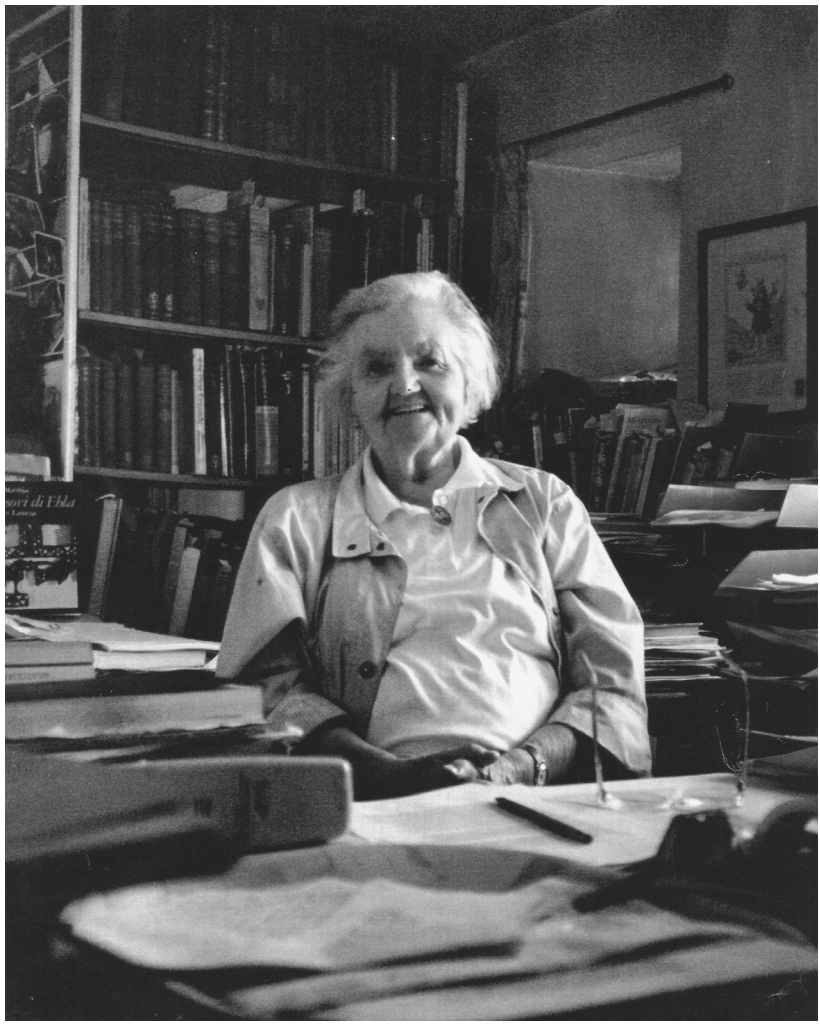

RACHEL MAXWELL-HYSLOP

Rachel Maxwell-Hyslop
1914–2011

Rachel Maxwell-Hyslop, the doyenne of specialists in Ancient Near Eastern jewellery and metalwork, passed away in 2011 at the age of ninety-seven. Her book on Western Asiatic jewellery, published in 1971, remains a standard work of reference after more than forty years. Rachel was born on 27 March 1914 at 11 Tite Street, Chelsea, London. She was the eldest of the three daughters of Sir Charles Travis Clay (1885–1978) and his wife Violet, second daughter of Lord Robson, Lord of Appeal. Charles Clay was appointed assistant librarian to the House of Lords in 1914 and following active service in the First World War he was appointed librarian to the House, a post he retained until his retirement in 1956. He became an authority on medieval charters and published widely on this subject. He was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 1950 and was Vice-President of the Society of Antiquaries 1934–8.[1] Clay's father, J. W. Clay, had also been a historian and genealogist, and although her grandfather died in 1918 when Rachel was a small child there was a strong family tradition of antiquarianism which Rachel evidently inherited.

Rachel was educated at Downe House School near Newbury in Berkshire and at the Sorbonne in Paris where she studied French. This later stood her in good stead when together with her husband, Bill Maxwell-Hyslop, she translated from French the book by Georges Contenau that appeared in English in 1954 as *Everyday Life in Babylonia and Assyria* (London). She was drawn to archaeology through attending the lectures of

[1] See C. Brooke, 'Charles Clay 1885–1978', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 64 (1980), pp. 311–40.

Biographical Memoirs of Fellows of the British Academy, XIV, 363–380.

(Sir) Mortimer Wheeler, who was then Director of the London Museum, and went on to work for Wheeler at Verulamium near St Albans and at Maiden Castle in Dorset. At this time she became friendly with (Dame) Kathleen Kenyon, who was later a colleague at the Institute of Archaeology. At Maiden Castle, to avoid the expense of commuting, she camped at the summit of the site in her father's First World War tent. Another anecdote from this time concerns a stuffed crocodile found by Rachel while digging a Neolithic pit. It transpired that it had been thrown out of the local museum in Dorchester, and was duly reburied, this time with a penny in its mouth, only to be exhumed by puzzled English Heritage archaeologists many years later. The mystery was only finally solved when Rachel wrote a letter of explanation to *The Times*. This early brush with British archaeology persuaded Rachel to turn her thoughts to the east. In her own words 'cleaning Roman pavements at Verulamium and digging Neolithic pits at Maiden Castle ... convinced me that my real interest lay outside Europe'.[2] Consequently, she applied to study Egyptology with Professor Stephen Glanville at University College London. Glanville was ready to accept her, but recommended instead that she should apply for the course in Mesopotamian archaeology at the London University Institute of Archaeology, then newly founded and until 1937 without its own premises.

So it was that in 1934 Rachel enrolled at the nascent Institute of Archaeology for an Academic Postgraduate Diploma in the Archaeology of Western Asia, together with Barbara Parker, later Lady Mallowan (1908–93), and a German-speaking student, Flora Beck. Barbara went on to become the Secretary/Librarian of the British School of Archaeology in Iraq, based in Baghdad, and after that a Lecturer at the Institute of Archaeology.[3] The postgraduate diploma course was devised by Sidney Smith who undertook the bulk of the teaching on two evenings a week in his office at the British Museum. Smith was Keeper of Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities at the British Museum 1931–48, and an Honorary Lecturer in Akkadian and Assyriology at Kings College London. He became Honorary Lecturer in Near Eastern Archaeology at the Institute of Archaeology in 1934 and an Honorary Professor in 1938. Smith was

[2] According to Jacquetta Hawkes in her biography of Mortimer Wheeler (*Adventurer in Archaeology*, London, 1982, pp. 120, 263), Rachel was deterred from a career in British archaeology by her strong disapproval of Wheeler's personal life and his womanising, but this story may be apocryphal. In his autobiography *Still Digging* (London, 1955, p. 91), Wheeler refers to Rachel being a student at the Institute of Archaeology and later joining the staff, but makes no mention of her having worked with him at Maiden Castle and Verulamium.

[3] See the obituary in *Iraq*, 55 (1993), v–vi.

undoubtedly a considerable scholar, and made great contributions to Near Eastern studies, particularly in the field of chronology, but is remembered in the British Museum as a difficult colleague.[4] Nevertheless, he treated Rachel kindly and she fondly regarded him as her mentor. Smith took a keen interest in Rachel's career, and they kept in touch until his death in 1979. Akkadian was taught by Professor S. H. Hooke at King's College, and Ancient History by Professor Norman Baynes at University College. Lessons in surveying were at University College. On completing the post-graduate diploma course, Rachel was appointed an honorary demonstrator at the Institute when it established its first permanent premises at St John's Lodge in Regent's Park in 1937.

Meanwhile, her Near Eastern archaeological career had already taken off. In the summer of 1936 and again in 1937 Rachel joined the excavations of the Cambridge archaeologist Winifred Lamb at Kasura in the Plain of Sandikli, 55 km south-west of Afyon Karahisar in western Turkey.[5] On the conclusion of her excavations at Thermi on Lesbos (1929–31), Lamb was interested in learning more about the connections between the islands of the eastern Aegean and mainland Anatolia in the prehistoric period, and selected Kasura as a site likely to produce the desired results. In due course, parallels were indeed discovered between Kasura, Thermi and sites in the Troad. In the second season, Rachel was responsible for investigating the massive fortification system and wrote it up for the report (Maxwell-Hyslop, 1938).[6] It is remarkable that even at this time women were able to make significant contributions to a discipline such as archaeology. At Kasura a number of bronze pins were found, some with spiral or double-spiral heads,[7] and it may have been these that triggered Rachel's lifelong interest in jewellery forms.

However, her first publication that also appeared in 1938 was on a quite different subject. This was a twenty-four-page essay on land tenure in Babylonia and Assyria from Sumerian times until the end of the Late Babylonian period in the sixth century BC that was published as the first occasional paper of the Institute of Archaeology. It has a foreword by Sidney Smith who clearly encouraged its publication. This is an interesting

[4] See D. M. Wilson, *The British Museum: a History* (London, 2002), p. 223. For an obituary of Smith see D. J. Wiseman, 'Sidney Smith 1889–1979', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 66 (1980), pp. 463–71.

[5] W. Lamb, *Archaeologia*, 86 (1937), 2 and *Archaeologia*, 87 (1938), 219.

[6] For references to works by Rachel Maxwell-Hyslop see the bibliography at the end of this memoir.

[7] W. Lamb, *Archaeologia*, 86 (1937), fig. 18 and *Archaeologia*, 87 (1938), fig. 21.

survey drawn from cuneiform sources but it is rarely referred to nowadays, having been overtaken by a range of specialist studies looking at the subject either from a linguistic or from a legal point of view. In the acknowledgements Rachel thanks Sidney Smith 'without whose help this essay could not have been prepared' and, interestingly, her father 'for assistance on various points'.

Also in 1938, she married Aymer Robert (Bill) Maxwell-Hyslop (1912–93), later a senior civil servant attached to the Ministry of Education. They made their home in Chelsea, London, first in Paultons Square, off the Kings Road, and later in Elm Park Road. They had three children, Andrew, Gillian and Hilary.

In the spring of 1939 she took part in an archaeological survey of the Jabbul Plain in North Syria with Joan du Plat Taylor, Veronica Seton-Williams and John Waechter (Maxwell-Hyslop et al., 1942). In an area between Aleppo and the River Euphrates they recorded 114 sites, ranging in date from the prehistoric to the Islamic periods. The survey was conducted under the auspices of the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem and the Institute of Archaeology, University of London, and there was evidently an intention to follow up the survey with an excavation at one of the sites in spring 1940, but this ambition could not be realised because of the outbreak of war. The report of the survey is preceded by a lengthy discussion of the complex history of the Aleppo region in antiquity, much of it one suspects written by Rachel. At the conclusion of the survey in mid-April 1939 the group drove down the right bank of the Tigris to Baghdad and then across the desert to Damascus.

During the war she drove ambulances but continued her archaeological research, focusing on metal tools and weapons. This resulted in two lengthy articles on daggers and swords and shaft-hole axes in Western Asia from prehistoric times until 600 BC that were eventually published in the journal *Iraq* (Maxwell-Hyslop, 1946, 1949). In both studies the weapons were divided into typological groups which brought order to what were hitherto miscellaneous groups of material, and although later studies have refined the dating and distribution of many of the artefacts in question these studies are still often referred to.

After the war, in 1946, Rachel was appointed part-time Assistant (later part-time Lecturer) in Mesopotamian Archaeology at the Institute of Archaeology, and she was soon to be joined in the Western Asiatic Department by Max Mallowan as Professor (in April 1947)[8] and Kathleen

[8] In his autobiography (*Mallowan's Memoirs*, London, 1977, p. 237) Sir Max Mallowan refers to Rachel as his 'closest associate' at the Institute of Archaeology. He continues with a highly

Kenyon as Lecturer in Palestinian Archaeology in January 1948. In the years 1947–56 V. Gordon Childe was the Director of the Institute, viewed by all his contemporaries as an inspirational academic colleague although Rachel had little time for his Marxist sympathies, being throughout her life a committed Liberal (her grandfather Lord Robson of Jesmond had been the Liberal Attorney General). She used to joke in later life (when she lived in West Oxfordshire) that she thought she must be the only Liberal in the staunchly Conservative Witney Constituency represented now (2015) by Prime Minister David Cameron.

Rachel remained as a Lecturer at the Institute until 1961. The stream of students during this time included the distinguished Pakistani archaeologist F. A. Durrani, Tariq Madhloom of the Iraq Department of Antiquities, and Georgina Herrmann and Harriet Crawford, both of whom later taught at the Institute.

During this period Rachel continued her work on bronze tools and weapons, building on the solid foundations that had been laid in the two articles referred to above. Further observations on axe-heads were offered in a series of four articles in *Iraq* (Maxwell-Hyslop, 1950, 1952, 1953, 1955). A study visit to Italy in the 1950s financed by a grant from the Central Research Fund of the University of London resulted in two studies. In one (Maxwell-Hyslop, 1956a) she concluded that the bronze cauldron stands, cauldrons and cauldron attachments found in Etruscan tombs were imported from Urartu or in some cases were copies of Urartian originals. This is an understandable conclusion, but the prevailing view nowadays is that the centre of production of these cauldrons was in Syria.[9] In her second study of Italian material (Maxwell-Hyslop, 1956b) she compared a bronze dagger from Populonia with similar weapons from the Near East. An invitation to contribute to a Festschrift for (Sir) Leonard Woolley in the journal *Iraq* presented an opportunity to offer some preliminary thoughts on the jewellery discovered at Ur of the Chaldees. In this article (Maxwell-Hyslop, 1960) Rachel was able to start putting the

complimentary description of her, saying that 'she proved to be an admirable liaison with the laboratories, with which she was always in close touch and thus sucked up scientific information. Rachel has become a recognized authority on archaeological metallurgy and the economics of metal distribution in the ancient world. Author of many invaluable articles, her book on Ancient Oriental Jewellery has won acclaim and is a mine of information on ancient methods of metallurgical production.'

[9] See, for example, O. W. Muscarella, 'Near Eastern bronzes in the West: the question of origin', in S. Doehringer, D. G. Mitten and A. Steinberg (eds), *Art and Technology: a Symposium on Classical Bronzes* (Cambridge, MA, 1970), pp. 109–28.

Ur jewellery into a wider Near Eastern context, a theme she continued in her later magisterial book on Western Asiatic jewellery.

From 1949 onwards, each spring Max Mallowan directed excavations at the important Assyrian city of Nimrud on behalf of the British School of Archaeology in Iraq,[10] which meant that Rachel had to hold the fort while he was gone. Although she was never able to join the excavation, she was heavily involved in the administration of it. At the end of each season there was a division of antiquities, with half the finds (excluding the unique pieces) being given to the expedition. The direct result of this was a large number of antiquities, including ivories, cuneiform tablets, pottery, metal objects and clay figures, being sent back to London after the end of each spring season. Many of the best items were then dispatched to institutions such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Ashmolean Museum that had contributed to the cost of the excavations, and other items were put into storage at the Institute. It was Rachel's task to pack and forward the objects and to maintain the so-called distribution lists. She also took material to the laboratory for analysis and conservation. In this way she became friendly with Henry Hodges who was Lecturer in Archaeological Technology from 1957 until 1974. They shared an interest in ancient technology which led to a fruitful collaboration and three joint articles. The first (Maxwell-Hyslop and Hodges, 1962) discusses a bronze short sword presented to the Institute of Archaeology and another bought for the collection; Hodges' technical examination shows that one was a good example of the casting-on process whereby the hilt and blade were fixed together in antiquity, but in the other case the hilt and blade, although both ancient, had been fixed together fraudulently in modern times. This led to an article two years later (Maxwell-Hyslop and Hodges, 1964) which discusses the technical aspects of the casting-on process and concludes that the process of casting bronze handles on to bronze blades was only refined after the technology had been developed through casting bronze handles on to iron blades. If correct, this would have chronological implications for the date of the all-bronze weapons of this kind. This is an interesting idea but remains speculative, as the widespread introduction of iron is likely to have been rather later than previously thought. Her last article with Henry Hodges (Maxwell-Hyslop and Hodges, 1966) took advantage of the fact that the Institute of Archaeology was a university

[10] The Nimrud excavations were directed by Max Mallowan 1949–57, by David Oates 1958–62, and by Jeffrey Orchard in 1963. Throughout this period the finds allocated to the expedition were sent back to the Institute of Archaeology.

department and not a museum and therefore felt able to surrender up for destructive analysis objects in its collection. These were actually an iron sword from Iran that had been purchased by Rachel from an antiques dealer in Notting Hill, London, together with some Luristan bronzes that were acquired with the specific purpose of sending them to the laboratory for examination and analysis. Rachel records (Maxwell-Hyslop, 1999, p. 10) that Gordon Childe gave her £5 to go and buy these objects. The hilt of the sword in question was cut in half longitudinally in the British Museum Research Laboratory and was found to have been made from five sections held together by rivets. The resulting article, which was based on a detailed technical examination of three iron swords of Iranian type, concluded that they were essentially of wrought iron and that the blacksmiths had not yet learnt the processes of transforming the iron into a mild steel.

Despite family obligations and her teaching commitments, Rachel continued during these years to travel to the Middle East whenever possible. Thus in 1952 she made an extended trip to Turkey, and in the summer of 1960 she travelled around Turkey again, this time with her close friend Nancy Sandars,[11] now chiefly known for her English version of *The Epic of Gilgamesh* (Harmondsworth, 1960, revised edition 1972), and *The Sea Peoples: Warriors of the Ancient Mediterranean* (London, 1978), in the *Ancient Peoples and Places* series. The two women made their base at the British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara, from where they visited the Hittite capital of Boğazköy (Hattusa), where Nancy photographed Rachel standing in the Lion Gate, the nearby Hittite sanctuary of Yazilikaya, and the Phrygian capital of Gordion. Afterwards they flew from Ankara to Afyon, near where Rachel had once worked at Kasura, and then proceeded by train and bus via Antalya to Finike on the coast. Their plan was to visit the Bronze Age shipwreck at Cape Gelidonya being excavated by the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology under the direction of George Bass. The problem was that the only access to the expedition camp at the base of steep cliffs was by sea, and it was three hours by boat from Finike. Eventually they persuaded a local boatman to take them for what was then the princely sum of £4. On arrival they were greeted by Joan du Plat Taylor, the librarian of the Institute of Archaeology and an old friend of both women, Peter Throckmorton, the discoverer of the wreck, and one of the divers, Frédéric

[11] The two women had a shared interest in swords and weapons; see the article by N. K. Sandars on 'The first Aegean swords and their ancestry', *American Journal of Archaeology*, 65 (1961), 17–29.

Dumas. After staying overnight 'on a shelf of rock under great clouds of stars',[12] Nancy and Rachel were able to visit the wreck site (but not dive to the wreck) on the next day before returning to Finike. From there they were lucky to catch the fortnightly boat to Izmir, sailing via Bodrum (Halicarnassus), Chios and Samos. After landing at Izmir, they made their way to Athens.

In 1961 Rachel took semi-retirement from her post as Lecturer in the Department of Western Asiatic Archaeology, and was replaced by Barbara Parker, newly returned from Baghdad. However, she continued to teach a weekly course in Ancient Near Eastern metalwork until the 1970s. As a lecturer she could sometimes appear to be a bit disorganised, but this was largely because of her great enthusiasm for the subject, which often led her to stray from the narrow confines of the curriculum. She was also sometimes absent-minded, and it was not unknown for her to invite students and others to Little Tew (even to stay the night) and forget that she had done so. Nevertheless those students who were prepared to make the effort could derive great benefit from the depth of her knowledge and the breadth of her learning. Above all, she was always interested in the work of students and colleagues, and never failed to show support and enthusiasm. During this time she also continued to provide help and advice to PhD students.[13]

Retirement from the Institute of Archaeology in 1961 allowed Rachel to spend more time on her personal research which at this time was focused on jewellery and culminated in 1971 in the publication of her magisterial book on *Western Asiatic Jewellery c.3000–612 B.C.,* published by Methuen in the same series as books on Greek and Roman jewellery by Reynold Higgins and Egyptian jewellery by Alix Wilkinson. In the preface Rachel herself says it 'is a pioneer attempt to examine synoptically ancient gold and silver jewellery from Western Asia' and, taking a leaf out of the book of her erstwhile mentor, Sidney Smith, she says that she has attempted to take into account 'historical, metallurgical, linguistic, technological and archaeological evidence'. The result is a survey of personal ornaments, mainly of gold but also of silver and bronze, from the whole of the Ancient

[12] As described in a letter from Nancy Sandars to her sister Betty. I was able to visit Nancy Sandars at her home in Little Tew on 31 August 2014, shortly after her hundredth birthday. I am most grateful to Nancy for sharing with me her memories of Rachel, and for showing me letters that she wrote to her sister Betty describing her travels with Rachel. The information about the journeys given above is taken from these letters.

[13] The present writer greatly benefited from weekly sessions with Rachel during the latter stages of his Ph.D. research.

Near East (principally Mesopotamia, Anatolia, Syria-Palestine and Iran) between about 3000 BC and the end of the Assyrian Empire in 612 BC. In this way an enormous amount of material was amassed and digested and links and parallels drawn across the region. The treatment is mainly typological and stylistic, but in line with the attempt to embrace all kinds of evidence the text is also interspersed with interesting observations about social and economic conditions; for example, we read that 'the purpose of the activities of Mesopotamian jewellers from the earliest historical period in Sumer onwards was primarily religious' (Maxwell-Hyslop,1971, p. 165). Since the appearance of this book there have been some remarkable discoveries of gold jewellery, in particular in the tombs of the Assyrian queens at Nimrud in 1988–90, but it is a testament to the comprehensive coverage of the book that it still stands as the main source of reference for ancient jewellery from the Middle East.[14] For some years before her death Rachel was anxious to find a younger scholar who was willing to produce a revised edition, but no-one was identified as being equal to the task.

One of the great merits of Rachel's book is that it depends primarily on excavated material. She had a robust view of the art market and of the undesirability of dealing with unprovenanced artefacts that was far ahead of its time. For example, at the end of her brief note in *Antiquity* about unprovenanced gold work acquired by the Boston Museum of Fine Art and the University Museum of the University of Pennsylvania, Rachel wrote: 'In addition, the dangers and misleading results which arise from using "treasures" obtained through dealers as valid archaeological evidence cannot be overstressed. Whether genuine, fake, or part-genuine, part-fake, they are irrelevant' (Maxwell-Hyslop, 1979, p. 228). And it is much to her credit that there is no mention in her jewellery book of the Dorak Treasure allegedly seen by James Mellaart in 1958 and now widely believed to have been a figment of Mellaart's imagination.[15]

The jewellery book was complemented by a number of articles that appeared before and after it. We have already referred to the note about

[14] For a useful review of the book by Prentiss de Jesus, see *Anadolu*, 6 (1971), 161–9. Inevitably, with the passage of time some opinions and identifications in the book need to be revisited. For example, in the last chapter Rachel considers the Median silver hoard from Tepe Nush-i Jan in Iran and suggests that the spiral pendants and beads are first millennium reproductions of earlier forms (Maxwell-Hyslop, 1971, p. 267). In fact it seems more likely that they are archaic objects dating from the late third or early second millennium BC. See J. E. Curtis, *Nush-i Jan* III (London, 1984), pp. 1–21.

[15] Drawings were published in the *Illustrated London News* of 29 November 1959. For more on Mellaart and the 'Dorak Treasure' see the memoir in the current volume: I. Hodder, 'James Mellaart 1925–2012', especially pp. 411–20.

goldwork in Boston and Philadelphia. Then, the few pieces of gold jewellery discovered at Nimrud up to that time were published in 1971 (with J. E. Curtis), and a note about a tiny gold ring from Ur made up of a circle of gold granules, with analytical and technological information, led to a discussion of gold sources in the Sumerian period (Maxwell-Hyslop, 1977). In 1980 she wrote about possible identifications of jewellery types in a Hittite text, appropriately in a Festschrift for the Hittite scholar Oliver Gurney (Maxwell-Hyslop, 1980).

Rachel was also very interested in the sources and working of iron, and for the Mallowan Festschrift in 1974 she wrote a paper on sources of iron in the Middle and Late Assyrian periods (Maxwell-Hyslop, 1974), and in 1976 she collaborated with Dr Alan Williams of the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology to produce a paper on a collection of iron tools found with several bronze objects including a helmet by Sir Flinders Petrie at Thebes in Egypt and now in the Manchester Museum. The paper attributed the tools to the Assyrian occupation of Thebes, as Petrie had done, and concluded that some of the objects were made of a mild steel (Maxwell-Hyslop and Williams, 1976). There followed a period of fruitful collaboration with colleagues who were all keenly interested in early iron technology, namely Robert (Bob) Maddin, Professor of Metallurgy at the University of Pennsylvania, Tamara Stech Wheeler, then a Research Assistant in the Department of Metallurgy and Materials Science at the University of Pennsylvania, and Professor James D. Muhly, also of the University of Pennsylvania, that resulted in joint articles on an iron dagger from Petrie's excavations at Tell Fara (1978) and iron objects found in the Israeli excavations at Taanach (1981).

For many years Rachel had been interested in the date of the gold treasure found by Schliemann at Troy and the similarities with material found in Grave 20 at Ashur in Northern Mesopotamia. She discussed this in her jewellery book, and returned to the subject at the International Colloquium on Aegean Prehistory at the University of Sheffield in April 1977, when she delivered a paper on the date of Grave 20 at Ashur. She followed this up in the Mycenaean Seminar at the Institute of Classical Studies on 17 January 1979, when she and Sinclair Hood each delivered a paper on the dating of Treasure A and the end of Troy Level II with which it is associated.[16] Each concluded that the end of Troy IIg must have been after 2000 BC, probably at some time in the twentieth to nineteenth cen-

[16] M. F. S. Hood, 'Dating Troy II – Part II', *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies*, 26 (1979), 125–6.

tury BC.[17] Rachel based her argument in part on the fact that the quadruple spiral gold beads, gold earrings and a bronze pan with handle and ribbed decoration[18] found at Troy were all similar to material found in Grave 20 at Ashur which she dated after 2000 BC.[19]

Retirement from the Institute in 1961 also allowed Rachel more time to travel.[20] She visited Turkey again in 1961, and in 1963 she travelled together with Bill to Lebanon, Syria and Jordan, gathering material for her jewellery book. In 1962 she had been able to visit Iran for the first time in the company of Nancy Sandars. The two ladies met at Kayseri in Turkey, as Rachel had been staying at the nearby site of Kültepe-Kanesh with Oliver Gurney, who was studying the tablets from there. Rachel herself later wrote about the metals *amūtu* and *aši'u* in the Kültepe texts in *Anatolian Studies* (Maxwell-Hyslop, 1972). They travelled by bus to Tabriz, and flew from there to Tehran where they stayed in the old headquarters of the British Institute of Persian Studies (BIPS) in Takht-i Jamshid. In the National Museum they were shown the newly discovered gold treasures from the late second millennium BC tombs at Marlik by the excavator himself, Professor Ezatollah Negahban, who later took them in person to the site by jeep. They travelled with an armed escort, as it was known that gold had been found at the site and Negahban was much troubled by the activities of robbers and antiquities dealers. They stayed there overnight. After returning to Tehran, they drove by bus to Pasargadae, the capital of Cyrus, where David Stronach was excavating with a BIPS team. They visited Persepolis, and then flew from Shiraz to Abadan. In Khuzistan they visited Susa and Choga Zanbil, and returned to Tehran by train. Here they met up with the distinguished French archaeologist Professor Roman Ghirshman. Rachel returned to Iran in 1968 to attend the Fifth International Congress of Iranian Art and Archaeology, held in Tehran, Isfahan and Shiraz, and in 1973 she gave a lecture at BIPS on 'Middle Assyrian and Elamite jewellery'. Also at this time she visited the American excavations at Tepe Yahya in Eastern Iran. While in Tehran, at the request of Sir Max Mallowan she assisted David Stronach in putting the final touches to his great report on the excavations

[17] Most authorities would now prefer a slightly earlier date, but the matter is far from resolved.

[18] In *Western Asiatic Jewellery* (Maxwell-Hyslop, 1971, p. 71) Rachel suggested that such pans could have been used for panning gold.

[19] For a proposed earlier date for this grave, see P. Calmeyer, 'Das Grab eines altassryischen Kaufmanns', *Iraq,* 39 (1977), 87–97.

[20] Visits in following years included trips to Yemen, Central Asia (Samarkand and Bokhara) and India. She was also a regular attendee whenever possible at the Rencontre Assyriologique.

of the British Institute of Persian Studies at Pasargadae 1961–3.[21] She read the book, making a number of helpful comments and suggestions, and compiled the index.

In spring 1970 she had been able to return to Iraq, staying at the British School of Archaeology on the banks of the River Tigris in Baghdad. From here, she travelled widely, visiting sites in the north and south of the country, sometimes with young colleagues who were also staying at the British School. On one occasion, during a tour of Northern Iraq, the group decided to visit the Assyrian reliefs on the River Gommel near Bavian.[22] They stopped at the police post at Ain Sifni, and a young policeman was detailed to accompany the group to Bavian. He led them to a hillside which at a distance appeared to be quite featureless, but close up it could be seen that the lush springtime grass was covering the ruins of mud brick houses. When told this was not the site the group wished to visit, he insisted on returning to Ain Sifni and complained vociferously to his superior that he had been given the wrong instructions. He was then instantly and severely reprimanded for taking a group of foreigners to the Kurdish village of Bavian that had been recently destroyed by the Iraqi army. This was during the 'Anfal', the genocidal campaign waged against the Kurds by the Iraqi government. When the group did finally get to the Assyrian site of Bavian, their Land Rover got stuck in the River Gommel. In the south of Iraq Rachel had the special privilege of visiting the marshes before they were later drained by Saddam Hussein. It was typical of Rachel, and her determination not to waste any opportunity, that during this visit to Iraq she looked for (and found) on the banks of the River Tigris a leaf that matched the gold leaves of the Sumerian headdresses from Ur.[23] The gold leaves had previously been wrongly identified as beech, but the newly collected leaf showed they belonged to a member of the willow family (*populus euphratica*).

A visit to Afghanistan in 1978 and study in the Kabul Museum resulted in a paper (Maxwell-Hyslop, 1982) on the remarkable hoard of gold and silver vessels found by chance near the village of Fullol in North-East Afghanistan in 1966.[24] The hoard is dated to *c*.2200–1900 BC, and Rachel's

[21] D. Stronach, *Pasargadae: a Report on the Excavations Cconducted by the British Institute of Persian Studies from 1961 to 1963* (Oxford, 1978).
[22] With Rachel were Erika Bleibtreu, Martin Selman and John Curtis.
[23] See Maxwell-Hyslop, *Western Asiatic Jewellery* (1971), p. 3, n. 2.
[24] Some of these pieces were shown in the 2011 Afghanistan exhibition at the British Museum; see F. Hiebert and P. Cambon (eds), *Afghanistan: Crossroads of the Ancient World* (London, 2011), pp. 67–79.

paper helped to demonstrate that at this period there was a rich and flourishing civilisation in Northern Afghanistan with easy access to sources of gold and lapis lazuli that was part of an elaborate long-distance trading network. Her interest in this civilisation also led to an article for the Ruth Mayer-Opicius Festschrift (written jointly with Barbara Mallowan, 1994) on a clay seal of similar date now in the British Museum,[25] said to come from Akra in Pakistan close to the modern Afghanistan border. This seal is an unusual combination of cylinder and stamp and has engraved designs of snakes and birds. Rachel's interest in this region had also manifested itself in a paper given at a British Museum conference in 1986 on 'Bronzeworking Centres of Western Asia *c*.1000–539 BC' where she spoke about the evidence from Central Asia in the first millennium BC (Maxwell-Hyslop, 1988). She was also keenly aware of the connections between Central Asia and Iran, and in an article about bronzes found at Khinaman near Kerman in Iran, dating from around 2000 BC, she was at pains to stress that 'Kerman is situated today on the main route from Iran to Pakistan via Bam and Zahidan' (Maxwell-Hyslop, 1988, p. 129).

In 1966, Rachel and Bill had moved from London to Water Lane House in the picturesque village of Little Tew in Oxfordshire. They were drawn to Little Tew because Rachel's long-standing friend Nancy Sandars lived in the nearby Manor House. Previously they had rented a remote cottage on the Berkshire downs above Aston Tirrold for weekends and holidays. The house in Little Tew, built of local ironstone and with thatched roofs, was surrounded by a large garden extending down to a stream.

Rachel's extensive library was accommodated in a room on the ground floor of the house with stone-flagged floor and a wide open fireplace. After her death, this library was generously presented by the family to the Department of Archaeology at the University of Reading, where a room in the department has been named after her. For a while after the move, Bill continued to work in London, commuting weekly. After his retirement, he translated from French Pierre Grimal's *Dictionary of Classical Mythology* (Oxford, 1986 and 1990).[26] Sadly, towards the end of his life he suffered from dementia and spent his last years in a nursing home in Chipping Norton. Rachel was a regular visitor and cared for him devotedly.

[25] On this seal see also now F. Khan, J. R. Knox, P. Magee and K. D. Thomas, 'Akra: the ancient capital of Bannu', *Journal of Asian Civilizations*, 23 (2000), pp. 54–5, 77, 171–2.

[26] Previously, he had translated with M. S. Drower Pierre Montet's *Everyday Life in Egypt in the Days of Ramesses the Great* (London, 1958) as well as with Rachel the book by Georges Contenau referred to above.

Rachel was a committed Christian and a regular churchgoer. When she first went to live in Little Tew, she usually attended services in the local nineteenth-century church of St John the Evangelist, and indeed her father was buried in the churchyard there in 1978. She also regularly worshipped at the historic church of St Michael and All Angels in Great Tew, founded in Norman times and with a number of interesting monuments and architectural features. When in 1988 medieval paintings showing the passion of Christ were uncovered in the south aisle, Rachel was the obvious person to publish them, which she did in a small booklet which also contains a detailed history of the church (Maxwell-Hyslop, 1996). She was not only an active supporter of the two churches in The Tews, but she also fully involved herself in the activities of the local community.

In Little Tew, Rachel continued to follow a wide range of interests which included gardening, painting and playing the piano. Amongst other things the garden is said to have produced the lavender that she sometimes smoked in a pipe instead of the Turkish cigarettes that she enjoyed in earlier years. She loved entertaining friends and being with her family which now included three grandchildren in whom she took a keen interest. From Little Tew, Rachel kept in close touch with developments in Near Eastern archaeology and was a frequent visitor to the Griffith Institute and the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, where she often consulted Roger Moorey, Keeper of Antiquities.[27] She also travelled whenever possible in the Middle East. In 1987 she attended the Rencontre Assyriologique in Istanbul and read a paper on bronze axe-heads (Maxwell-Hyslop, 1998). In 1989, she returned to Iraq together with Lady Mallowan to visit the British Museum excavations at Nimrud and Balawat directed by former students John Curtis and Dominique Collon. The two distinguished visitors were initially accommodated in a concrete guest-house reserved for VIPs in the Nineveh compound, but soon moved to the more basic mud brick building nearby occupied by the rest of the team, which they found more congenial. Then at the age of eighty-three in 1997 she paid a lengthy visit to the excavation of David and Joan Oates at Tell Brak in Syria and relished staying there under canvas. She subsequently contributed to a chapter on the third millennium BC metalwork from Tell Brak in the second volume of Brak final reports (Maxwell-Hyslop, 2001). For the David Oates Festschrift (Maxwell-Hyslop, 2002) she returned to her erstwhile interest in tools and weapons by writing an article on 'curved sickle-swords', of which the best-known example has an inscription of the Assyrian king Adad-nirari I

[27] P. R. S. Moorey (1937–2004), FBA 1977.

(1305–1274 BC). This proved to be her last article, but she had remained active up until this point, continuing with her scholarly research. Apart from the works already mentioned, she wrote articles for Festschrifts honouring the Turkish husband and wife team Tahsin and Nimet Özgüç, on quadruple spiral designs (Maxwell-Hyslop, 1989) and gold jewellery from Carchemish (Maxwell-Hyslop, 1993). There were also notes about the Sumerian goddess Nanshe (Maxwell-Hyslop, 1992) and the Tod Treasure found in a temple in Egypt in 1936 and possibly dating from the reign of Amenemhat II (*c*.1929–1895 BC). In the latter paper (Maxwell-Hyslop, 1995), Rachel argued that the silver vessels found with the Treasure were of Anatolian, Syrian or Mesopotamian origin.[28]

During these years, her close friends were the archaeologist Nancy Sandars (FBA 1984) who lived in the nearby Manor House at Little Tew, the Hittite scholar Oliver Gurney (1911–2001, FBA 1959), who until his retirement in 1978 was Shillito Reader in Assyriology at the University of Oxford and lived on Boars Hill, and Sinclair Hood (FBA 1983), Director of the British School of Archaeology at Athens 1954–62, who lived at Great Milton, both also in Oxfordshire. She continued to come to events in London, and at the opening of the Norman Foster-designed Great Court at the British Museum in 2000 she was interviewed on national television praising this new cultural resource. She was also able to participate in the Rencontre Assyriologique that was held in London in 2003. Among the last events she attended (by then in a wheelchair) was a symposium on seals at Magdalen College, Oxford in June 2005 organised in honour of Dominique Collon.

Rachel had a life-long association with the British School of Archaeology in Iraq (now the British Institute for the Study of Iraq). She served as a member of Council from 1958 until 1996, was Vice-President 2001–4 and in 2004 (until 2007) she succeeded Lady Mallowan as President. It was therefore entirely appropriate that the School organised a party to celebrate her ninetieth birthday after one of its lectures in 2004. Rachel was also a long-standing member of the Council of Management of the British Institute of Archaeology in Turkey 1954–82, and a member of the Council of the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem 1971–7. During this latter time she visited the Institute in Amman to deliver a lecture on 'Sumerian gold jewellery'. She was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries as early as 1943, and in 1991 she was elected a

[28] In his *Ancient Mesopotamian Materials and Industries* (Oxford, 1999, p. 90), Roger Moorey argues that some of the Treasure was made in Iran.

Fellow of the British Academy. In this, she shared with her friend and colleague Dame Kathleen Kenyon (FBA 1955) the honour of following in her father's footsteps: Sir Charles Clay had been elected FBA in 1950 and Kathleen's father Sir Frederic Kenyon was President of the British Academy 1917–21. Rachel is said to have appreciated being elected an FBA at the age of seventy-seven because she was able to express herself freely in meetings without the risk of jeopardising her career.

After playing the piano as usual at home in Little Tew, she spent one night in the Horton General Hospital, Banbury, where she died on 9 May 2011 at the age of ninety-seven. After a funeral service at the Church of St Michael and All Angels, Great Tew, on 16 May, she was buried next to her husband in the adjacent churchyard.

JOHN CURTIS
Fellow of the Academy

Note. In the preparation of this memoir I have drawn on obituaries that appeared in *The Guardian* on 29 June 2011, in the *Daily Telegraph* on 4 August 2011, in the journal *Iraq*, 73 (2011), ix–x, and on Rachel Maxwell-Hyslop's own reminiscences that appeared in *Archaeology International*, 3 (1999), 9–10. I am grateful to Hilary Maxwell-Hyslop and Nancy Sandars for personal information.

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In contrast to many other distinguished Near Eastern archaeologists and Fellows of the British Academy (e.g. Seton Lloyd, R. D. Barnett, David Oates, Roger Moorey), Rachel never received a Festschrift or a volume dedicated to her and so a bibliography of her writings has never appeared. It is therefore appropriate to include such a list here, particularly as it will help readers to evaluate her contribution to the subject.

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