

devoted to his students that his output of publications was comparatively small. Had he survived, many more important monographs would have come from his pen. His grateful students will bring to fruition some of the works which he projected but was unable to finish.

JOHN W. SPELLMAN.

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SIR LEONARD WOOLLEY

Charles Leonard Woolley, who died on 20th February, 1960, nearly eighty years old, had not only a diversity of archaeological experience unequalled in his generation, but also gifts that helped to make his opportunities and turned them to unique account. After he had had a short museum experience in Oxford, the pattern of his life was quickly set by some minor explorations in Nubia: he was to be the field-archæologist, not the academic scholar, still less the teacher.

Three sites in the Near East were the scenes of Woolley's most memorable achievements. Two of these, Ur and Carchemish, had already been identified and partly worked; the third, 'Aṭshanah, was his own discovery. Its neighbourhood abounds in ancient mounds, and Woolley's choice of one among them all was brilliantly justified when it proved to be Alalakh, a place of no little note in the international politics of the later second millennium B.C. Carchemish gave him his introduction to the Near East and yielded to his work a series of late Hittite sculptures and inscriptions and the most comprehensive plan of the city's fortifications. But his most famous discoveries were made in thirteen seasons at the ancient city of Ur in Southern Iraq. It was not only the treasures of the Royal Cemetery which signalized his results; he could always single out the other most significant spots in the great area of the ruins. The outcome of all these excavations, still far from completely published, is the best picture we have of a principal Sumerian and Babylonian city through more than two thousand years of its existence.

Another remarkable gift contributed much to the esteem in which his work will always be held. He was a practical excavator of great perception, especially in tracing the plans and penetrating the debris of ancient buildings, so as to preserve all the evidence which they could afford. When antiquities were sighted or even suspected he was fertile in devices for removing from the ground things almost

irretrievably decayed and fragile and then, with even greater ingenuity and delicacy, preserving the fabric and finally restoring the object to much of its original shape, not by unwarranted additions but by manipulative skill. Many notable pieces now in museums were remoulded in this way by Woolley's hands and this in days before the recent techniques of preservation had been much developed.

Although he left many books of excavation reports and of popular exposition and wrote with a rare gift of adding interest to fulness and accuracy, it might be objected that he was not free from the besetting sin of excavators, which is to go digging and shun the drudgery of adequate publication. This stricture cannot apply to Carchemish and to Alalakh, for he compiled solid volumes upon his work at each of these. But much of Ur remains only in his annual preliminary accounts, and in the mass of detail consigned to his field-notes, which had doubtless become too complex for his later years to marshal into final reports. Indeed, an excavation of this size and importance would not now be undertaken without a much larger and more stable staff than Woolley ever had. In this respect he was the last of the old-fashioned individual excavators in the Near East, as he was one of the most distinguished and most deservedly successful.