



Lapis and Gold Bull's Head decorating a Harp found in one
of the Royal Tombs at Ur

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OBJECTS FROM UR

THE Museum's share of objects found during the final season of excavations at Ur are now being sorted and catalogued. While the 1934 finds do not include any such magnificent objects as the bull's head of lapis and gold which is the subject of our frontispiece this month, they do include a number of attractive smaller pieces, and particularly do they add no small contribution to the sum total of knowledge which has been gathered through the years at this notable site. Miss Dorothy Cross, of the Babylonian Section, gives in the following article brief mention of some interesting finds of the Ur Expedition's last season.

THE activities of the Joint Expedition to Ur during its twelfth and last season have been reported in earlier numbers of the *Bulletin*. Now that a number of the finds are at hand, it may be of interest to describe some of the objects discovered in the great pit dug, as the principal work of the season, in the area known from previous excavations to contain a cemetery of the important period which preceded that of the Royal Cemetery and which is known as the Jemdet Nasr.

Before reaching the Jemdet Nasr levels deep in the pit, various other strata were cut through, including two that may be of particular interest. One of these contained Sargonid graves, indifferent as regards finds except for a quantity of etched carnelian beads, which show connections with the contemporary civilization of the Indus Valley. The other stratum goes back to the period of the Royal Cemetery, and the weapons discovered in these new graves recall those of the infantry as depicted on the famous Standard from one of the large Royal Tombs. Many of the graves yielded cylinder seals of shell with designs which correspond to those on a seal of the well-known Mes-kalam-dug, whose rich tomb has thrown such brilliant light on the equipment of privileged warriors of the Early Cemetery period. It is probable that such seals were especially favored by the warrior class. The most important single find in this level was an alabaster statuette of a woman done in characteristic Sumerian style and found against the shoulder of one of the interred.

The Jemdet Nasr cemetery was composed of at least three strata, and the excavated section held over two hundred graves. All the bodies were flexed, but their positions show no definite orientation. They were covered with matting, and a small cup was usually placed in one hand. The tomb furniture was composed for the most part of vessels of stone, pottery and copper. Stone specimens predominated in the uppermost layer. The typical Jemdet Nasr pot with squat body and broad overhanging rim was well represented among the vessels, which were occasionally ornamented with animal and flower patterns in relief. The ceramic fabrics varied considerably as to technique. A reversed slip ware was popular in the topmost stratum, while burnished red slip and smoky gray or black wares, produced by a slow smothered fire, were found in the middle layer. The characteristic polychrome ware occurred throughout. In the lowest stratum, lead tumblers served as lids for jars. Beads of stone and frit were worn around the neck, waist, wrists and even around the ankles. Attention should be called to an unusually long type of bead, tubular in form and cut from the column of the conch shell. Some of these were over five inches in length. Four such beads were joined together with carnelian or shell ring beads and might have been worn on the head in the same manner as the modern Arab ageyl.

TEPE GAWRA EXCAVATIONS

THE Joint Expedition of the University Museum and the American Schools of Oriental Research now working at Tepe Gawra is steadily pushing back the threshold of Mesopotamian culture. The season's first report from Mr. Charles Bache, the field director, is at hand and is summarised below.

GREAT progress has been made in clearing the eleventh level below the original surface of the mound. In addition to a conspicuous temple, similar in ground plan to the now well-known temples of the later settlements, the city of level XI has been found to contain private houses, household pottery, spindles and loom-weights for weaving, hammer-stones, hones, knives and scrapers for such local industries as leather-working and basket-making, a community oven, combs, mortars for ointment and bottles for kohl with which the women prepared their faces—abundant remains of the domestic life of the people. This is in sharp contrast to the discoveries of the previous