

Austen Henry Layard Encyclopedia Article

Austen Henry Layard

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1817-1894

English archaeologist who unearthed the ruins of ancient Assyrian cities from beneath ancient mounds in what is now Iraq. There he discovered alabaster palaces, gigantic statues of winged animals with human heads, and many tablets of wedge-shaped cuneiform writing. Among the cities was Nineveh, a city mentioned in the Bible but which had been regarded by many as legend. Layard became known as the "Father of Assyriology." Later in life he served as a British diplomat.