similar style may be seen in the 34 British Museum collections, both from Nineveh and from Nimrud, see CNI, pls. cxiii, cxiv (perhaps of the time of Tiglath-Pileser III), and cxvicxvii, and compare these with the better spaced, more mobile figures engraved in loc. cit. cxv which Barnett attributes to the 8th century because of the absence of stiffness; the built-in guiver on a chariot illustrated on one of these plaques does not figure in the reliefs before the reign of Tiglath-pileser III. But reference to the engravings on the robes worn by the king in the 9th century shows that the artists of the early period when engaged in executing miniature work could produce mobile figures with flowing lines in a sharp contrast to the formal figures on the megalithic monuments. Note also the different treatment of the eves in the older engraved ivories in Iraq XV, pl. iii, no. 2, datable to a period not later than the 9th century owing to the style of the earring. I am indebted to Savid Tariq el Madhlum for his observations concerning the quiver, the mace with lanyard and sword with volutes; the latter is still worn as late as the time of Tiglath-pileser III and Sargon, but only by the knig, not by the courtiers as in the oth century.

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35

Botta et Flandin, *Monument de Ninive* I, pls. 15, 16, depict good examples of the bifrons lion spitting out the sword blade from between its jaws. See also loc. cit. pl. 64, 65, for courtiers holding lion-headed rhyton; loc. cit. II, pl. 92, single lion as a sceptre head; and pl. 159 for an illustrated type series of batons and scabbards thus decorated. And see

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also Charles K. Wilkinson, illustrated article entitled 'Assyrian and Persian Art' in the *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, March 1955, p. 213f, where the Nimrud lion is compared with other Assyrian examples, also with gold work of the 7th century from Ziwiye and a lion-headed golden dagger of the Achaemenian period from Hamadan. For the style, compare a dagger handle of ivory, with the end carved in the form of a snarling lion's head, but not bifrons, found in the debris of Ahab's courtyard, see Reisner, *Harvard Excavations at Samaria*, vol. I, p. 368 and vol. II, pl. 56c.

- 182 36 *JHS* LXXI (1951), p. 89 and pl. xxxiia.
- 182 37 Iraq XVI, pl. xxvii and p. 119. This is a fragment of the obelisk BM118800, for which see C. J. Gadd, *The Stones of Assyria*, pl. 6 and p. 128. See also ch. XIV, note 33 to p. 250.
- 182 38 This vase fragment ND5335 found in a dump over ZT10 may join with another, inscribed, fragment BM91582 apparently discovered by Layard in the temple of Ishtar-belit-mati. The latter depicts the hindquarters of the same horse, a tributary carrying a cauldron on his head, and women on the battlements of a castle in the mountains, cf. Layard,  $N \subseteq B$  p. 358 wrongly described as porcelain. The inscriptions on the B.M. vase indicates that it was a dedication to the god Ninurta—perhaps by Assur-nasir-pal II who founded the temple.

#### Chapter XII

- 184 1 Houses at Assur: Conrad Preusser, Die Wohnhäuser in Assur (1954) with an interesting introduction by W. Andrae who speculates on the origins of the house plans and considers certain fundamental differences between those of Assyria and Babylonia. Although the evidence is defective, the obvious conclusion would seem to be that basic and distinctive forms must have been ecclesiastical in origin, for the god's abode had priority over man's and indeed there is evidence that in Sumer the king originally lived in the temple, see A. Falkenstein in Cahiers d'Histoire Mondiale, vol. I, no. 4, April 1954, article entitled 'La Cité-Temple Sumérienne'. For good house plans in the Assyrian city of Shibaniba see Charles Bache, 'Tell Billa: First Assyrian Level' in the Museum Journal of the University Museum, Univ. of Pa., vol. XXIV, no. 1 (1935). 79 rooms, a street, and a plaza were excavated. They were much more regular in their layout than those discovered at Nimrud. 184
  - 2 See Layard, N & R II, p. 41-3. His reasons for not following up soundings in this part of the mound are given on p. 42. 'The ruins were, of course, very inadequately explored; but with the small sum at my disposal I was unable to pursue my researches to the extent that I could have wished. If, after carrying a trench to a reasonable depth and distance, no remains of sculpture or inscription appeared, I abandoned it and renewed the experiment elsewhere.' It was in fact wise of Layard to discriminate in this way, for with his untrained labour he could hardly have succeeded in recovering the insubstantial mud-brick walls, still less could he have discriminated between the successive levels of building. Aristotle, *Politics*, book VII, para. 11.

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186 4 For the original account see Iraq XVI, pp. 68 and 129-52.

- 187 5 See Joan Lines in Iraq XVI, p. 164f.
- 187
  - 6 See appendix 1 for technical report on the cereals and vegetable remains by Dr Hans Helbaek, and note 87 to p. 434 in ch. XVI.
- 188 7 The tablets in this archive were published by D. J. Wiseman in *Iraq* XV, p. 135*f*. Subsequently Margarete Falkner in *AfO* XVII, p. 100, published a list of the post-canonical Assyrian *limmu* in a provisional order plausibly suggested by collateral evidence of the names of witnesses and of officials which fall into successive groups, as well as from documents which give successive lists of some of the *limmu*. Although there is still room for adjustment, the general scheme is sound and we are entitled for example to accept a date of about 616 B.C. to the *limmu* Bel-iqbi, whose name also figures on a tablet found in Ezida at Calah, written in the reign of Sin-shar-ishkun, the last king of Assyria.
- 188 8 See A. L. Oppenheim in Iraq XVII, p. 70.
- 188 9 See C. J. Gadd in AS VIII (1958), pp. 35f. and 69.
- 189 Io For further information about these particular documents and seal impressions thereon see also Barbara Parker in *Iraq* XVII, ND3423, pl. xxiii, 2, and text fig. 6; ND3437, pl. xxiv, 6 and text fig. 8; ND3463, pl. xxv, 1, and text fig. 9; ND3427, pl. xxv, 2, and text fig. 10; also D. J. Wiseman, in *Iraq* XV, p. 135f.
- 190 11 For many examples of corbel-vaulted graves at Assur, see A. Haller, Die Gr\u00e4ber und Gr\u00fcfte von Assur, p. 95f.
- I have used the term 'rhyton' for a funnel-shaped vessel terminating in 193 12 an animal's head, although strictly speaking, in Greek usage, it is a drinking cup or horn running to a point where there is a small hole: see Liddell and Scott: Greek-English Lexicon. Young refers to similar vessels from Gordion as 'situlae'. See also ch. XIII, note 9 to p. 206. For parallels, technique, and history of these rhyta, which had a long vogue and were more often made of metal, see Charles K. Wilkinson, 'Two Ancient Silver Vessels' in The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin, summer 1956. For a ram-headed rhyton from Zinjirli, see AIS V, heft xv, p. 47 and taf. 20d, also a and b; from Ziwiye, A. Godard, Le Trésor de Ziwiyè (1950), figs. 57 and 58, perhaps too highly dated, for there is at present no evidence that such rhyta were used as early as the reign of Assur-nasir-pal. However, a bronze ram's-head rhyton, with silver band and 'Egyptian blue' inlays from Hasanlu, now in the Tehran Museum, is alleged by Vaughn E. Crawford to be of the oth century B.C., see Met. Mus. Bull., November 1961, fig. 7. On the reliefs at Khorsabad there are banquet scenes in which the courtiers hold in their hands lion-headed rhyta, see Botta and Flandin, Monument de Ninive, tome I, pls. 16, 64 and 76 (courtier holds a rhyton in each hand and is dipping one of them into a wine vase); at Khorsabad these representations were no doubt intended to depict metal, probably silver, prototypes. Interesting, nearly contemporary parallels also occur in the Phrygian city of Gordion (c.700 B.C.), see Rodney S. Young in A7A 59, no. 1, January 1955, fig. 5, a rhyton of black polished ware-this vessel is however cornet-shaped; two other fine examples in bronze, much closer in form, of the same date, were also found at Gordion: one ends in a lion's head, the other in a ram's, see Archaeology 10 (1957), coloured pictures on pp. 228 and 229. For bronze rhyta at Khorsabad described as 'coupes'-they terminate in antelope's heads-see V. Place,

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Ninive et l'Assyrie, vol. III, pl. 73, nos. 8, 9; these may confidently be assigned to the reign of Sargon, 722–705 B.C. Note also fragments of a ram rhyton from Assur, Haller, *Die Gräber und Grüfte*, taf. 26d. A magnificent gold and silver rhyton from Marash was published by C. L. Woolley in AAA X, p. 69*f*. and pl. lxviii, who with considerable acumen advocated a date in the 7th century B.C.; but against Woolley's hypothesis, it should be noted that the rhyton with head turned at right angles to the vessel, and not in line with it, appears to be a development more characteristic of the Achaemenian period, 6th to 5th centuris B.C. The lower part or stand is of gold, beaten up with the hammer, and is in the form of a kneeling bullock; the goblet part is of hammered silver. The separate parts were probably joined with solder.

- 193 13 See Layard, *Monuments of Nineveh* (2nd series), pl. 68, and pl. 59, for the design on the bronze bowl.
- 194 14 See L. W. King, Bronze Reliefs from the Gates of Shalmaneser, pls. xvi, lxiii, lxxix.
- 195 15 Woolley, Carchemish III, pl. B.40, possibly 9th century B.C.
- 196 16 See Barbara Parker in *Iraq* XVII, p. 93, for an informative article on the seals and seal impressions found at Nimrud between 1949 and 1953 with detailed comment and illustrations of those found in the houses.
- 196 17 Iraq XVII, ND3224, pl. xviii, no. 2; ND3261, pl. xix, no. 4; ND3308, pl. xix, no. 6.
- 196 18 Iraq XVII, ND3582, pl. xii, no. 1, and possibly others.
- 197 19 Iraq XVII, ND891, pl. xx, no. 1 and ND3228, pl. x, no. 3.
- 197 20 See also the discussion on the rise in levels measured in the Hellenistic settlement at the south end of the mound, ch. xv, p. 302.

Chapter XIII

- I This building which we have appropriately named 'The Burnt Palace' 200 has been referred to by Barnett, CNI, as the South East Palace, but the latter nomenclature we have avoided because in the past, as Barnett has noted, it has been indiscriminately applied to various buildings in the south-east sector of the akropolis. The great building to the east of the Burnt Palace has now been given the collective name Ezida which in antiquity also comprised the temple of Nabu. The building south of Ezida referred to by George Smith as the S.E. Palace is now called by us the Palace AB: it was first discovered by Lavard; was perhaps founded by Sammuramat, mother of Adad-nirari III; repaved and restored by Assur-etil-ilani (see ch. xv). Within Ezida there are four sanctuaries, all on its western side [194]: going from north to south the first two are dedicated to two divinities, names unknown; the third belonged to Nabu and the fourth, adjacent to it, probably to his consort Tashmetum, for a tablet describing repairs to her sanctuary, dated to the reign of Esarhaddon, was found in it (see ch. XIV, notes 52 to p. 265 and 65 to p. 271). 200 Quoted by R. D. Barnett in CNI, pp. 23-4. 2
- 200 3 C. J. Gadd, The Stones of Assyria, appendix.
- 205 4 Barbara Parker, *Iraq* XVII, p. 93*f*. Excavations at Nimrud', 1949–53, seals and seal impressions, pl. xi, no. 2, xii, no. 3, 4 are all in a style which agrees with Sargonid glyptic.
- 205 5 D. J. Wiseman in Iraq XIV, p. 61 and ND1107, p. 64.

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- 6 F. Thureau-Dangin, *Huitième Campagne de Sargon*, p. 1, implies that this letter was written when the king was residing in Calah, and the fine quality of the tablet clay comparable to other documents found in Ezida reinforces the correctness of his hypothesis. Indeed a very finely written ritual text ND1120 published by D. J. Wiseman in *Iraq* XIV, p. 65, was found in debris thrown out of Ezida, 10 metres east of the Burnt Palace throne-room; it is in a beautiful hand, dated 714 B.C., the same year in which the account of the eighth campaign was composed, and instructs Nabu-shallimshunu, the royal scribe who wrote the account of Sargon's campaign, to go into the citadel. Sidney Smith, before the latter discovery was made, in *CAH* III, p. 53, suggested that the letter was perhaps written in Musasir.
- 205 7 Conrad Preusser, Die Wohnhäuser in Assur, p. 58.

The relevant letter discovered in ZT4, the chancery in the north wing 8 of the N.W. Palace, has been published and discussed by H. W. F. Saggs in Iraq XX, p. 182f., who notes that the state of Mushku (Phrygia) was not mentioned in the extensive tribute lists of Tiglath-pileser III, and in fact did not become prominent till Sargon's reign. Remoter from Urartu and Assyria than the tributary kingdoms Kummuh, Que, Tabal' Sam'al and Tuhana, it had profited by being less closely involved in their conflicts, and indeed the discoveries at Gordion illustrate the great wealth which had accrued to Phrygia in the last quarter of the 8th century B.C. It is moreover likely that Mushku, which had encouraged Carchemish to revolt against Assyria in 717 B.C. without apparently playing an active military part in it, had been chastened by witnessing Sargon's victory over Urartu in 714 B.C., as well as by a punitive campaign in 709 B.C. It was doubtless the danger of a common enemy, the Cimmerians, which turned the Assyrians and Phrygians towards an alliance.

206 9 Illustrated in colour in Archaeology II, no. 4 (winter 1958), pp. 228, 229 and see also Rodney S. Young in AJA 61, no. 4, 1957, Gordion 1956: Preliminary Report. See also ch. XII, note 12 to p. 193.

206 10 A. G. Lie, The Inscriptions of Sargon II, King of Assyria, part I, The Annals, pp. 71-3.

- 206 11 Thureau-Dangin, loc. cit. p. 59, lines 379*f*. The list of booty is a catalogue of objects to which many of the ivory fragments discovered at Nimrud could have belonged. Note also line 407 which implies that some of the booty was really once Assyrian property plundered by Urartu; in fact Assyria was recovering much that had once belonged to it!
- 206 12 L. Waterman, RCAE, letter 486. Another document found in ZT4, the chancery of the N.W. Palace, appears to be a copy of Sargon's orders concerning the disposal of straw, asses and ploughs required in Dursharrukin at the time when it was being built. See H. W. F. Saggs in *Iraq* XVIII, p. 48, letter XXXI.

The originally date proposed in *Iraq* XVI, p. 72, for the destruction, 705 B.C., must therefore be altered to c.614 B.C.
Thus the date assigned by me to the repaying of the passage-way in

<sup>208</sup> 14 Thus the date assigned by me to the repaying of the passage-way in *Iraq* XVI, p. 75*f*., must be amended. A tablet, ND2063, written either in 671 or 666 B.C. (loc. cit. note 3) was evidently a throw-out from the older level, and the fragments of ivory packed into the door-socket box as useless antique fragments, at the entrance to the passage 39, were embedded there after 614 B.C. (including ND3319, fragment of an ivory capital, loc. cit. 79); on the same page, fifth line from bottom, for metres read centimetres.

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- 208 15 Other specimens were found in loose debris of the courtyard. See Iraq XIV, p. 67, ND1130.
- 209 16 Illustrated in E. Herzfeld, Iran in the Ancient East, pl. lxxvii and Schmidt, Persepolis I (Chicago, 1953), pls. 32 and 52.
  - See W. E. S. Turner, 'Glass Fragments from Nimrud of the Eighth 17 to the Sixth Century B.C.' in Iraq XVII, p. 57f. for a valuable discussion and analysis. As far as I am aware, and as Turner has stated, there is as vet no evidence that lead oxide was used as a major component in glass before about 200 B.C. and as we now know that the Hellenistic occupation levels from which the kilns in room 47 were sunk do not date before 220 B.C. and may be several decades later, the Nimrud find accords well with contemporary evidence from Egypt and elsewhere. The date tentatively suggested by me for the Nimrud kilns in Iraq XVI, p. 77, as early 6th century B.C. must in the light of subsequent stratigraphic evidence be considered too early. The quantitative analysis of this glass in Iraq XVII, p. 67 was carried out by Miss Mavis Bimson, under the direction of Dr H. J. Plenderleith. On the provenance of Egyptian red glass now in University College London, see also A. J. Arkell, 7EA 43, 1957, p. 110. For the description of the Hellenistic villages and associated coins and pottery on the site AB south of the Burnt Palace, see ch. xv, p. 300f.
  - Many carvatid figures of high quality were found in the same building т8 by Loftus, see R. D. Barnett, CNI, pls. lxxii-lxxvi, in the 'Syrian style', but it is in fact difficult to determine their origin; see his discussion, loc. cit. p. 104 f. So far this type of caryatid ivory has not been found elsewhere, but fragments of female figurines wearing the same distinctive crowns occur at Tell Halaf, cf. A. Moortgat, Tell Halaf III, 1955, p. 12, Abb. 11, 12. The stratification of the Halaf figurines indicates that they are pre-Adad-nirari III, probably last quarter of the 9th century B.C.: their execution is inferior to that of the fine specimens from Nimrud; note the simpler treatment of the crown, the different setting of the eyes and ears-all evidence that the two lots were made in different workshops, possibly at different periods. Cf. W. Llewellyn Brown, review in PEQ, 1958, pp. 65-70, whose remarks on differences of style are invaluable for an appreciation of the chronological problems; thus the carvatid ivories from T. Halaf, a 'more farouche Syrian type', may be contrasted with pieces of a 'milder kind' in the Egyptianizing style, with which he would classify pieces 'from Zinjirli and Rhodes (where exports so early as the 9th century B.C. would be unlikely)'. 'Could this be evidence for development over a century from a more uncompromising fierce style in the 9th century to a softer, milder one in which Egyptian influence was stronger in the later 8th century?' It seems that one of the Halaf fragments was part of a carvatid and indeed on the same site stone carvatids (draped males and females) were used as architectural members in the porches of the hilani buildings. Similar crowns are worn by female figures in procession, on a gold strip from Amathus, Cyprus (drawing in Barnett, CNI, fig. 43, p. 105). The most archaic representation of this crown, however, is depicted on an ivory from Megiddo of the 13th century, Loud, OIP III, pl. 4, where a queen or priestess is seen wearing it in the presence of the enthroned king. For the probable date of the Megiddo ivories see now H. J. Kantor in OIP LXXIX, p. 64. Finally, for the tectonic scheme there is an important parallel from el Kurru in

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the Sudan. Here we have a silver-gilt mirror from the tomb of the Kushite Pharaoh, Shabako 716-701 (?) B.C., upon which figures of goddesses encircle the shaft. In this connection we have also a number of miniature ivories associated with the same Pharaoh and others which are contemporary with his successor Shebitku 701-690 (?) B.C. These Kushite ivories are, as Stevenson Smith has remarked, Egyptian in style; but the skilled detail in execution of some of the miniatures, especially the bewigged heads, is closely akin to the miniature ivory work specimens found in the Burnt Palace at Nimrud, and Assyrian contact with Egypt at the time must have a bearing on this technological relationship. For discussion and illustrations of the relevant Kushite material see Stevenson Smith, AAAE, p. 242f. and pl. 179; also Ancient Egypt, the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (1952 edition), p. 151, 152 and fig. 98, p. 155. The representation of the nude female, especially common in Babylonia throughout the 2nd millennium B.C. in terracotta figurines and on cylinder seals, is there to be connected with the cult of Ishtar, and contemporarily in Syria with Astarte. Thus there is a long-standing iconographic history behind these Assyrian figurines. For chronology of T. Halaf, see also ch. IX, note 22 to p. 134; and other references ad hoc.

E. Douglas Van Buren in AfO IX, p. 165-71, on 'A Clay Relief in the 10 Iraq Museum'. See also H. Frankfort in *INES* III, no. 3 (1944), 'A Note on the Lady of Birth', which draws attention to the similar iconography in Egypt and Mesopotamia, matching the modern Egyptian spiral wire amulets for the protection of women during pregnancy. On the basis of ancient Egyptian texts Frankfort has suggested that the symbol stood for a cow's womb and was appropriately associated with The Lady of Birth. But here the swaddling band appears to be the better interpretation.

H. Payne and G. M. Young, Archaic Marble Sculpture from the Acropolis, 20 pl. 19 and p. 12. See also the knotted fillets on Attic statuary of the late 7th to early 6th century B.C., when the knot is slightly more elaborate. G. M. A. Richter, Kouroi, pls. 7-10, 14. I am indebted to Mr John Boardman for the latter reference.

ABSA, no. XIV, Session 1907-8, pp. 22-4, figs. 8, 9. See also Artemis 21 215 Orthia (ed. Dawkins) figs. 119-22 and pls. clxxixf. It was estimated loc. cit. by A. J. B. Wace that more than 100,000 of these lead votive offerings were discovered on the site of this temple at Sparta: the stratification is determined and in the early stages overlaps with the neo-Assyrian empire: Lead 0, last years of the 8th century; Lead 1, 700-635B.C.; Lead II, 635-600 B.C. The figurines are Greek in character, but sphinxes, cocks, lions, palmettes and horses betray the influence of Syria, Phoenicia and Assyria. See also ch. xvi for lead figurines from Fort Shalmaneser.

22 ILN, July 8, 1933, article by H. Payne and fig. 9, p. 66 for the bone Hera. 215 An ivory calf, couchant, is reminiscent of the couchant calves from the Burnt Palace but is less well executed and in a simpler style. See now H. Payne, Perachora II (1963) pls. 171f. Some of the ivories are in general attributed to the early 7th century B.C. The finely carved male head with flat back, A.9 on pl. 173, seems to be related to ivory masks found at Urartian sites as well as to those from the N.W. Palace at Nimrud, see ch. VIII, p. 113 and notes 14-16; but the example from Perachora appears to be more advanced in style and, I suspect, was made some decades later than the Oriental prototypes.

23 H. Payne and G. M. Young, loc. cit. p. 3. 215

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15	24	The classic type of 'lady at the window' occurs in the N.W. Palace and
		is one of the distinctive features of the Layard collection, cf. CNI,
		pl. IV. There is no evidence that Loftus found any of these in the
		Burnt Palace, but the peculiar hairstyle of ND2104, the tresses represented
		by a series of oblong, more or less rectangular blocks is characteristic of
		the type. The fine specimen from Fort Shalmaneser, ND6316 (ch. XVII,
		p. 522) is also a variant from the N.W. Palace group.

- C. Leonard Woolley, Alalakh Tell Atchana, pl. lxxvib illustrates a delicately 215 25 modelled nude in ivory of the 'swimming maiden' type, but the head is missing, and there is no bowl attached; loc. cit. pl. lxxvig, however, shows an ivory toilet box with head of a female mortised to it.
- 216 26 Illustrated by Barnett in CNI, pls. xvi-xvii, cf. also the pyxis found in the well NN, of the N.W. Palace, ND2232, joined to ND2216, ch. IX, pp. 137-8.
- F. Thureau-Dangin, Huitième Campagne de Sargon, line 159. 217 27 CNI, p. 192 and pl. xxvii, S.12a, drawing on p. 67.
- 28 217
- CNI pl. lxv, S.149a, b. 20 217
- Illustrated in F. Thureau-Dangin, loc. cit., p. xii. 220 30
- See note 22 above for reference to an illustration of an ivory calf 220 31 couchant, discovered at Perachora, first half of the 7th century B.C.
- Ausgrabungen in Sendschirli V, 1943, taf. 64 and p. 129f. Rendering of 221 32 head, mane, and ears on the ivory lion from Zinjirli is closely comparable. It was found amid a cache of treasure in room J.2 of the palace of Kalamu. The most important treasures at this site were probably made during the period of its greatest prosperity, that is from the reign of Kalamu (whose inscribed golden pencase was found there, taf. 47), after about 830 B.C., and not later than the reign of Bar-rekub, a vassal of Assyria, c.732-722 B.C. These terminal dates fit very well for the comparable objects from Nimrud. Ivory lions in a similar style were found by Loftus, cf. CNI pl. xcviii. Note identical treatment of the mane of a stone lion in Tell Halaf III, taf. 120 where it may perhaps be dated to the last quarter of the 9th century B.C.
- Bes however had long been known in Egypt; cf. the dancing figures 222 33 painted at Deir el Medineh (New Kingdom) illustrated in AAAE, fig. 57, p. 166. His popularity in Babylonia was relatively late; faience and frit figures were common in the Neo-Babylonian and Achaemenian periods. See also ch. xvi, p. 435 and [183], [365].
- 222 For the ivory knob with inscription, see CNI, pl. lxxxvii, S.292t 34 and p. 161. Contract tablet, Barbara Parker in Iraq XVI, ND2307, pp. 30, 37, and ch. XI, p. 179. For the types of staves found in the Burnt Palace, see CNI, pls. lxxxii-lxxxv.
- References are given by R. Campbell-Thompson in Iraq IV, pp. 186-8. 223 35
- 223 36 See C. J. Gadd, The Stones of Assyria, appendix, p. 10. The cist grave lay at a level of about 17 feet below that of the throne-room floor, embedded in the great mud-brick platform and overlaid by it. Amongst the votive deposits in the grave Loftus found a remarkable flanged copper axe with ribbed socket, first published by P. S. P. Handcock, Mesopotamian Archaeology, pl. xxviii, which may be dated to the 18th century B.C. I found what was practically a duplicate of the type in a grave at Chagar Bazar, cf. Iraq IX, p. 187 and pl. xli. The two specimens are illustrated side by side in Iraq XI, pl. xxxix and have been discussed by K. R. Maxwell-Hyslop, loc. cit. p. 107. See also ch. v, note 1. The early date of this axe is further confirmed by the fact that an almost

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identical axe was also found at Kültepe, the ancient Assyrian colony of Kanesh in Cappadocia, in level 1(b), datable to not more than one generation after the reign of Shamshi-Adad I.

- 223 37 Quoted from Iraq XVIII, p. 24.
- 225 38 Iraq XVIII, p. 30 and note 2 where it is inferred that the imprint of a stone facing slab of a determined thickness may be attributed to that monarch.
- 226 39 References to the dated texts will be found in AAA XXII, pp. 63, 95.
- 226 40 Translated by O. R. Gurney in AAA XXII, p. 65 q.v.
- 226 41 See Conrad Preusser, Die Wohnhäuser in Assur, pp. 33, 58 and taf. 15, 28, 20. The long history of these figurines, with valuable references, has been given by Mrs E. Douglas Van Buren in her book, Foundation Figurines and Offerings and I am indebted to her for pointing out to me that the Nimrud figurines are not the earliest known, as stated by me in Iraq XVI, p. 85, last line. I discussed the later types in the same number of Iraq, p. 86f. It would appear that some of the Assur figurines were made as early as the end of the 2nd millennium B.C.; some bore inscriptions on their arms. On the other hand, all the figurines illustrated by Preusser, loc. cit. above, appear to belong to the 1st millennium B.C. The winged apkalle type were found in a house which contained a fragment of a prism inscribed with an account of Sargon's 8th campaign, loc. cit. p. 58, and two rather poorly executed bearded figurines were found in house no. 20, which contained tablets dated to after 648 B.C.
- 226 42 RCAE, letter 977, p. 181.
- 230 43 Compare the threshold decorated with rosettes in the residence of Sinahu-usur, Sargon's brother, at Khorsabad, Residence L, OIP XL, pl. 36.
- 230 44 See Iraq XVI, p. 94, published by D. J. Wiseman in Iraq XV, p. 148, ND3481.
- 230 45 See Barbara Parker in *Iraq* XVII, pl. xix, e.g. ND3212, phase H of the palace; other seals on the same plate were found in graves of the neo-Babylonian period, dug into the ruins of a palace known as PD5 at the south-east end of the outer town.
- 230 46 Xenophon, The Persian Expedition, translated by R. Warner, p. 118.
- 230 47 See the discussion on the glass on p. 209-10 and note 17 above. References to a series of pots, some of which were Hellenistic, ND3000-3008, are given in *Iraq* XVI, p. 83.
- 230 48 Iraq XX, p. 120; see also ch. xv, p. 311.

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- 231 I C. J. Gadd, *The Stones of Assyria*. End plan by W. K. Loftus shows what had been found up to 1854.
- 232 2 Nabu left Borsippa on the sixth day of the festival, cf. C. J. Gadd in Babylonian Myth and Ritual (ed. S. H. Hooke), p. 55, also F. Thureau-Dangin, Rituels Accadiens, p. 129; 'Le Rituel des Fêtes du Nouvel An à Babylon'—'Bêl, ton siège est Babel, Barsip est ta tiare (aguku)'.
- 232 3 Plan of Ezida at Borsippa and short account of it is given in A. Parrot, Archéologie Mésopotamienne, p. 2017. and fig. 46. The definitive publication is by R. Koldewey, Die Tempel von Babylon und Borsippa (1911). The Nabu Temple at Borsippa was founded by Nebuchadrezzar II,

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604–561 B.C., two centuries after that at Calah. Koldewey rightly observed that the complex was appropriately designed for the reception of pilgrims, as in the mosque and khans at the neighbouring Kufa today. The Borsippa building was no doubt a relatively late and spacious development from a series of much earlier buildings of the type at Babylon. The plan at Borsippa is more regular than that of Calah; the antechambers as well as the sanctuaries are organized on the *Breitraum* system. Postaments or podia, very deeply founded, occupied the entire width of the sanctuary. The 'niche-and-reed' façade decoration on the north and south walls, and in the courtyard, were also applied at Borsippa, and were obviously appropriate to Nabu.

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4 A ramp is more probable than steps since this would have been more convenient for pack animals and wheeled traffic. This was the form of approach used at Khorsabad, *OIP* XL, pl. 71. In the Hellenistic period, or perhaps shortly before it, a pair of stone steps was dislodged from one of the minor sanctuaries NTS1 and removed to the Fish Gate entrance, but Ezida was then only a shadow of its former self.

- 5 OIP XL, pl. 49, illustrates fragments of bronze door-plaques with repoussé design of a merman. Botta, Mon. de Ninive I, pl. 32, bas-relief from Khorsabad, depicts a swimming merman wearing horned crown and 'lily' at its top. Tell Halaf III, taf. 94, illustrates a merman in relief on one of the Kapara period orthostats. For mermen on seals, see Layard, N & B, p. 343, illustrating two from Quyunjik, and Iraq XXIV, p. 37, ND7067, impression on a tablet of the reign of Sin-shar-ishkun, found in se10, Fort Shalmaneser, Nimrud.
- 235 6 Iraq XIV, p. 30.
- 236 7 OIP XL, pl. 71, chamber no. 4 of the forecourt, discussed on p. 60.
- 236 8 OIP XL, pl. 48.
- 237 9 Iraq XII, p. 197, ND284, standard brick inscription of this king.
- 237 10 George Smith, Assyrian Discoveries, p. 74. The tablet number is K.3751, see also note 16 to p. 239 below.
- 237 11 OIP XL, pl. 71. In the Nabu Temple at Khorsabad rooms 5, 12 on opposite sides of the forecourt were tablet rooms: in the latter the famous Khorsabad King List was found. Room 15 off the central court was also a scribal chamber; it contained small horizontally arranged niches for the storage of tablets.
- 238 12 Height of the blocks was approximately 50 centimetres. The quality of this masonry resembles that of Esarhaddon's great defensive wall on the south side of Fort Shalmaneser, see ch. XVI, p. 466. It is therefore possible that credit for the reconstruction of NTI should be assigned to this monarch rather than to Sargon, for fragments of his prisms describing repairs to the sanctuaries of Nabu and Tashmetum were found elsewhere, see p. 230.
- 238 13 Resumé by R. D. Barnett in Iraq XXI, article entitled 'Further Russian Excavations in Armenia (1949–53)', with references to previous publications. For mention of river Arat in translation of fragmentary inscription of Tiglath-pileser III from Nimrud, see D. J. Wiseman in Iraq XVIII, p. 123, line 22: 'a district from the mountain passes as far as the river Arat.' For other fragments of this king's annals, see also Iraq XXVI, p. 118f.
- 238 14 Excavations, directed by Miss M. V. Seton Williams, were conducted at Tell Rifa'at, North Syria, in 1956, 1960, 1964; a preliminary report on this work was published in *Iraq* XXIII, p. 68f. See also *Iraq* XXVII, letter LXXIX.

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- 239 15 LAR I, para. 769: 'iron, elephant hide, ivory, purple (wool) . . . in Arpad I received.' Amongst the places and districts mentioned or indirectly indicated are Tyre, Que, Carchemish, Gurgum, Kummuh. See also Iraq XIII, p. 23.
  - 16 The following is the list of fragments of historical tablets of Tiglathpileser III, discovered by recent expeditions to Nimrud; provenances are also given: ND400 from the Governor's Palace; ND4301 from south-west corner of Nabu sanctuary; ND4305 in debris near 4301; ND5419 on pavement of NT12, the tablet room in Ezida; ND5422 from debris in the corridor NT6 behind the Tashmetum sanctuary. Most of these fragments have been published by D. J. Wiseman, see *Iraq* XIII, p. 21f., XVIII, p. 117*f*. The fragment K.3751 incorporated in the Quyunjik collection has Nimrud marked on it in George Smith's handwriting; its provenance was almost certainly room NT50, see discussion on p. 237 and note 10 above; it was published in *LAR* I, para 787*f*. A full account of the Tiglath-pileser III inscriptions discovered up to the year 1873 was given by Smith in *Assyrian Discoveries*, ch. XIV, p. 253*f*.

17 F. Thureau-Dangin, *Huitième Campagne de Sargon*, p. 67, line 428, mentions the name of the scribe. See also ch. XIII, p. 205 and note 6 for detailed discussion of this document.

18 The general arrangement is also partly comparable to the royal apartments in the principal palace at Arslan-Tash, cf. Arslan-Tash, end plan, rooms XXII-XXIV, bathroom, corridor, robing-room (?) or bedchamber (?) abutting on XXVIII, the throne-room with 'tram-lines'. On that site, it is true, the three subsidiary apartments were on an axis at right angles to the throneroom in accordance with the standard layout; the arrangement at Calah was due to exigencies of space but the functional organization of these apartments on the two sites was in fact similar. A. Parrot, Archéologie Mésopotamienne I, p. 467, adduces sound reasons for believing that this wing of the Arslan-Tash palace may have been built by Sargon. There is moreover a comparable layout in the 'Kultraum' at T. Halaf, see Tell Halaf II (1950), Abb. 173 and p. 357f., where the building consists of ante-room, oblong sanctuary and three service chambers to one side of it. The sanctuary walls were partly lined with brick benches, and three statues were found in situ, one on a basalt podium, the other two on a mud-brick podium confronted by an altar. The analogy with the throne-room at Calah is interesting since this room also was probably used for religious ceremonies, and it would be consistent with the evidence from Tell Halaf if the mud-brick podium had been used as a dais for statuary. Whilst it is likely that the Halaf Kultraum was founded not later than the 9th century, it may well have persisted in use until the 7th, since an 'Egyptian blue' paste scarab was found in it, loc. cit. p. 359, but the find-places of the associated seal cylinders were not adequately recorded, and we do not know which of those illustrated in Tell Halaf IV (1962), taf. 23-6, belonged to this building. The statuary found in the sanctuary was dated by A. Moortgat, op. cit. III, p. 30, to the latter half of the 9th century, but in spite of the arguments advanced by him, a case can be made for arguing an 8th century date, possibly the upper half, which would agree with the changes in style manifest in north Syria during this period: these Halaf statues, loc. cit. taf. 146-9, show a rapprochement with statuary of the time of Bar-rekub, c.730 B.C. at Sakcha Gözü, cf. Bossert, Altanatolien, pl. 225, no. 885, but their comparative simplicity may indicate a date about 50 years earlier; note especially the cut-away coat with fringe

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worn by the bearded man, illustrated in op. cit. III, taf. 149. Further discussion of the date of T. Halaf, see also ch. IX, note 22 to p. 134.

- 240 19 Tell Halaf II 1950, taf. 12, p. 45f. and Abb. 14.
- 240 20 Iraq XIX, p. 34f.
- 242 21 The definitive publication by D. J. Wiseman of the vassal-treaty first appeared in *Iraq* XX, and in the same year a bound edition was produced entitled *The Vassal-Treaties of Esarhaddon*. Short, illustrated account by the same author with full page photograph of the obverse of this tablet in *ILN* of 3 January, 1959, pp. 26–8, and figs. 1–6.
- 242 22 Note the review and comments by I. J. Gelb in *Bibliotheca Orientalis* XIX, 3/4 (1962), p. 159*f*. The author discusses the nuance of the word *adê* which Wiseman advisedly rendered 'vassal treaties' as an intelligible approximation to a term for which there is no exact equivalent in English. Gelb demonstrates that the *adê* texts represent 'sworn pacts of loyalty imposed by a sovereign party upon one or more subordinate parties'. For another rendering with slight differences of interpretation, see also J. Laessøe, *People of Ancient Asyria* (1963), p. 117*f*.
- 243 23 D. J. Wiseman, loc. cit. p. 6 and note for references.
- 243 24 CAH III, p. 87.
- 243 25 It is generally accepted that Sennacherib was murdered as the result of a plot instigated by one or more of his sons—the wicked brothers of Esarhaddon. R. Campbell-Thompson, *The Prisms of Esarhaddon and of Ashurbanipal*, Introduction, argued, however, that there was a case for suspecting Esarhaddon himself as the particide, and that the murder was committed in Babylon, not in Nineveh. This unorthodox view, however, as he himself admitted, can hardly be accounted as more than a conjecture.
- 246 26 An admirable account of these events and the political problems involved has been given by Professor Sidney Smith, *CAH* III, p. 120*f*.
- 246 27 ND5517 was catalogued and translated by Professor J. Laessøe who, it is hoped, will publish this and other fragments in *Iraq*. The account follows that of other prisms previously discovered, but the finding of this one in the Ezida library is of particular interest.
- 246 28 C. F. A. Schaeffer, Ugaritica III, pl. vi.
- 247 29 ANET, pp. 353-4.
- 249 30 List of rulers and districts in D. J. Wiseman, loc. cit. p. 2, discussion of the seal impressions, pp. 14-22.
- A. Godard, Le Trésor de Zimiyè (1956), fig. 5, for comparison. This is a 250 31 drawing of the figures engraved on the bronze tub, fig. 4, p. 13, perhaps executed on the spot and possibly representing typical inhabitants of Mannaean territory. But it must be admitted that men so attired may be identified with mountaineers from the frontiers of what are now called Syria, Asia Minor and Iran. This is probably all that is warranted from an examination of the tributaries on 9th century reliefs of Assur-nasir-pal and Shalmaneser III. The attendants accompanying Jehu of Bit Humri on the Black Obelisk are also similarly dressed. Probably, therefore, this was a garment worn by many different peoples in ancient western Asia, more especially in those parts of it which were subject, at some season of the year, to a cold climate. Note also a similar garment worn by tributaries on a relief of Tiglath-pileser III, see Barnett and Falkner, The Sculptures of Tiglath-Pileser III (745-727 B.C.), pl. lxx. It has been suggested that the city depicted on this relief is Astartu, in Gilead; but this identification is by no means certain.

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- 250 32 Assur in winged disc, carrying bow, see Layard, Mons. of Nineveh, pl. 21, on a relief of Assur-nasir-pal from the throne-room of the N.W. Palace.
- 250 33 Basalt obelisk of Assur-nasir-pal, see ch. XI, note 37 to p. 182, for references. The fragment ND3219 illustrated in ch. XI, [118] is probably a part of the B.M. obelisk, 118800. Similar figures on the Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III, see Frankfort, AAAO, pl. 93, and Layard, Mons. of Nineveh, pls. 54-6. Variations of the long 'furry' coat however continue to appear on later monuments, e.g. of Tiglath-pileser III and Sargon, cf. ASBM, pls. xxi, xxx. On the latter plate one of Sargon's bowmen wears a short tunic with a castellated design such as appears on some of our ivory panels, but with more gradations and without hachuring. Closer parallel for this at Til Barsip on a painted mural depicting a Bedu woman; the design occurs on the hem of her robe: Til Barsib, pl. li.
- 251 34 I am indebted to Sayid Tariq el Madhlum for this valuable observation concerning the swords worn by the courtiers on the Assyrian monuments. A doctoral thesis which he has written for the University of London is an important contribution to the study of Assyrian art.
- 255 35 Sir Leonard Woolley, Alalakh (1955), pl. lxxvie.
- 256 36 P. Naster, 'Le Suivant du Char Royal sur les doubles Statères de Sidon', Extrait de la Revue belge de Numismatique, tome CIII (1957), pp. 11, 20.
- 256 37 e.g. ND5404–14, 5416 and the series 5517–49, 5470, 5471; and see note 27 to p. 246 above. Recent list of Ashurbanipal inscriptions in *Iraq* XXVI, p. 123.
- 256 38 Published in detail by Barbara Parker in *Iraq* XIX, p. 127 and 135–6. The document is also valuable historically as it confirms the contemporaneity of the *limmu* Bel-iqbi with Sin-shar-ishkun already proposed by M. Falkner in *AfO* XVII, p. 119.
- 257 39 See also ch. XVI, for subsequent evidence from Fort Shalmaneser, suggesting that Calah was sacked twice, in 614 and in 612 B.C.
- 257 40 On two business documents, ND3424, 3460, dated by *limmu* to 665 and 632 B.C. The name is Nabu-shallim-ahe. See *Iraq* XV, p. 157, index under that name and pp. 140, 145 for a description of the tablets, both of which were found in a merchant's house. The cylinder seal, ND5262, was published by Barbara Parker in *Iraq* XXIV, p. 28.
- 260 41 Drawing by Boutcher illustrated in C. J. Gadd, *The Stones of Assyria*, pl. 7, opp. p. 30, and description on p. 229. The probable distribution of the six principal statues found in Ezida was well demonstrated by David Oates in Iraq XIX, p. 29; it is clear that Rassam's description was confused and misleading, no doubt because he failed to draw any plan of the building.
- 260 42 OIP XL, pls. 11, 12, for the masonry and 26 for the columns. See also note 12 to p. 238 above; comparable masonry was later discovered in Esarhaddon's wall on the south side of Fort Shalmaneser.
- 260 43 Illustrated in ASBM, pl. iii, and described in Gadd, loc. cit. p. 150.
- 260 44 LAR I, para. 745.
- 261 45 Quoted in part from Twenty-five Years of Mesopotamian Discovery, p. 71f.
- 261 46 See ch. VIII, note 3 to p. 108.
- 261 47 Drawing by Boutcher illustrated in C. J. Gadd, loc. cit., pl. 8, no. 1.
- 261 48 Nabu was often so described, e.g. on a tablet ND5463 from NT13. He is referred to as 'he who holds the tablets of destiny' in an inscription on the stone lions at Til Barsip, loc. cit. p. 141f. and p. 149, where he is also

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saniq-mithurti, translated by Thureau-Dangin as 'qui maintient l'equilibre', and see also E. Burrows in  $\mathcal{JRAS}$  Centenary Supplement, October 1924, p. 37, for the latter expression, and note 54 below. The inscription on the Barsip lions was executed by Samsi-ilu, a rebel *turtân*, in the time of Shalmaneser IV, c.770 B.C., loc. cit. p. 142.

49 Arslan-Tash, pl. i and p. 66, one of several probably set up by Tiglathpileser III in the doorways of the temple which he erected to Ishtar in 736 B.C.; its height, 1.73 metres, was probably about the same as that of the statue discovered by our expedition at Nimrud which measured only 1.20 metres, because the head and neck were missing.

- 264 51 Quoted from the account by D. Oates and J. H. Reid in *Iraq* XVIII, p. 36.
- 265 52 Identification of NT5 as the Tashmetum sanctuary was indicated by the discovery of the end of a barrel cylinder, ND4315, most probably of Esarhaddon, mentioning work on a shrine, Nabu and Tashmetum. Another inscribed fragment, ND4312, found elsewhere in Ezida, also mentioned repairs and a temple of Tashmetum. The latter fragment appears to have been written in the reign of Sin-shar-ishkun and is proof that the temple was still being carefully conserved during the reign of the last king of Assyria; see D. J. Wiseman in *Iraq* XXVI, part II.
- 265 53 The same technique was employed in the Sin-Shamash temple of Assurnasir-pal at Assur. A single course of stone blocks was first laid as a Randverbrämung and, as at Nimrud, smaller stone chips were set within this framework upon which the mud-brick superstructure was built, see WVDOG 67, A. Haller, W. Andrae, Die Heiligtümer des Gottes Assur und der Sin-Shamash Tempel in Assur, p. 89.
  - 54 Kindly communicated to me by C. J. Gadd from a lecture delivered by him to the British School of Archaeology in Iraq in 1954. See also note 48 above, and ch. x, p. 156. Foundation boxes at Khorsabad, see *OIP* XXXVIII, p. 112, fig. 117, also stone jar for ritual purposes sunk into Central Hall of Sin Temple, p. 118, figs. 122, 123. Boxes at T. Halaf, see also note 55 below.
    - 55 Tell Halaf II (1950), R. Naumann, pp. 349–57, 403, proposes a date in the 7th century B.C. for this building on account of its obvious relationship with Sargon's temple at Khorsabad and the later Nabu Temple at Assur. At T. Halaf some of the walls were decorated with red and yellow stripes. Similarly there were red stripes on the throne-room walls of the Burnt Palace (see ch. XIII, p. 207) and in the Palace AB at Calah, both of which were thus redecorated in the 7th century B.C. This form of ornament therefore appears to be a useful chronological criterion; but I know of no evidence to prove that the Halaf temple could not have been erected originally in the 8th century B.C., even by Adad-nirari III himself. Dimensions of the Halaf temple are rather smaller than the corresponding one at Calah. The picture of the principal sanctuary with its boxes in the stone-paved floor, taf. 66, is strikingly similar to that of Nabu at Calah. Another similar feature is the engaged half columns in the walls of room B, C—taf. 69.
- 266 5
- 56 W. Andrae, *Das Wiedererstandene Assur*, pp. 159–63 and plan on Abb. 69 and taf. 75. See note 52 above for reference to the same king's repairs to the shrine of Tashmetum in Calah.

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<sup>261 50</sup> OIP XL, pl. 47.

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- 267 57 For the Nabu Temple at Khorsabad see *OIP* XL, pls. 25, 26 and plan on pl. 71.
- 267 58 See G. R. Driver and J. C. Miles, *The Babylonian Laws* II, p. 115, note 8.
- 267 59 D. J. Wiseman in Iraq XII, p. 187, ND203.
- 269 60 RCAE, letter 368. We also have the records of a merchant of Calah who was supplying birds, probably for the temple, see ch. XII, p. 188.
- 269 61 Iraq XVI, p. 153f. has a brief account of this partially dug palace.
- 269 62 See the discussion above, pp. 249-55, on the date of the ivories found in the throne-room and notes 33, 34 to pp. 250-1.
- 269 63 See C. J. Gadd, The Stones of Assyria, pl. 22 and p. 176.
- 271 64 Botta, Mon. de Ninive I, pl. 33; OIP XL, pl. 90, for parallels in Sargon's reign. The winged bull (apart from the lamassu) is a rare motif and is depicted as early as the reign of Assur-nasir-pal, in miniature, see Layard, Mons. of Nineveh, pl. 8, 43, 47 but Sargon's bulls are much closer in style. Earlier example of a winged bull from Assur, in ivory, possibly Middle Assyrian period, WVDOG 66, taf. 25.
- 271 65 ND4315, assigned to this king on account of the phraseology which resembles that of other Esarhaddon inscriptions. See also note 52 above. For recent list of cylinder fragments recording repairs to Nabu and Tashmetum sanctuaries, see D. J. Wiseman in *Iraq* XXVI, pp. 122–3.
- 274 66 C. J. Gadd, Stones of Assyria, p. 149.
- 274 67 P. Hulin, Iraq XXI, pp. 42-53.
- 275 68 Other fragments of similar texts were also found in Ezida, ND5402, part of a black limestone (?) hemerology or menology began with events in the 9th month Kislimu and ended with Arahsamna; it was found in a dump of rubbish deposited over NT7 out of place. ND5491, four fragments of hemerologies, came from NT12, also 5591–2.
- 275 69 J. V. Kinnier Wilson, Iraq XVIII, p. 130f.; XIX, p. 40f.
- 275 70 E. E. Knudsen, Iraq XXI, pp. 54-63.
- 275 71 Iraq XIX, pp. 52-3, line 22.
- 276 72 Iraq XVIII, p. 136.
- 276 73 ND4311 was found in the throne-room, south side, in displaced debris which included broken bricks: ND4320 in a pit sunk into the Nabu Temple.
- 277 74 Barbara Parker in Iraq XIX, p. 125f.
- 279 75 Fine burnt ivory head comparable with this specimen: see W. Andrae, Ausgrahungen in Sendschirli V (1943), taf. 70a, b, and p. 130f. It was found in the debris of the burnt stratum, room J.2 of the North Palace, plan in op. cit. IV, taf. L. A peculiarity of the Zinjirli head is that it was originally surmounted by two small figures back to back; the Nimrud specimen bore the stump of a column on top. The building to which the Zinjirli ivory belonged was burnt some time in or after 676 B.C. as may be deduced from the fact that a tablet, probably dated to that year, was found in the same ash deposit. See also ch. XIII, note 32 to p. 221.
- 282 76 For example, on reliefs of Sennacherib. C. J. Gadd, Stones of Assyria, pl. 13; ASBM, pls. xxxviii, lxiii, lxiv.
- 282 77 E. F. Weidner, Die Reliefs der Assyrischen Könige, p. 97, Abb. 79.
- 283 78 Quoted from Iraq XVIII, p. 37.
- 283 79 See ch. v, p. 78.
- 285 80 W. Andrae, *Das Wiedererstandene Assur*, p. 165. P. Jensen in *MDOG* 60 discusses inscribed sherds from Assur. See also Debevoise,

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*History of Parthia*, pp. 22 and 265. Comment on rare mention of Assur at Hatra, see Cacquot, *Syria* XXIX, pp. 112, 118 and XXX, p. 239, 243, where he interprets one (divine) name as 'Assur-Bel'.

### Chapter XV

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- I The first account of the excavations at this site is by Layard,  $N \notin R$ I, pp. 352-3 and II pp. 37-40, with plan on p. 39. In loc. cit. p. 38 Layard says 'There were no traces of inscriptions, nor were there any remains of fragments by which the comparative age of the building could be determined', but from  $N \notin B$ , p. 656 it would seem that he found inscribed bricks of Assur-etil-ilani there, see note 9 below. Loftus's contribution to the work would appear to be the excavation of a chamber on the north side of our AB6. See C. J. Gadd, *The Stones of Assyria*, appendix with 'Plan of the Mound of Nimrood Assyria' by W. K. Loftus, F.G.s.
- 2 See C. J. Gadd, *The Stones of Assyria*, appendix 2, p. 3 for plan of the North Palace at Quyunjik drawn by W. Boutcher, 1856, particularly rooms G, F, H, I.
- 292 3 George Smith, Assyrian Discoveries, p. 76, correctly identified these remains as a palace. Contrary opinion by R. D. Barnett CNI, p. 25, but the fact that Smith, loc. cit. p. 77 noted that 'the entrances [were] ornamented by clusters of square pilasters and recesses in the rooms...' does not necessarily imply that the building was a temple, for similar features appear in the palace AB at Nimrud, in a late palace west of Fort Shalmaneser in the outer town, and in the palaces at Khorsabad.
- 292 4 Illustrated in Iraq XX, pl. xxxvi, no. 4.
- 293 5 George Smith, illustrated in loc. cit. p. 78.
- 293 6 George Smith, loc. cit. p. 77 and photograph in H. Rassam, Asshur and the Land of Nimrod, opposite p. 226. This construction however was not re-excavated by us and we cannot therefore deny the plausibility of Rassam's conjecture.
- 293 7 Quoted from George Smith, loc. cit. p. 78.
- 294 8 Quoted from David Oates, Iraq XX, p. 110.
- 9 Layard,  $N \in B$ , plan no. 3, opposite p. 653, top right hand corner with caption 'Palace of Grandson of Essarhaddon' and the statement on p. 656 para. 3 would seem to imply that he found bricks of Assur-etil-ilani in this building. See also note 1 to p. 290 above.
- 295 10 Illustrated in Layard, *The Monuments of Nineveh*, pl. 95, no. 7 and mentioned by him in N & R II, p. 39. The comparable fragment of an oliphant (?) ND6051, found by us was 8.3 cm. in length.
- 295 11 Described and illustrated by David Stronach in *Iraq* XX, pl. xxxii, no. 1 and pl. xxxiii, no. 5.
- 296 12 Sialk VIB. Varying dates have been assigned to this important Iranian cemetery from as early as 1200 to as late as 900 B.C. by C. F. Schaeffer and R. Ghirshman respectively, *Stratigraphie comparée*, p. 470-7 and R. Ghirshman *Fouilles de Sialk II*. But the seal engraved with riders (pl. xxx, 5), use of glass, some of the metal and stone toggles from horses' harness (pl. lv, \$796c) are closely related to Assyrian material datable at Nimrud to the 9th-8th century B.C. These parallels provide grounds for advocating a lower date than any hitherto proposed for at least a part of the Sialk cemetery.

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- 296 13 A. Parrot, Syria XXIX, no. 3, 1952, p. 198, fig. 9, is closely comparable.
  296 14 The various types of Assyrian grave have been copiously illustrated and described in WVDOG 65. A. Haller, Die Gräber und Grüffe von Assur (Berlin, 1954) and correspond closely with those discovered in various places (mostly in connection with the private houses TW53) at Nimrud. Detailed catalogue of the Hellenistic graves in the palace AB and in the trenches 0, P, published by David and Joan Oates in Iraq XX, 153f. with illustrations, pls. xxix, xxx.
  298 15 Achaemenian type comparable with specimens from Nimrud in DPM
- 298 15 Achaemenian type comparable with specimens from Nimrud in DPM XXXVI, pl. xxv, no. 1, by R. Ghirshman, Village Perse-Achémenide and similar to the bowl illustrated on our [277].
   299 16 e.g. ND6026, Babylonian style seal pendants from Fzida: illustrations and
  - 16 e.g. ND6026, Babylonian style seal pendants from Ezida; illustrations and catalogue by Barbara Parker in *Iraq* XVII, pl. xix especially nos. 1, 7, 8. The pot types illustrated on this page are taken from *Iraq* XX, pl. xxviii, nos. 17–24, see catalogue ad hoc for details; clays mostly buff or greenish buff.
- 301 17 Three types of Hellenistic arrow-heads are illustrated by David Stronach in *Iraq* XX, pl. xxxiii, nos. 8–10. They are simpler in form than the elaborate Assyrian arrows, larger and with longer tangs, serviceable, perhaps heavier weapons which reflect a change in this type of armament.
- 301 18 The Hellenistic coins have been illustrated and admirably published in an article by G. K. Jenkins of the Department of Coins, British Museum, in Iraq XX, pp. 158–68 and pl. xxxi.
- 302 19 The point was well taken by G. K. Jenkins loc. cit. p. 167.
  - 20 See ch. XII, p. 197, for estimates of accumulation in the Assyrian private houses during an approximately similar period of time. In the same zone a different rate of accumulation was calculated for the period 1280-700 B.C.
  - The figures quoted from the different sets of observations made at 21 Nimrud cannot of course be applied to the total accumulations of ancient tells or mounds, the rise of which is due to a complex series of factors. For example, Nineveh, at its topmost point just under 100 feet, say a minimum of 7,000 years of occupation (an estimate in time probably considerably low) would yield an average rise of less than 1 foot 6 inches per century, but within that span of time there were periods at which levels remained altogether static; demolitions in the course of which ground level was lowered; building of platforms which involved rapid rises during a very short period; intervals of abandonment with very low rate of accumulation; finally, periods of domestic occupation where results were probably comparable at Nimrud. Such figures, therefore, will not yield criteria of scientific value unless derived from well-defined, strictly comparable types of accumulated debris. An interesting attempt to evaluate the chronology of successive temples built in the course of the 3rd millennium B.C. at Khafajah on the Diyala was made by P. Delougaz in OIP LVIII, pp. 117-35.
- 304 22 Quoted from Iraq XX, p. 119.
- 304 23 Illustrated in Iraq XX, pl. xx.
- 305 24 David and Joan Oates in *Iraq* XX, pp. 114–57. The Hellenistic settlement, illustrations loc. cit. pls. xv-xxx.
- 306 25 Unguentarium at T. Arbit, see Iraq IV, fig. 16 no. 11 and p. 140, to be dated probably in the 3rd century B.C. rather than in the 4th as there stated by me. This type of fusiform vessel also occurred in the Hellenistic levels of T. Fakhariyah (near Ras el 'Ain) on the headwaters of the Habur, cf. OIP LXXIX, Soundings at Tell Fakhariyah, pl. 41, no. 72.

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306 26 Woolley and Mallowan, Ur Excavations IX, The Neo-Babylonian and Persian Periods, pl. 35, U15, 195, U1635, U408.

- 310 27 These two quotations are from D. and J. Oates, *Iraq* XX, pp. 125, 130. The type illustrated on this page is ND4011, cream glaze, yellow, soft paste, from the south-east corner of Ezida, in late debris, not is precisely stratified and cannot be assigned with certainty either to the Achaemenian or to the Hellenistic period. Oates noted a similar neo-Babylonian specimen at Nippur.
  - 28 The date of the copper bath and its contents discovered by Woollev at Ur is a difficult problem which has recently been discussed by R. D. Barnett in Iraq XVIII, p. 114 f. and note 2 on p. 115. In A7 VI, p. 379, Woolley originally dated this bath coffin (and a second found adjacent to it) to the period of Assyrian occupation at Ur c.700-650 B.C., and I am inclined to think that this date is not far wrong because of the similarity to one discovered at Zinjirli, Ausgrabungen V taf. 57, for which any date subsequent to the reign of Esarhaddon seems unlikely. Incidentally the design of the ibex on that coffin closely matches that on a copper strip from Ziwiye as noted by Adrian Oswald (see Barnett loc. cit. p. 116). The character of these ibex designs is Assyrian, ultimately derived from sculptured reliefs of Assur-nasir-pal II, see Layard, Monuments of Nineveh, pl. 30. It is in my opinion probable that the votive offerings in the Ur bath-graves were deposited later, i.e. the copper containers were antiquities re-used. This would agree with Woolley's revised opinion expressed in UE IX, quoted by Barnett loc. cit. p. 115, that the coffins should be assigned to the Persian period, but Barnett advocated a neo-Babylonian date for other reasons. However that may be, the glazed vessels and the fibulae found therein may, I believe, be assigned to some period in the latter half of the 6th century B.C., together with other specimens of glazed bottles with small perforated handles found elsewhere at Ur, for which see UE IX, pl. 57.
- 310 29 Sherds from level 1 are illustrated in *Iraq* XX, pl. xxi, nos. 13, 15 and pot types in pl. xxiii nos. 32-4, pl. xxiv nos. 14-17.
- 310 30 Iraq IX, p. 49.
- 311 31 See R. J. Forbes, *Studies in Ancient Technology*, vol. III, chapter on wine, pp. 106*f*. and for the decline in the Greek wine trade following on Italian competition, p. 115. A. M. Bon, loc. cit. below, p. 43, quotes the references by Pliny the Elder to the displacement in Italy of Thasian by Falernian wine.
- 311 32 The classic work on Thasian amphorae is by Anne-Marie Bon et Antoine Bon, Les Timbres Amphoriques de Thasos, 1957, catalogue in collaboration with Virginia Grace whose valuable studies on Greek amphorae in Hesperia and the AJA are acknowledged therein. References to Greek literary sources are given by A. M. and A. Bon in their authoritative and exhaustive study. On p. 537 there is a list of the Oriental sites at which Thasian stamps have been found. To this we may add Babylon, WVDOG 62, F. Wetzel, E. Schmidt, A. Mallwitz, Das Babylon der Spätzeit, p. 58, no. 99; some Rhodian stamps were also found. Stamps at Samaria, see Samaria-Sebaste III, p. 385.
- 311 33 Quoted from Xenophon, *Anabasis* IV, p. 138 (Penguin Books, translation by Rex Warner).
- 311 34 Anabasis loc. cit. p. 147.
- 312 35 Anabasis loc. cit. pp. 153-4.

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- 312 36 Anabasis, loc. cit. p. 154.
  - 37 A. M. Bon, loc. cit. p. 36, refers also to the commodities other than wine produced by the peoples of Thasos; amongst them  $\theta a \sigma (av \ a \lambda \mu \eta v)$ , salt pickles, were much in demand, as is recorded in Athenaeus, *Banquet of the Sophists* VII, p. 329*f*. It is of course likely that such articles were also exported in amphorae, but A. M. Bon rightly concludes in view of the abundant textual evidence that the majority of the Thasian amphorae were used for the export of wine from the island. The discovery at Nimrud of the eponymously stamped Rhodian jar handle, and at Babylon of a stamped handle with one of the standard ethnic inscriptions:  $\Theta A \Sigma I \Omega N$

 $\overline{AI\Sigma XPIQN}$  (reference in note 32 above) is further confirmation that these particular contributions  $f_{12}$  ( $\overline{AID}$ )  $\overline{AID}$ 

particular containers were for wine. For discussion of difficulties in the conservation of wine and methods used by the Greeks to overcome them see R. J. Forbes loc. cit. note 30, p. 112.

- 312 38 Quoted from André L. Simon, A Concise Encyclopaedia of Gastronomy,
   p. 714 (Collins, 1952). I owe this reference to Anthony A. Hicks whose informed interest in all matters concerning wine has been most helpful to me.
- 312 39 See Hetty Goldman, Tarsus I, p. 168, 'the greatest number [of wine jar handles] from Rhodes, a few from Cnidos and possibly a few from Thasos'. Miss Joan Du Plat Taylor has kindly informed me about the discovery of one handle at Rifa'at, possibly Rhodian. See also M. Dunand, Fouilles de Byblos I, pp. 17, 22, 38; II, p. 55-9; H. Ingholt, Sept Campagnes de Fouilles à Hama p. 120, where the Rhodian handles found there are compared with specimens from Gezer and Samaria.
- 312 40 A comparative table of contents is given in A. M. Bon, loc. cit. after p. 44.
- 312 41 Sir Leonard Woolley, Carchemish III, p. 235, note 4, for references to Hellenistic wares discovered on that site including 'wares with red paint "trickle" ornament'. References to Sultantepe and T. Halaf are given by D. and J. Oates in Iraq XX, p. 126, note 1, and in their catalogue, passim.
- 313 42 Some of these problems were discussed by me in *Iraq* VIII, 'Excavations in the Balih valley, 1938', p. 111f. and particularly on pp. 121f. with reference to Nicephorium on p. 122. The monumental work by R. Dussaud, *Topographie historique de la Syrie antique et médiévale*, is still a mine of historical and geographical information on this subject. The survey conducted by A. Poidebard entitled *La Trace de Rome dans le désert de Syrie*, still invaluable as a geographical site list, needs considerable revision in the light of more recent ground investigations by David Oates in northern Iraq, see his *Studies in the Ancient History of Northern Iraq*, published by the British Academy.
- 313 43 Discussion of Abu Sheetha, on the south bank of the Upper Zab, 10 kilometres north-east of Quwair, see *Iraq* XX, p. 134 with reference to potter's mark XP and the use of Greek in the municipality of Nineveh.
  - 44 After 612 B.C., Assyria had been knocked out and no attempt was made to resuscitate the homeland: indeed the utter devastation of its former capital cities was deliberately designed to prevent it from ever again dominating Near Eastern affairs. Subsequent campaigns described in the Babylonian Chronicle provide clear evidence that Nabopolassar, Nebuchadrezzar and their successors conducted their marches up the Euphrates into Syria, for their major objective was to eliminate Egyptian

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influence there: the decisive battle in this episode was the defeat of Pharaoh Necho at Carchemish; a victorious campaign by Neriglissar against Cilicia, in 557 B.C. is a further indication that following on the capture of Jerusalem in 597 B.C., north Syria and its neighbouring territories, not Assyria, were the targets of Babylonian imperialism. Indeed it is possible, as Mr Wiseman has suggested, Chronicles of the Chaldaean Kings p. 39, that Nebuchadrezzar's operations in the former vassal territories of north Syria were perhaps 'arranged, by agreement, to guard the southern flank of the Median advance', which resulted in the victory of Cyrus the Mede over Alyattes, king of Lydia and, as a result of Babylonian mediation, the fixing of the boundary between Media and Lydia on the river Halys. By that time Urartu was a sphere of Median penetration and influence and it seems likely that in so far as any interest was sustained in the ruined cities of Assvria proper it must have been through Median or Iranian rather than Babylonian authority. Although there are still lengthy gaps in the Babylonian Chronicle between 594 and 556 B.C., cf. BASOR no. 143, October 1936, it seems that the restoration of the old temple of the Moon God by Nabonidus in Harran in 553 B.C. may represent a Babylonian attempt to impinge once more on territory which had been directly associated with the Assyrian royal house when their last stand was made in 610 B.C. after Nineveh had been sacked. But that effort was due to the fact that the mother of Nabonidus had long fostered the cult of Sin in Harran, and indeed had probably been born there. The attempt by Nabonidus to re-establish the cult of the Moon in eclipse, a theological trend repugnant to the more orthodox Babylonians echoed in the book of Daniel, appears to have provided Cyrus with propaganda to palliate his entry into Babylonia. This effort indeed resulted in the final elimination of any authority which the Babylonians may have exercised in a part of Assyria proper. For the Harran inscriptions of Nabonidus see C. J. Gadd, AS VIII, 1958, p. 35f.

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Quoted from Iraq XX, p. 167.







