



Pioneers to the Past

American Archaeologists in the Middle East, 1919-1920

edited by Geoff Emberling

DESCRIPTION:

Pioneers to the Past: American Archaeologists in the Middle East, 1919-1920, the catalogue of the Oriental Institute special exhibit of the same name, highlights the interconnected stories of an important figure in intellectual history - James Henry Breasted - and the beginnings of American scientific archaeology in the Near East at a crucial turning point in world history. At the end of World War I, Breasted and a small team of scholars set sail for the Near East on what would be an eleven-month odyssey across the region. The fascinating mix of politics, scholarship, and history (both ancient and modern) as seen through a focus on the larger-than-life persona of James Henry Breasted lies at the heart of **Pioneers to the Past**. Breasted's letters and photographs from his trip provide a window into the engagement of modern scholarship with the ancient world, in a highly charged setting of power politics in the early twentieth century. The essays in this catalogue explain the historical, legal, and political context in a way that greatly enriches our understanding of Breasted's journey and its aftermath.

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