this one will doubtless throw light on this topic. At this point it is relevant to mention recent discoveries of trading centres in Arabia, not far distant from the Gulf, where traces have been found, in the shape of 'Ubaid' pottery, of those who had occasion to visit these remote places. It would appear that the pottery is of genuine Ubaid provenance, made either at Ubaid itself, or in Sumerian centres such as Ur and Eridu, and is thus a witness to sea-faring in the sixth millennium by early merchants who may perhaps be described as Sumerian or proto-Sumerian. It appears that in Arabia most of the pottery originated from Ur, some from Ubaid and Eridu (Joan Oates in Antiquity 1977). There is still much to be gained through the analysis of Woolley's discoveries, notably the metal. Indeed it is astonishing to see recent illustrations of the implements discovered in the Royal Cemetery of Ur and still bearing the caption 'Copper or Bronze'. Analysis of the metallurgy should be a requirement demanding the highest priority.

It would not be out of place for me here to indulge in a few personal reminiscences. I remember that on my first journey to Ur in the autumn of 1925 I crossed the desert between Beirut and Baghdad together with Woolley in a Nairn Cadillac and when we found the wadi at Sebast in full spate, volunteered to carry the baggage across on my shoulders, as the drivers feared that loaded cars might be bogged down. I recall that when later at Ur we were talking about the incident I was, in those days, too shy to admit that I was the one who had performed that service, which however our Architect, Whithurn, had not forgotten.

Woolley's work at Ur was the climax of a long and distinguished archaeological career and, not excepting Flinders Petrie in Egypt and Palestine and Arthur Evans in Crete, he must have been the world's most prolific digger. The lesson he left us is that not to publish is a crime, and that we should brand others who have not lived up to these expectations as criminals.

We do well to honour him in these pages and to remember that what Arthur Evans did for the Minoans, Woolley did for the Sumerians.
25 February 1920, Gordon to Kenyon

"Since my return to Philadelphia in November last I have had in mind a subject which I broached to you during my visits to New York and October on my way to and from Egypt and Palestine, namely the formulation of plans for excavations in Mesopotamia. I have talked the matter over with my associates and I find that there is a consensus of opinion in favour of the continuation of work by this museum in Mesopotamia at such time as permission may be granted.

... Having in mind the idea of cooperation I inquired of you during our conversations whether some plan for a joint expedition of the British Museum and the University Museum for excavation at Ur of the Chaldees would be likely to meet with the approval of yourself and the Trustees of the British Museum.

... My object in writing to you now is to inquire whether progress has been made with a statement of politics as far as in Mesopotamia that would permit the granting of permission to outside institutions to begin excavations. Whether conditions are likely to be favourable to a plan of cooperation, and in particular whether there is a reasonable prospect that the action of the Trustees of the British Museum would be favourable to such a joint understanding as I have indicated."

21 April 1920, Kenyon to Gordon

"The Secretary of State for India, in whose Department the civil administration of Mesopotamia is at present placed, has taken up the position that no excavation can be allowed until an efficient administration of antiquities is set up, and that no such administration can be set up until (3) the treaty of peace with Turkey has been signed, and the mandate given for Mesopotamia, and (2) the Mesopotamian government can afford the expense.

... has represented strongly (3) that prohibition of excavation invariably means illicit digging and smuggling, (2) that the credit of the country requires proper provision for a department of antiquities at the earliest date, (3) that excavations under scientific control should be encouraged, not prohibited, (4) that ample provision can be made for the future needs of a Museum in Baghdad or elsewhere. We have suggested as a working arrangement that qualified explorers should be allowed to bring all their discoveries home, and that you would give the necessary treatment and publication, under covenant to return (say) one half to Mesopotamia if and when required to do so."

4 March 1921, Kenyon to Gordon

"The administration of Mesopotamia is in a state of transition. Its control has lately been removed from the India Office to the Colonial Office. This in itself is a gain; for the India Office was disposed to be dilatory and obstructive while at the Colonial Office, the men who will have to deal with Mesopotamia are sympathetic towards archaeology. The person principally concerned is Col. Lawrence, who was digging for us at Carchemish before the war. He has only just been appointed to his present post, and I wrote at once to ask what answer I could give to your inquiry. Unfortunately he has had to go out with Mr. Winston Churchill to Egypt for a conference on the affairs of the East, and until he comes back no decision can be taken. Indeed the answer largely depends on the results of the conference; for the possibilities of excavation will vary according to the policy that may be adopted in Mesopotamia."

16 March 1921, Kenyon to Gordon

"I have now received an answer from the Colonial Office with regard to the possibility of an application from you to excavate in Mesopotamia being granted. It is as follows: I should be grateful if you would inform the University of Pennsylvania through Dr. Gordon that American archaeologists may continue excavations in that country as the permanent form of Government for Mesopotamia has been determined; the question of archaeology in the country will be considered as a whole, and that it would be preferable for that body to defer a second application for a few months."

"So far as the Museum is concerned, I think we shall probably put in an application about July next, with a view to sending out Mr. Hall in the autumn."

23 August 1921, Iraq

Sir Percy Cox proclaimed Faisal King of Iraq after a plebiscite in which 98% had turned out in favor.

September 1921, London

Dr. Gordon visited London and while there called on Col. Lawrence to discuss conditions in Iraq.

18 November 1921, Kenyon to Gordon

"In Irak everything is held up until a Director of Antiquities has been employed and appointed. The Colonial Office have been making efforts to find a suitable man, but the last word has not yet been heard."

"... if it is impossible to resume work at Carchemish, Woolley would be available for Mesopotamia after Christmas."
5 January 1922. Gordon to Kenyon

I have laid a plan before the President and Board of Managers and we propose to raise in America a sum of money between now and the beginning of the next season which will be adequate for the purposes that the two institutions propose to undertake in common.

The scope of the expedition might be defined by agreement whenever you may find it convenient to consult your own plans and purposes in connection with this proposed joint undertaking. The thought that has been in my mind and which I have put forward with considerable argument in my conferences with my associates here includes 'an archaeological survey of Iraq'; my thought being that such a survey, even though not carried out with extreme minute- ness, would be a very useful guide for detailed archaeological excavation and for general information.

23 January 1922. Lawrence to Kenyon

I think we said we would keep you in touch with any changes made in the Mesopotamian Archaeological Department-to-be.

Well, we have now appointed a provisional Director, the Education chief, who has worked at our School in Athens, and who looks after Archaeology till the work gets too heavy. Consequently the Mesopotamian Government is in a position to consider applications for permits to excavate.

We are going to be a little particular about the quality of these excavations, because Mesopotamia has suffered so much in the past from unscientific work (carried out under the auspices of the most distinguished bodies!). So in future permits will only be given when the name of the field excavator (not a conservator expert; at least not necessarily, but the man who will record the finds and do the practical work) is Reimer or Petrie—or Woolley—of the business is given, and when he commits himself by his past record to a committee in London.

This is not as bad as it sounds, because the committee is a quite practical and quite representative body, with Sir Frederic Kenyon as its chairman, and one object is to encourage digging in Mesopotamia: the right sort of digging.

In your case I know there will be no difficulty. If you have plenty of time, you can apply to Director of Archaeology, Dept. of Education, Baghdad and say any time when you want to dig, and who is your superintend- ing expert. He will send your application in here and the Colonial Office will call the Joint Committee and advise the Mesopotamian Government to grant it.

If you want to avoid unnecessary delay then write to Under Secretary of State, Middle East Department Colonial Office, Downing St. London, and ask him to forward your application to Mesopotamian Government. Then we will call in Committee and send out the application and the advice together.

This may sound cautious: but it's safe and better the things remain buried than be dug up badly. If only Kuyunjik and Niniveh were still virgin sites!

This letter wouldn't look good in public: so please don't consider it offered. W. Blundell has gone out to look for a site for himself and Langdon: he hasn't yet told us who his excavator would be.

4 March 1922. Kenyon to Gordon

"Your suggestion of an archaeological survey is interesting, but I am afraid it would be difficult for us to join it. Our funds available for an expedition are for the acquisition of objects for the Museum; and though we could embark on a speculation, such as the excavation of a site, without a certainty of adequate return, we could not use our money simply for a survey."

6 March 1922. Gordon to Kenyon

"I now write to say that we have already set aside the sum of $25,000 (5,000) towards the expenses of a season's work in Mesopotamia. It would be our purpose to obtain further funds for any work that may be agreed upon and for the excavation of any site that may be assigned by the Government. I have recently had a letter from Col. Lawrence stating that a provisional Director of Antiquities had been appointed. We have not made any application for permission to excavate. If we are to undertake this work in association with the British Museum, which is the way I prefer, I presume that the application should be made in common.

"It is my thought that arrangements might be made to begin work in the field as soon as the climate permits which I suppose will be in the early autumn of this year."

Concerning the Director of Excavations, Mr. C. Leonard Woolley is one who would be satisfactory to the University Museum and in case he should be your choice we would be glad if he were available to take charge of a joint expedition."

6 March 1922. Gordon to Lawrence

I have received your letter of the 26th of January and I have delayed answering long enough to have had a consultation with the President of the Board of Managers of the Museum. I am now in a position to say that we will make a formal application for permission to excavate in Mesopotamia. We will make the application in the way indicated by you, directly to the Under Secretary of State, Middle East Department, Colonial Office. In our formal application we will name the sites desired and give the name of the proposed Director of Excavations. At the present writing I am in a position to mention either because we are in correspondence with the British Museum with regard to a proposed joint expedition and if this joint undertaking should be authorized by both institutions I suppose that we will make a joint application for whatever site may be agreed upon for excavation. I may add this letter for the Director of Excavations Mr. Woolley, in case he should be available, as one who I think would be satisfactory to all parties.

"For your own personal information I can say that we have already set aside a sum of $25,000 (5,000) towards the expenses of the first year's work."

7 March 1922. Kenyon to Gordon

"The Colonial Office says the Mesopotamian Administration has drafted a provisional act for the protection of antiquities and now is prepared to give permits to applicants employing competent excavators. They especially mentioned the University Museum application as naturally to be approved (in view of work at Nippur)."

23 March 1922. Gordon to Kenyon

I have your letter of March 7 for which I thank you. The only statement that I need make at this time is one that I perhaps ought to make with reference to my suggestion of an archaeological survey of Iraq. Upon further thought I came to the conclusion that a better plan for us would be the excavation of some site and you have put it right when you say that a survey is a proper task for the Government of Iraq to undertake if and when they can find funds for the purpose."

5 May 1922. Gordon to Kenyon

Following your suggestion that I give you any particulars that I can as to the nature of proposed cooperation in Mesopotamia, I will give you my thoughts which are briefly as follows.

"We are disposed to make further excavations on some sites in Lower Mesopotamia in order to carry forward investigations begun at Nippur and at other sites in former years.

"To accomplish this, two things are necessary from the start; namely, funds and a competent man to do the work. With regard to the latter we have no one to whom we could entrust the work, he would have to be a trained and experienced excavator and to meet with success he ought to be acquainted with the particular field in which he would have to work and with the people among whom he would have to live and whom he would have to employ. I do not know any one in this country at the present time available who could fill these conditions. I have it also in mind that if we were to send an independent expedition it would be working a great distance from home and while we feel that we could depend upon the protection of
the British authorities wherever that authority is exercised, we are aware that in a possible disturbed condition of the country protection might become difficult.

"The British Museum on the other hand would have the name and the prestige of the British Government as special guaranties of security. I understand that owing to the large expense of government and heavy taxes the Government might be unwilling at present to allow much expenditure for archaeological work by the British Museum."

These thoughts have led me to the conclusion that by means of a joint expedition, each institution might supply the thing most needed by the other. Working with the British Museum would be to us equivalent to a measure of insurance. On our part we might furnish most of the funds.

"It seems to me that a reasonable basis for cooperation would be that this Museum should provide most of the funds and that the British Museum should contribute its prestige, the interest of the authorities, the protection of the local and central government and the facilities and good will of the country generally with regard to transportation, labour, supplies. With regard to the Field Director, my thought is that his choice would be subject to approval by both institutions and that each Institution should pay one half of his salary, the amount to be fixed by mutual agreement.

"At the end of each season's work the finds might be divided as equally as possible between the two institutions. Perhaps this division could be made most conveniently in London between a representative of the British Museum and a representative of this Museum."

12 June 1922, Kenyon to Gordon

"I am much obliged by your letter of 5th May. I have laid it before my Trustees, and am authorized by them to arrange with you for a joint expedition to Mesopotamia on the lines indicated therein."

17 July 1922. From Gertrude Bell

Miss Bell wrote that she had obtained King Feisal's "assistance for my law of excavations which I have compiled with the utmost care in consultation with the legal authorities. He has undertaken to push it through council—he's perfectly sound about archaeology, having been trained by T. E. Lawrence—and he has agreed to my suggestion that he should appoint me, if Sir Percy contents, provisional Director of Archaeology to his government."

22 July 1922. Gordon to Kenyon

"I am very sorry that there has been any delay in replying to your letter of June 12. It arrived after the exodus when in this part of the world everybody has gone either to Europe or to the seaside for the holiday season, and it was very difficult for me to get together any members of the Board for final action on the Mesopotamian matter. I have now all necessary authorities, and I think it best for me to go to London for a conversation on this subject, I believe that a brief talk will be more satisfactory than correspondence to adjust all details of the expedition."

Fall 1927

26 July 1922, Gordon to Kenyon

"First about a man from here to join the expedition. We have certainly no one with a knowledge of Mesopotamian Arabic. It is much more likely that you could find someone in England with that qualification. Dr. Leon Lefrain, Curator of the Babylonian Section, is a good cuneiform scholar but my thought would be that a cuneiform scholar might be less important at the beginning of the work than some other assistants. A man that we might be able to send would be either a young man without any of these qualifications who wished to get archaeological training or else a photographer who is also a practical museum man and who has handled, cleaned and mended all of the Babylonian tablets now in this Museum, I believe that we could send either one of these with a good deal of confidence that he would be found helpful to the expedition.

"With regard to your other questions, I have been hoping that some one might by this time be in London who could discuss all the details of the expedition with you. That however is not the case at the present moment. Nevertheless I think that early in August some such person from here may be in London. Such details of the expedition as remain to be settled can then be gone over and adjusted.

27 July 1922. Gordon to Kenyon

"Since I dispatched a letter to you yesterday I have today received your wire and have answered as follows: 'Will arrive London by train mid-seafront for conference Mesopotamia.'"

22 August 1922. Kenyon to Gordon

"...We cannot control the share of the discoveries that may be claimed by the Iraq government. Practically they are not likely under present conditions to claim much but legally they are entitled to claim a good representative selection. Even so, there would almost certainly be equally good and complete representative selections for you and us."

26 September 1922. Kenyon to Gordon

"The High Commissioner has written that no Law of Antiquity has yet been passed but that probably the matter would be arranged this autumn. He made it clear that it was highly desirable that the expedition go out."

10 October 1922. London

Gordon to Kenyon

"Great Britain signed an agreement with Iraq which transformed the mandate into an alliance relationship."

24 October 1922. From Gertrude Bell

"The Cabinet, at the request of the king, has appointed me honorary Director of Archaeology—there didn't seem to be any other way of keeping the place warm till we could afford a project Director."

26 October 1922. Cable from Basm: Woolley to Gordon

"Expedition starting out."

1 November 1922. From Gertrude Bell

"I've been figuring in my capacity as Director of Archaeology, Mr. Woolley arrived on Sunday. I knew him just when he was digging at Carchemish. He's a tiresome little man but a first class digger and an archaeologist after my own heart—I.e. he entirely backs me up in the way I'm conducting the Department."
12, 13

This headless statue, carved out of diorite and identified when first discovered as a statue of Enannatum, was actually a statue of Entemena, son of Enannatum and king of Lagash ca 2450 B.C. In the long and very interesting Sumerian inscription carved on the statue, Entemena refers several times to his father Enannatum and the early identification of the statue must have been based on the reading of that name. It is still not certain what this statue of a Lagashite king was doing at Ur, but it, as well as several other objects, might indicate that Lagash actually controlled Ur during at least part of the Early Dynastic III period.

16 February 1923. Woolley to Kenyon

"An inventory of these antiquities has been supplied to the Iraq government and I hope to receive on the 19th instant a visit from the Director of Archaeology and the Minister to settle the division."

20 February 1923. Woolley to Gordon

"The Iraq Government has in its share of the objects taken the diorite statue of Enannatum. Apart from this serious loss the Expedition comes out well on the division... all incautious objects are being brought home for study including the share of the Iraq government."

1 March 1923. From Gertrude Bell

"I went to Ur with Major Wilson. They are closing down for the season and we had to go in person and divide the finds between the diggers and the Iraq... "It took us a whole day to do the division but it was extremely interesting and Mr. Woolley was an angel. We had to claim the best things for ourselves but we did our best to make it up to him and I don’t think he was very much displeased. The best object is a hoard of Sumerian tokens of a king of Lagash, about three feet high but headless. "It has a long inscription across the shoulder in which they have written the king’s name, but it will go back to London to be completely deciphered and then return to us..."

27 April 1923. Lusanne

Treaty of Peace signed with Turkey.

SECOND DIVISION AND AN UPROAR. 1924

8 March 1924. Woolley to Gordon

"The division of objects, however painful in process, was not I think so unfavourable to ourselves as I had feared... Certainly we retain a very fine collection of objects."

24 May 1924. Woolley to Gordon

"The result of the exhibition and lecture in Baghdad was distinctly good. In the latter I thought it polite to make as much as possible of the advantage gained by the Iraq Gov’t in the partition of the spoil, so as to make the ministers and others understand the wisdom of ‘letting the excavators have a share—and therefore excavate’—so that the country gets a great deal for nothing. Actually, in the division we did very well and have no cause for complaint—though I would not say that to Miss Bell."

10 July 1924. Baghdad

The Constituent Assembly adopted a constitution for Iraq.
24 July 1924, Gordon to Kenyon

"Worst of all in its effects was the fact that immediately after the new demand for funds [to meet unexpected expenses at Ur] had been met and after my assurance had been repeatedly given that very important discoveries were being made and that we could depend on a fair share of the finds, there came long despatches from London, printed in all the papers here, stating with apparent authority and much emphasis that the Government at Baghdad had retained all of the important objects found by the Joint Expedition. These despatches, whatever their source or authority may have been, were commented upon at length editorially in the leading papers and in very unfavourable and discouraging terms. You will observe that the effect was precisely the same whether the despatches were true or false. Once a statement has been given currency in the newspapers, it is quite impossible to overtake it or to counteract it, either in the minds of those with whom I am directly in touch or with the public in general. The result has been that the supporters of the Joint Expedition to Mesopotamia have been discouraged."

12 August 1924, Kenyon to Gordon

"As to the bad effect of the announcement that the Iraq Govt. had retained all the most important objects found, you understand of course that we had no part or responsibility in it. It emanated from irresponsible correspondents in Baghdad. No doubt the third party in our excavations, the administration in Baghdad, had its difficulties also, and is anxious to assure the Govt. and people of Iraq that they have got their full share of the proceeds. In point of fact I think Miss Bell treated us quite fairly. She was bound to claim the most striking object (the milking frieze) for Baghdad, but she compensated us by leaving to us considerably more than our half share of the other friezes and the copper bulls. That is quite in accordance with the original understanding, and it is only on those terms that we can expect to be allowed to work.

10 September 1924, Gordon to Le Strange

"It has been decided and agreed upon between this Museum and the British Museum that you shall this year join the Joint Expedition of the two Museums to Ur, of which Mr. C. Leonard Woolley will be in charge. The duties to which you will be assigned on this Expedition will be indicated by Mr. Woolley.

10 September 1924, Le Strange to Gordon

"I called on the 1st of July on Mr. Woolley and was introduced by him to Mr. H. Hall, head of the department, and to Mr. Sidney Smith, his assistant. Mr. Gadd, the second assistant, the cuneiform expert of the last Ur campaign was on his vacation. The collections were scattered in five or six different locales of the British Museum, partly unpacked, partly under repair, partly in the showcases of a temporary exhibition that was to open the following week in the lower room (Babylon Bronze Gates) of the Assyrian section.

"Division of the material—I mentioned your intentions (to divide the 1923-24 collection) to Mr. Woolley, but as head of the Joint Expedition, Mr. Woolley thought that the division was not amenable to that. Mr. Hall listened to the request, but leaving for his vacation the next few days, he referred me to Mr. S. Smith, Mr. S. Smith thought the proper man to do the division would be Mr. Gadd, who had been in the field and

1924 Expedition

knew the material. Mr. Gadd being on his vacation, I was advised to come back the following week when he would return. This is what I did, visiting in the meantime friends in Belgium.

"Following week I met Messrs. S. Smith and Gadd. Mr. Smith who had talked over with Mr. Hall, suggested that certain important objects among the reconstructed full relief copper bull, the flat embossed relief copper bull, should be left out of the actual division as some correspondence was going on the subject between the two museums.

"Besides Mr. Woolley's opinion was that so far as the British Museum has spent time and money on the reconstruction of the bronze bull, this sample ought to remain in the British Museum, while a second copy just as good of the same bull, but not unpacked, cleaned or restored, should be sent to the U of P Museum, that would provide for the rest.

"The rest of the collection has been divided in three days work by Mr. Gadd and myself—as best as possible.

"Two objects of the same type and value being paired, we agreed to choose according to the different needs of our respective museums—Or each would choose in turn—Or in case of an unusually desirable or unique piece, we would divide it equally.


12 C. Leonard Woolley, 1922-1934, best known for his work on the Excavations at Ur, 1923-1935. He was appointed Keeper of the Department of Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities in 1924.

3 March 1925, Woolley to Gordon

"But our main discovery was made in the courtyard of E-dubali-mah and in the gate-chamber he would return. This is what I did, visiting in the meantime friends in Belgium.

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CHRISTMAS AT UR, 1924

3 January 1925, Le Strange to Gordon

"I beg you would believe we drank your health in good style on Xmas and New Year's eve. Despite the distance the desert and the strenuous work we omitted none of the rites: turkey, plum pudding and real Scotch Whisky. That is some help to archaeology.

I am up every day at half past six and go to bed at half past ten, which is rather a change. I begin to like the eternal dust and mud and emptiness of this strange country.

The country around is safe and peaceful in the surrounding of Ur with some trouble not very far from it. We had a cold spell, and ice one inch thick in the tub left in the courtyard—not being too rich in wood and coal we use the bitumen recovered in the excavation. We have to thank Nahamish [King of Ur 555-539 B.C.] for the invaluable and inexpensive way of warming up at Ur of the Chaldees. An extra blanket at night is welcome for our windows have but shutters. Rain is not yet over, and we wade up to the dig in greasy gum boots. At last mosquitoes and sand flies are dead and we are safe from that pest."

FURTHER DIVISION: "THE STELE OF THE FLYING ANGELS"

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greatly by flaking and the action of salts; the reliefs had been intentionally smashed, and the fragments scattered all over the site (two were found on the other side of the Ziggurat) and those found in the courtyard had been broken up a second time; what we have recovered is only a fraction of the whole, but we have one scene almost complete, important parts of four other scenes, and can reconstruct others from small fragments so as to obtain a very fair idea of the original scheme of the whole relief. Though in the main inscription the name of the king is missing, yet fortunately on one of the minor fragments showing the drapery of a standing figure there is inscribed the name of Ur-Zagir [now read Ur-Nammu, 2113-2096 B.C.], which dates the monument; the stela commemorates the good works of the founder of the Third Dynasty of Ur, his activities in digging canals for the benefit of his subjects and his piety in building the Ziggurat.

"This great historical stela is far the most important object yet found at Ur—indeed the Sphinx of the Vultures in the Louvre is the only monument of Sumerian art which can be compared with it. To you, Sir, I need not insist upon its value, which fully repays all the cost of your Expedition up to date, but I should like to say, in view of its fragmentary state, that I by no means despair of recovering more of it. The pieces found this year were so scattered, parts having been removed at an early date for use as building material, that there is every likelihood of more being found in other buildings not yet excavated. I venture to consider this the most encouraging as well as the most satisfying discovery that we have made on the site.

On March 2nd Miss Bell and Major Wilson came to Ur for the division of our antiquities with the Iraq Government. I am thankful to say that they were convinced by my arguments and agreed to leave to the Expedition all the great stela fragments, in spite of the outstanding importance of the monument."

4 March 1925. From Gertrude Bell

"...It has been a good season, though not so sensational as last year, but still there were some wonderful finds, rather more difficult than usual to divide. This year I left the great piece to them—it is a huge stela with amazingly interesting reliefs, but as it was all in fragments and needed a great deal of careful reconstruction, which we can't do here, I thought it was in the interests of science to let it go to some big museum—British Museum or Pennsylvania—where it can be properly treated..."

18 July 1925. Woolley to Gordon

"I think that I have found an assistant for the general side, a young Oxford man named Mallowan, who is inexperienced but has the reputation of being clever and a hard worker, and is certainly keen to go out. Kenyon is seeing him, and I hope to fix things up this week."

30 July 1925. Woolley to Gordon

"Mallowan has been vetted by Kenyon and definitely engaged as assistant for next season; he seems a decent fellow and I trust he will make good."
10 September 1925, Gordon to Kenyon

"I have been thinking a good deal about the problem of dividing last year's discoveries at Ur. The light in which the matter presents itself to my mind is as follows. The large stela is worth much more than all the rest put together; therefore, an equal division is not possible. The solution that I wish to propose for your consideration is as follows. A. That we postpone the division of last year's finds until these finds can be combined with those of next year or the next two years, in order to furnish a basis for a division more satisfactory than exists at present.

"B. That the large stela, having been exhibited at the British Museum, shall be exhibited also at the University Museum. This is important from our point of view for two reasons. It is now necessary for us to make the best possible display of Ur finds in order to make an impression. At the end of November, we will open a new ving of the building, in which will be installed all of the new Egyptian collections together with the new Palestine collections and the collections from Ur. We are now installing the exhibits in the rooms of this new wing and I am very anxious to have the stela and anything else that can make the Ur exhibit a success."

Winter at Ur, 1926

18 January 1926, Le gone to Gordon

"We had our Xmas dinner in good English style with one turkey, one goose, four ducks, two plum puddings, six bottles of Champagne, one of golden sherry, two of Vermouth and no end of whisky. Don't print that in the Museum journal please. I like to leave them under the impression of our hardships. Another good improvement was the wire netting at the door and windows which keep the flies effectively out. The white ants still pierce the walls hunting for books and paper their favorite food, but we drown them in kerosene."

16 February 1926, Le gone to Gordon

"The house has just been flooded. We have been through one of the worst storms of the season. Roofs leaking. Everyone busy piling the bedding and rugs and valuable property on the tables. All tubs, basins, empty bins requisitioned to collect the water from roof and walls. The court in a few minutes was a pond. The staff and men dripping wet were jumping about with spades trying with mud and timber to build a dam and stop the onrush of flood outside. All enjoyed the excitement. Now the rain has stopped. The ground is absorbing it slowly. The house looks a mess like the following day after battle. We sit where we can smoking, drinking liquor to get a little warmth, and writing home since work is impossible and there is nothing else to do."

March 1926, Baghdad

Victoria Soochville West quoted by Mallon (1977) described Miss Bell's house in Baghdad: "a door in the blank wall... a sneaking of hinges, a broadly smiling servant, a rush of dogs, a vista of garden-path edged with violets in pots, a little veranda and a little low house at the end of the garden path, an English voice—Gertrude Bell."

Mallon remembers her (1977) as "of striking appearance, always smartly dressed, and her delicate features radiated intelligence..."

A Personal Matter, 1926

8 July 1926, Gordon to Woolley

"This is personal and confidential. In your letter of Nov. 30th last written from Ur, you mentioned the name of Miss Keling as having been a visitor to the camp of the Expedition at Ur the year before and as having returned as a volunteer assistant. As you have not had occasion to mention Mrs. Keling again and as Dr. Legrain has not mentioned her presence in camp, it is unlikely that the subject should have occurred to me had I not begun to give rise to some slight and inconsequential comment on the part of people entirely outside of the archaeological interests and outside of our acquaintance.

"The work of the expedition at Ur and everyone connected with it are subjects of interest and discussion from Baghdad to Philadelphia. Tourists and others returning from Iraq and Palestine make it an important part of their recollections through most of them know it only from hearsay.

"Perhaps the presence of a lone woman with four men in camp makes a more interesting figure for some of them than the outline of zigurats. In any case I should be a little apprehensive that a woman in that situation might incur the risk of becoming the subject of inconsiderate remarks which though they might be treated as negligible by the subject could not be regarded as matter of indifference by you or anyone in a responsible position. Perhaps you will wish to give the matter your best consideration with a view to removing that risk. I do not know how important you may consider Mrs. Keling's work as an assistant, but without detracting from her in any way and quite apart from the circumstances that I have mentioned I have very grave doubts, which amount to a conviction about the wisdom of having any volunteer assistants on the expedition.

"With every good wish and with entire confidence that I can see, count upon your excellent judgement."

12 July 1926, Baghdad

Gertrude Bell died in Baghdad two days before her 50th birthday.
22 July 1926. Gordon to Kenyon

"I have learned with regret of the death of Miss Gertrude Lowthian Bell at Baghdad and I have naturally been wondering how the expedition and any future work in Iraq is going to be affected. Naturally it will depend on who Miss Bell's successor will be. One could always depend on Miss Bell's intelligence and sympathy and doubtless her death will be a very great loss to all of us. I hope however that in the appointment of her successor, everything will be considered.

"By this time, no doubt, the finds for 1925-6 are being arranged for exhibition in the British Museum except those pieces that were retained at Baghdad. It is time to look on the question of the division of the 1925-6 collection all of which, as I understand the situation, is now in this Museum unless some duplicates may have been retained in the British Museum.

"I suppose that the large stela should be balanced against the rest of the collection so that whoever gets the stela relinquishes the rest. I understand that that would be your view except that where there are duplicate inscriptions, naturally one would go to each Museum. I am a little uncertain too about the small fragments of a stela, whether they should be regarded as belonging to the large stela or whether they should go with the rest of the collection. I should be inclined to regard them as a part of the large stela and should remain together with it.

"I should be equally content whether we get the stela or the rest of the collection. I suppose that we had better draw lots to see where the stela will go. Perhaps you may have some other suggestion to make."

23 July 1926. Woolley to Gordon

"I certainly think that all the small sculptured fragments of limestone found in 1924-25 ought to be regarded as belonging to the great stela; it is indeed virtually certain, since they were all found together, and it would be most unsuitable to separate them. At any time you may find other fragments which will connect them together; last season a new fragment turned up which I am sure also belongs though it does not have the same inscription, but with regard to what you say I must protest that I assuredly did not feel that the stela should be balanced against the rest of the objects found in the same season: rather I agreed (so far as it was for me to do so) with what I understood to be your suggestion, that there was nothing but the collection fit to be balanced against it the division had best be left over for a year in the hope that a counterpoise might turn up. That was what I understood to be your view, and I believe that that was what Kenyon understood also; but here I speak without authority, and would ask you please to refer to him."

4 August 1926. Kenyon to Gordon

"I have just received your letter of July 23rd. I am sorry to hear that you are not coming over this summer, but I shall be glad to see Miss McHugh, and to discuss matters with her...

"As to the division of the discoveries of the season 1924-5, I do not think I have ever suggested setting the large stela against the rest. On the contrary, I remember that in your letter of September 10th, 1925, you expressly ruled out this solution, on the ground that you would not remove all the rest put together, and proposed that the division should be postponed until the finds of that season could be put in hand with those of the following year or years, in order to form a more satisfactory basis for a division. In my answer of 23rd July I fully concurred with this and I have assumed that that was settled.

"I will therefore propose to Miss McHugh that we pool the results of the two seasons 1924-5 and 1925-6, and make a division in the manner you suggest. It will be easier them to secure for each Museum objects representing all the principal varieties of interest...

"Miss Bell's death is a grievous blow, and it is impossible to forecast the consequences. I think she has so far established the idea of a Department of Antiquities and of a Museum in the mind of the Iraq Government that they are sure to make a new appointment; but who it will be is quite uncertain."

8 August 1926. Woolley to Gordon

"I received your letter of July 8th and duly late as my club didn't forward it and I only found it there when I went up to town. Its first effect on me was to real into the grave regret once more the fact that I can't see you: I'm always feeling what a loss it is, when I'm working away, you, to be always at such a distance."

One day's conversation should do more than reams of writing to avoid misunderstandings and settle differences of view. However, I can't get over to the States at present, and I learn to my regret that you are not coming here this summer, so I must needs write.

"You tell me that you have doubts which amount almost to a principle about the wisdom of having volunteers on an expedition. Once at Carchemish I had a volunteer assistant who might almost have converted me to your view, but on the other hand we had at Ur FitzGerald and my one regret was that other engagements didn't allow of his coming out a second time. English expeditions partly perhaps through lack of funds so constantly employ volunteers—Kish has had two. Petrie in Egypt almost lives on them, and so on—that the idea of an objection to such on principle hadn't occurred to me. Frankly I don't share it: it seems to me a matter of expediency not of principle, and I should be very sorry to be deterred from taking advantage of volunteer help when that is in itself to the advantage of the expedition. But when I get your letter I felt obliged to see Kenyon at once, because I don't for a moment want to set up my opinion against yours, or against his, and of course if a line of policy is laid down for me I am prepared to act on it. So, though I didn't show Kenyon your letter, it being marked 'personal and confidential' I explained your views and asked his. Well, he certainly doesn't share the objection to volunteers as such provided that they are properly subordinate to the head of the expedition, and was on the contrary anxious to avail himself of any help we could provide that it really was helpful. And I do trust that in view of the general practice over here you may incline to share his opinion.

"Kenyon said that as regards the particular question of how far Mrs. Keeling helps the expedition he was prepared to leave that to my judgement (and I'd like to say, Gordon, how very much I appreciate the reliance which both you and he have placed in me and the freedom of action which you have allowed; that has always been a great comfort)—but it's only fair to you at a distance that I should say something to you on the point.

"The only definite job for which Mrs. Keeling volunteered last season was the drawings for the catalogue and for reproduction. This isn't in itself a big enough thing to justify the employment of a special paid assistant, but Mallowan, who writes the catalogue, couldn't draw at all, and the work would therefore have fallen on me. I have quite enough on my hands as it is and was
only too thankful to be relieved of this. Actually, though she didn’t undertake the housekeeping, Mrs. Keeling did a great deal in looking things up and keeping the house decent and comfortable, as all of us were quick to recognize with gratitude, and that too saved me from a deal of trouble: also by taking charge of visitors and acting as guide she saved me a vast amount—for one can’t refuse to show round visitors who have come a long way to see it, though they do waste one’s time frightfully. Lastly I do think that the presence of a lady has a good moral effect on the younger fellows in the camp and keeps them up to standard. Speaking quite officially I can say that I consider the Expedition a success as far as related to Mrs. Keeling and should be most sorry if she were not coming out again.

As a matter of fact she decided last season not to do so, and was going to India instead, because it looked as if there’d be no definite work for her since Mallowan was away taking drawing lessons in the summer; but as it became clear to me that he will not be up to the work yet I strongly urged her to reconsider. Mrs. Mallowan, who takes a keen interest in her son’s work, supported me; and a little while ago she wrote me a very generous letter, saying that she thought of giving up the plans she had made for India and to come out once more to do the same work as last year and to give Mrs. Keeling lessons. She ought to be quite capable of doing the whole work himself next year. In this I acted in what I believe to be the best interests of the expedition, and I couldn’t now ask her not to come without being guilty of a rudeness which I should hate.

"Lastly (this is a long letter; but since I can’t talk to you I must write at length) lastly there’s the point which you raise, very curiously, about Mrs. K’s even interests in view of the fact that people have gossiped about her presence in the camp. About this I felt that I ought to speak to her, so put off writing to you until I should see her for I was just coming to Oxford to lecture to the British Association and she was coming to stop with an old friend of hers—a trustee of the British Museum—for the same meeting.

You know, it’s quite difficult to believe that such gossip can exist when one’s in this atmosphere of scientific work, with lots of women, by no means all of Mrs. Keeling’s age and standing, engaged in positions very similar to hers, when everyone takes the circumstances of the work as a matter of course and is keenly interested in what she is doing: it isn’t only that in her case her University is pleased with the progress of the work and interested in it, but every student, but everyone feels that it’s the right and proper thing. Probably this contrast made the shock greater and Mrs. Keeling was at first very much hurt to think that her name could be so talked about; perhaps that is still the price which women may have to pay for cooperation in scientific work. Of course it’s all wrong. I don’t mean that archaeologists don’t ever murmur, and the more happily many have interests in common: it’s not unlikely that at the beginning the possibilities of that were discussed in Iraq and such discussion may have been at the bottom of the tourist gossip you describe: in a small community like that of Iraq discussions are always personalities, but everyone thought that she was out there for work. Since I am discussing a lady confidentially, I might go further and say that Mrs. Keeling is nearly 40 and has been a widow for over 7 years and...

work forward I can only be the more grateful. But of course I shall keep my eyes and ears open and do anything I can that may make things of the sort, and I’m very grateful to you for the hint.

P.S. Reading over the above I’m not sure that I have made it clear how distressed Mrs. Keeling was to learn of these rumors. But I assured her, as I knew you’d wish me to do, that your letter (which of course she has not seen) was written by you in her interest entirely and that apart from her interest you would not have paid any attention to such tales.

29 August 1926. Gordon to Kenyon

Miss McHugh has told me about the division of the excavations which was announced while she was in London." [The Ur-Nammu Stela fell to the University Museum.]

5 October 1926. Gordon to Woolley

He has made his decision concerning the matter about which I wrote to you in private and that you acted, as you believe, entirely in the interest of the Expedition. That interest is, of course, my only concern in the matter.

With regard to whether married or single, are not disqualified for membership on an expedition. They may be, when properly qualified, attached to an expedition on the same terms as men.

You will understand that these are my personal views and represent our practice in this matter.

In 1927 Katherine Keeling became Mrs. Leonard Woolley."[With regard to volunteers, it should be remembered that at this time Charles H. Heschel, President of the University Museum, was raising large sums of money for expeditions and the purchase of collections. With all this, and the nation-wide depression of 1929, conditions changed drastically so that in subsequent years this Museum has been happy to welcome volunteers. They are still valued assistants both at home and in the field.]

19 October 1926. Woolley to Gordon

Mallowan comes again as general assistant. Mrs. Keeling, as I have already told you, comes out again an unpaid assistant.

The Director has taken Miss Bell’s place as Director of the Iraq Museum, and I shall probably have to deal with him as well as with the British Museum’s wise to the Ministry of Education.

14 December 1926. Baghdad

A new treaty with Great Britain recognized the independence of Iraq.

3 January 1927. Woolley cable to Gordon

Found prehistoric cemetery very rich...