



A REMARKABLE CACHE OF ALABASTER AND OTHER OBJECTS
IN SITU AT TEPE HISSAR, PERSIA

THE UNIVERSITY MUSEUM BULLETIN

WITH the death of John Frederick Lewis the University Museum suffers a loss that is shared by many other of Philadelphia's public institutions. As a member of the Board of Managers since 1928, Mr. Lewis brought to the administration of the Museum his wisdom in developing and carrying forward its policies and his generosity in assisting to increase its collections. There is scarcely a section of the Museum that does not include some group of objects added by him over a considerable period of years, chief among them being a collection of papyri which are numbered among the most important documents in the Egyptian Section.

The Board of Managers are sensible of a loss in their number that it will not be possible to replace.

The Persian Expedition

THE final report of the Persian Expedition has just been received as this issue of the *Bulletin* goes to press. While it is premature to judge accurately the full extent of Dr. Schmidt's results, it can safely be said that few expeditions have in recent years operated with so satisfactory a measure of success, both as to rare objects uncovered and important archaeological data added to our knowledge of prehistory. The final campaign at Tepe Hissar was started on May 22nd and active excavations terminated November 2nd, after five months of intensive work.

The earlier finds of the past season were described in the last issue of the *Bulletin*, particularly the two 'hoards' of alabaster vessels and ornaments in gold, silver, and semi-precious stones.

The present report contains an enlarged description of the discovery of the burnt building which also yielded richly:

'The nucleus of the burned complex was a single building with four large rooms, two small chambers and a watchtower protecting the only entrance. A violent conflagration had baked the sun-dried brick walls to a considerable depth, thus accurately preserving the contours and architectural details. In the storeroom, rows of large and small storage vessels had been smashed by the falling roof. A copper mattock and two fine copper stamp seals lay in the floor refuse.

'The main living-room was virtually filled with archaeological treasures. Many hundreds of beads and other ornaments of chalcidony and lapis-lazuli, gold and silver were scattered over the floor. There lay a gold cup, silver and copper vessels, long copper daggers, one with a grip of silver and cord forming an attractive checker-board pattern.

'The plan of the building and the position of the finds tell the story of the catastrophe. Two stairways led from the main room to the roof. Four daggers and the charred remains of human skeletons lay at the foot of the southern stairs. The attackers had not entered through the gate. They had climbed on the roof and probably thrown firebrands into a room, adjoining the main room and containing wheat, while they held the hatchway against the, presumably desperate, attacks of the occupants below. Some of the latter may have been killed by the weapons of the assailants, but smoke and fire killed apparently most of the defenders. Six or seven distorted skeletons lay on a small enclosure between the large kitchen and the main room, two were in the storeroom near the door, others were scattered about on the floor of the main room and the "wheat room" . . .

'The victorious enemy were cheated of their loot. The fire which destroyed the unfortunate defenders, repelled the assailants. The flat mud covered roof, the burning wooden beams and poles

of which collapsed, burned the victims and their belongings under the debris. About 3500 to 4000 years had passed when we found the evidences of their tragic end . . .

'On the Main Mound we uncovered an extremely interesting hoard of presumably religious character. About a dozen small copper figurines of men, a little copper duck, small discs and small angular bowls of the same material [Plate II] were scattered about in or mainly under the floor refuse of the last Hissar III deposit. Piles of copper braziers and conical caps of various sizes were associated with the statuettes.'

In the grave of a young woman, also of the Hissar III period, were discovered the frail silver vessels illustrated in Plate III. Dr. Schmidt says of these: 'The little cup to the right is encircled with an incised floral pattern. The second, problematical receptacle is hour-glass shaped: a narrow aperture opens through the top, while the conical lid hangs at the side, attached to the body through oxidation, as are various beads. There are no traces of soot to suggest use as a lamp.'

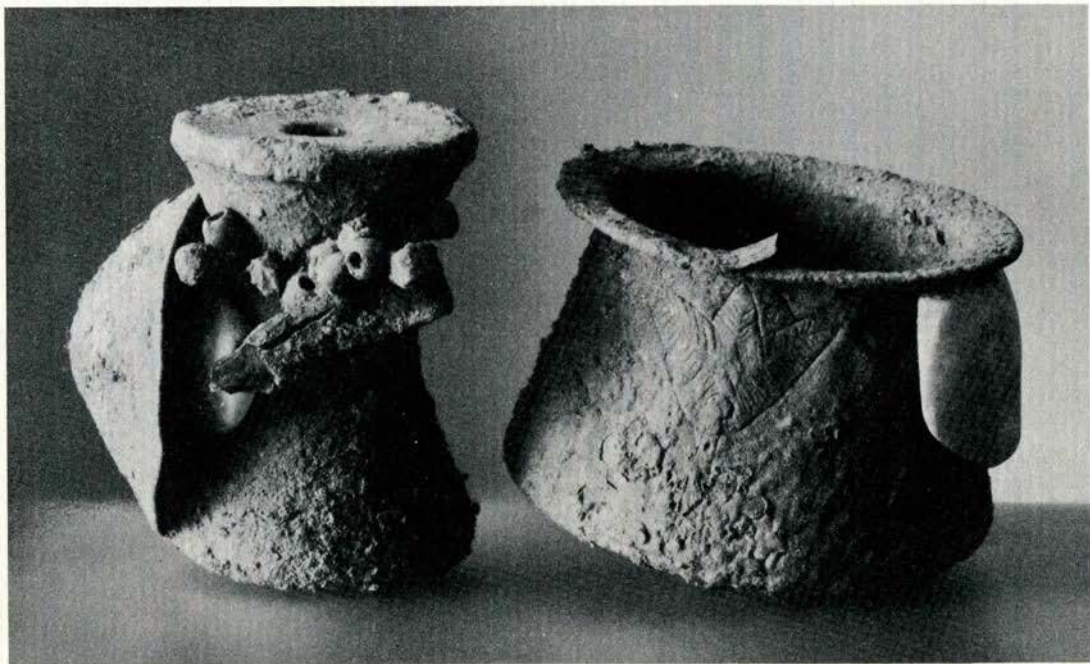
The report ends with the following paragraphs:

'Season 1932 closed on November 3rd, but for many more days burial and architecture required our attention. The field railroad will work almost to the end of our stay in Damghan in order to clear the entire mound area from the remaining dump dirt. In doing so, we are not thinking of another season to come for ourselves. Our task at Tepe Hissar is completed. We follow an obligation that has become an unwritten archaeological law, namely to leave the remainder of a site in such a condition that at any future time another excavator can easily continue where one has stopped . . .

'We consider our work at Tepe Hissar completed because the wealth of information and objects recovered during the two long seasons give us enough perspective to restore, to an extent limited only by the character of archaeological material, the manner of



A RELIGIOUS HOARD OF COPPER OBJECTS FROM TEPE HISSAR, PERSIA



SILVER VESSELS FROM THE GRAVE OF A YOUNG WOMAN, TEPE HISSAR, PERSIA

life and the achievements of the ancient settlers during the successive culture stages.'

It is sincerely hoped that means will be found to publish at an early date Dr. Schmidt's full reports on the work at Tepe Hissar.

*Excavations at
Tepe Gawra*

THE Joint Expedition of the University Museum and the American Schools of Oriental Research has resumed work at Tepe Gawra and Tell Billa, Iraq, with Mr. Charles Bache as field director. The reports so far received cover only the first month of work, but the results already augur well for a successful season. At Tepe Gawra, the remaining walls of Stratum VIII, which proved so interesting last year, have been removed and Stratum IX has been entered upon; an intermediate layer seems also to have been present, at least in part of the site.

In Stratum IX has been found a building, almost the duplicate of the so-called Priests' Residence of early VIII and with the same crenelated niches, similar to the one pictured in Plate XI of the *Bulletin* for March 1932. An interesting feature of the lower building is that it faces in exactly the opposite direction.

Among the outstanding objects found recently at Tepe Gawra are an ivory comb and hair-pin; the latter is decorated in the central portion with lapis-lazuli and green stone lozenges, and is further ornamented by four bands of gold. Both comb and hair-pin were found in a mud-brick grave which had originally been covered with rushes, the mould of the oxidized rushes being found over the body and over the top of the walls.

*Excavations at
Tell Billa*

WITH only a small force at Tell Billa, progress has been slow, but two finds are of no little importance. One is a crescent earring of gold similar to those found last year and now on display at the Museum. The other is a group of four bronze