

## A R C H A E O L O G Y



## The Epigraphic Survey

*Lanny Bell*

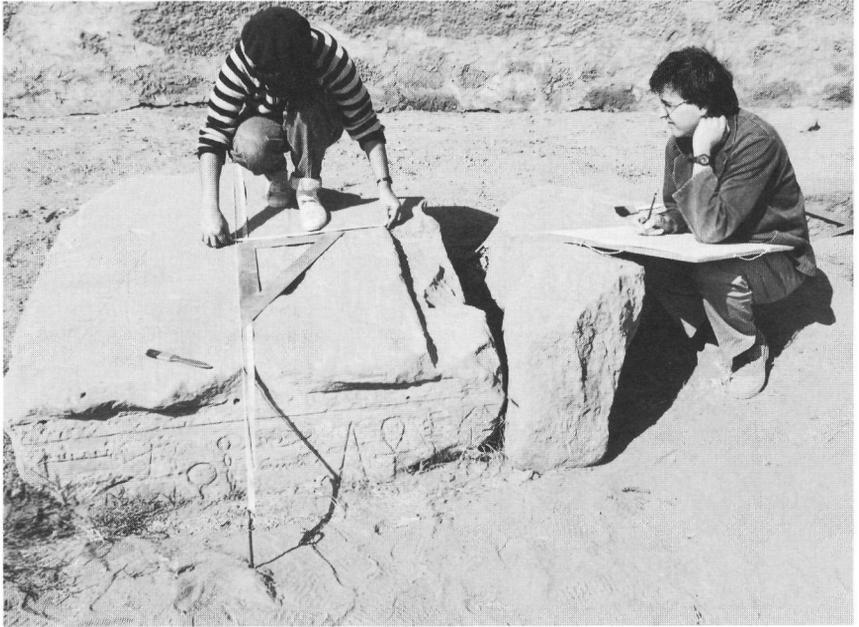
The efforts of our two conservators during the 1984–85 season of the Epigraphic Survey were divided once more between monumental and domestic repairs. Working again at Medinet Habu in collaboration with the skilled restorers of the Egyptian Antiquities Organization, they completed the interior and exterior gap-filling of the walls and roof of the six chapels at the back of the Small Temple. The open skylights in Rooms L and O were covered with translucent plastic in time to shut out the heavy rain which fell on April 13. A final light cleaning of the walls of Room Q was undertaken in conjunction with the construction of an experimental floor to protect the newly cleaned walls from the dust unavoidably kicked up by anyone walking across the uneven dirt floor which existed here before. The new floor will support both our epigraphic work and eventual heavy tourist traffic. The ancient flooring blocks which still survive have subsided irregularly; freed from the debris in which they were buried, they were covered over with a layer of fine gravel to cushion them and raise the level of the floor to nearly its original height. A cover of impermeable concrete tiles, tinted approximately the color of the sandstone and arranged to imitate the pattern of the Pharaonic floor, was laid on top of the gravel in a thin layer of white cement mortar. The edge of this floor, which is set back about 50 cm from the walls to allow for the installation of permanent lighting fixtures at the conclusion of our own work, is fitted with a continuous raised curb to help bond the paved center of the floor together and remind visitors not to touch the decoration. Although the result is somewhat artificial in appearance, insofar as it diverges from the original architectural scheme of the building, this plan treats each room like a modern museum display. Because there is no direct contact between the new floor and the walls, the system is open, permitting the evaporation of ground water alongside rather than through the porous walls. Designed for minimal maintenance, the floor may easily be removed should this prove necessary for any future investigation or further conservation. We have now requested the

approval of the Permanent Committee of Antiquities Organization before finishing the remaining rooms of this complex.

The Antiquities Organization's restorers replaced the shattered surface of a decorated block which was literally hanging by a thread when our epigraphers inspected it during their work on the rapidly disintegrating outer enclosure wall of the Ramesses III Temple. Clearly in much better condition in one of our fifty-five year old photos, the turn of the century repairs which had served to hold this fragile stone in place were giving way practically before our eyes. Fissured by growing salt crystals, the whole surface was being forced off the wall, buckling and crumbling as it went. Our photographer was rushed to the scene and the situation was called to the immediate attention of the Chief Inspector of Qurna, Mohammed Nasr, who set the temple restorers right to work on it. Fortunately, much of the block could still be saved. Dr. Ahmed Qadry, Chairman of the Egyptian Antiquities Organization, reported at the opening session of the Fourth International Congress of Egyptology, held in Munich during the summer of 1985, that the Antiquities Organization's an-

*Richard Jaeschke  
filling gaps in  
masonry on roof of  
small temple at  
Medinet Habu, with  
Ramesses III pylon in  
background. Photo  
by Susan Lezon.*

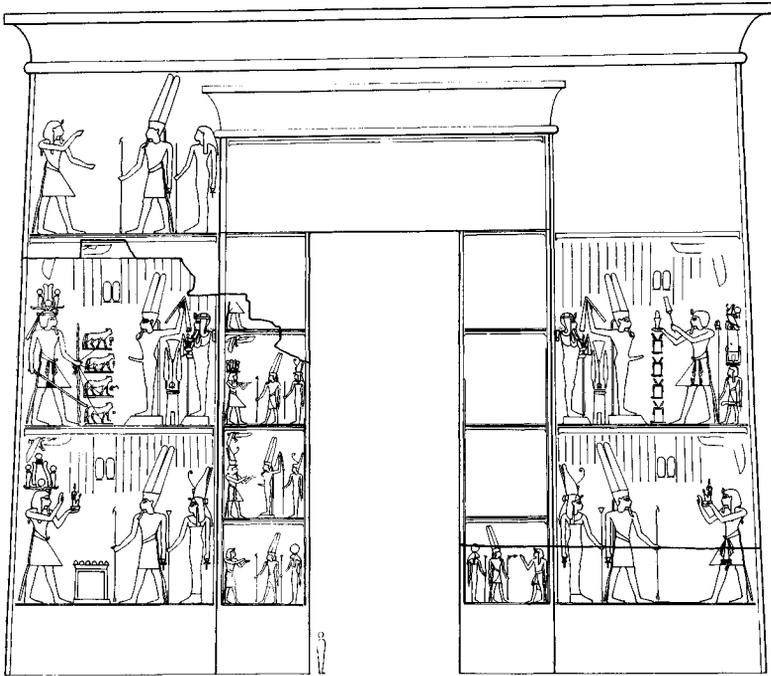




*Sal and Barbie Garfi  
documenting  
architectural  
fragment from the  
Colonnade at Luxor  
Temple. Photo by  
Susan Lezon.*

nual budget for conservation is currently running at fifteen million Egyptian pounds (well over ten million dollars).

The Antiquities Organization's restorers were very busy at Luxor Temple this year removing salt crystals from stone surfaces, gap-filling, and cleaning the spectacularly painted reliefs in the Offering Hall before the central Barque Sanctuary. Our conservation activities at Luxor consisted of monitoring the plaster breaks which we had first placed on the architraves of the Portico and Court of Amenhotep III in 1983 to study the seasonal movements of the columns on which they rest; planning the initial stages of the replacement of fragments to their original positions in the walls of the Colonnade and Amenhotep III Court; and dismantling the unstable stone foundations of an annex to the 7th-8th Century church located on the east side of the Avenue of Sphinxes. Exposed by excavation and undermined by wind erosion, part of one precariously perched section of these walls had shifted and collapsed in the summer of 1984, damaging some delicate fragments. It was only a matter of time before continued erosion or disturbance by animals or even tourists would have brought down the rest, endangering the life and limb of any passers by, threatening damage to the nearest sphinx, and shattering many more fragments. After receiving the permission of Mohammed el-Sughayyir, Director of Antiquities for Southern Upper Egypt, and in consultation with



*Reconstruction of the Eighteenth Dynasty facade of the Luxor Colonnade. Drawing by Raymond Johnson.*

Peter Grossmann of the German Archaeological Institute in Cairo, who had previously documented the architectural remains of this church, the endangered walls were carefully dismantled. The fragments were recorded *in situ*, consolidated as necessary both before and after removal to an adjacent storage area, and the pottery recovered from the fill was collected for later analysis.

The perilous condition of this foundation had been noted by Ray Johnson last season while searching for fragments for our reconstructions of the upper registers of the Colonnade. In 1983 he was able to see some decoration on 36 of the stones of this foundation; by the fall of 1984, so much movement had occurred that 55 decorated faces were visible. On the basis of style, content, and recognizable cartouches, Ray had determined that nearly all the fragments came from the south end of the west wall of the Colonnade, where Sety I had carved the reliefs. Of the 188 fragments newly identified this season, 156 were recovered from the church annex; and a total of 99 fragments (75 from this foundation) have been incorporated into a series of offering scenes from the third register, six stone courses (4 m) in height, showing the king

before the various members of the Great Theban Ennead. As the only reused pieces from the Colonnade known to us still *in situ* in their secondary context, these fragments provide new evidence regarding the systematic quarrying away of the walls of Luxor Temple for building materials in the Middle Ages. An additional 9 fragments from the façade of the Colonnade have also been registered. Many of the blocks we have assembled over the years preserve architectural details important to our study of the Colonnade's construction.

Besides their on-site activities, our conservators also carried with them from England many heavy spare parts for continuing the refurbishing of our 1963 Land Rover. In addition, they replastered breaks in several walls in Chicago House; resurfaced a section of the driveway which had been broken up to replace an electric cable; recemented part of the front fence and helped rehang the main gate, damaged when a large tree branch fell on them; and replaced the floor tiles removed while locating and repairing a water leak in the library wing heating system. Their role was crucial in finishing and floating a new dock in our legal battle to regain control over the Chicago House landing, which had been usurped over the summer. This struggle monopolized the Field Director's time, night and day, during the first two

*Staff members and houseguests moving new floating dock to Chicago House landing. Photo by Susan Lezon.*

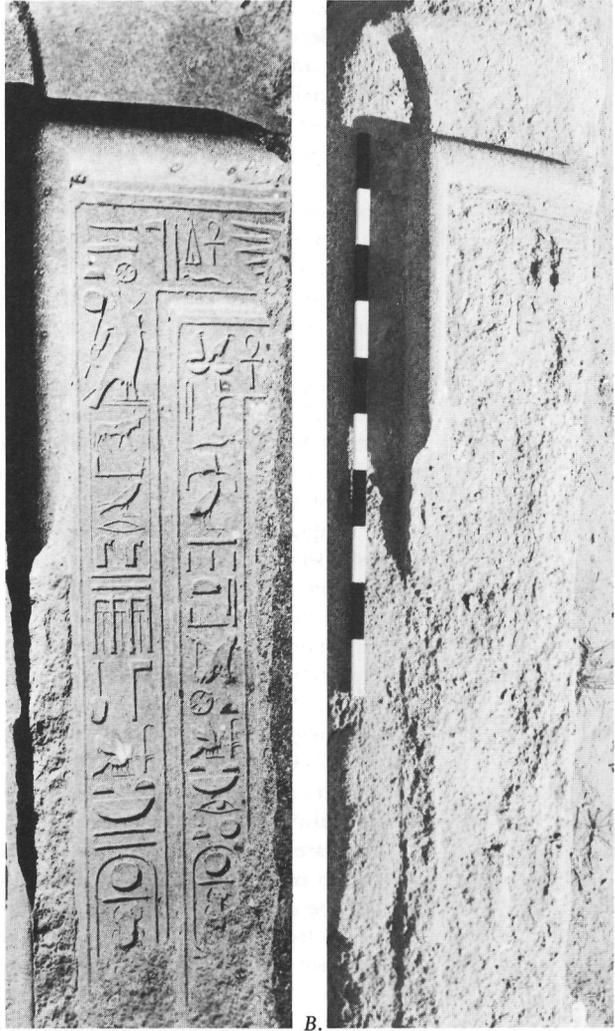


months of the season. Our triumph was especially facilitated by the efforts of local police officials and the timely intervention of the United States Embassy in Cairo.

Our photographer, working with us four months in Luxor, duplicated 84 deteriorating negatives and copied our old collection of 158 albumen prints made by such photographic pioneers as Antonio Beato (fl. 1862–1903), Sebah (fl. 1868–1890), and Bonfils (fl. 1867–1885). The originals will now be interleaved with barrier paper to retard further deterioration. Consulting our print files for the Theban tombs in connection with his own study of the reign of Amenhotep II, Peter Der Manuelian was able to identify an extensive series of Schott photos which we had previously incorrectly attributed. Reorganization of our archive of 14,000 negatives and 20,000 prints took a big step forward with the purchase of four metal filing cabinets for the storage of stable negatives: nearly 1000 negatives have been packaged in acid-free envelopes, housed in archival boxes, and transferred into them. Our photo archivist, Jill Maher, undertook the task of registering 50 rolls of 35 mm negatives covering such diverse subjects as Chicago House social activities and Luxor Temple architraves. Fieldwork has been greatly facilitated by the acquisition of a state-of-the-art 165 mm Schneider Super Angulon wide-angle lens with Compur shutter for our 5" × 7" and 8" × 10" cameras. Donated by a generous benefactor, this lens has made it possible to begin documenting the newly cleaned walls of the Small Temple at Medinet Habu, in preparation for drawing them. In the meantime, the leaks in the lead-lined wooden sinks in the darkroom became so serious a problem that their replacement is now a high priority. Due to our local reputation, we were offered a private archive of some 800 glass negatives produced around 60 years ago. Mostly general views of Upper Egyptian monuments, this collection complements our own detailed record of individual reliefs. All need to be cleaned and about two-thirds of the lot require conservation, but the owner resisted repeated efforts to negotiate the purchase price to a level we could afford to pay. He has already begun to disperse the archive, selling off plates one by one; tragically, the least picturesque and less well preserved images will probably eventually be scrubbed off to sell the glass.

Our epigraphers have finished making hand copies of every inscription and scene in the Small Temple of Medinet Habu, and problematic areas in need of special attention have been identified. Working from a 3-story wooden ladder and our portable aluminum scaffolding, they were able to reach even the top of the Ptolemaic Pylon. A total of 475 decorated blocks built into the Small Temple and the Chapels of the

*Fragment of red granite false door at Medinet Habu. A. As published in Hölscher, The Excavations of Medinet Habu II in 1939, Oriental Institute photo. B. As preserved in 1985. Photo by Susan*



Saite Princesses have been recorded. Bill Murnane made some new joins among the scattered pieces originally taken from the Ramesseum, and was able to suggest the area of the temple from which some of them might have come, on the basis of the forms of the names of Ramesses II found on them; the further study of this material should contribute to our knowledge of the building history of the Ramesseum itself. Working from an old Oriental Institute photo and the available parallels, he also restored much of the inscriptions on the badly eroded granite doorjambs of Pedamenopet (probably originally from Theban Tomb 33) reused in the

northern gateway into the Late Ptolemaic Colonnade behind the Second Pylon. Steven Shubert began the translation of texts and a study of the decorative program of the reliefs, especially in regard to the evidence for Late Period innovations in the theology of this important cult place. The copying of the outer stone enclosure wall of the Ramesses III Temple and the jambs of the Roman gateway into the Small Temple necessitates the removal of some of the modern debris which has piled up against their street sides during the last half century. Once more with the permission of Mohammed el-Sughayyir, this work was undertaken; and the preliminary epigraphic study of the cleared areas has been accomplished. Only 30% of the Saite Chapels has ever been published in any form; our preliminary copies of all this material are ready for collation next year. Isolated elements still awaiting copying at Medinet Habu include the wells, the destroyed Western High Gate, and the many loose fragments lying around the complex.

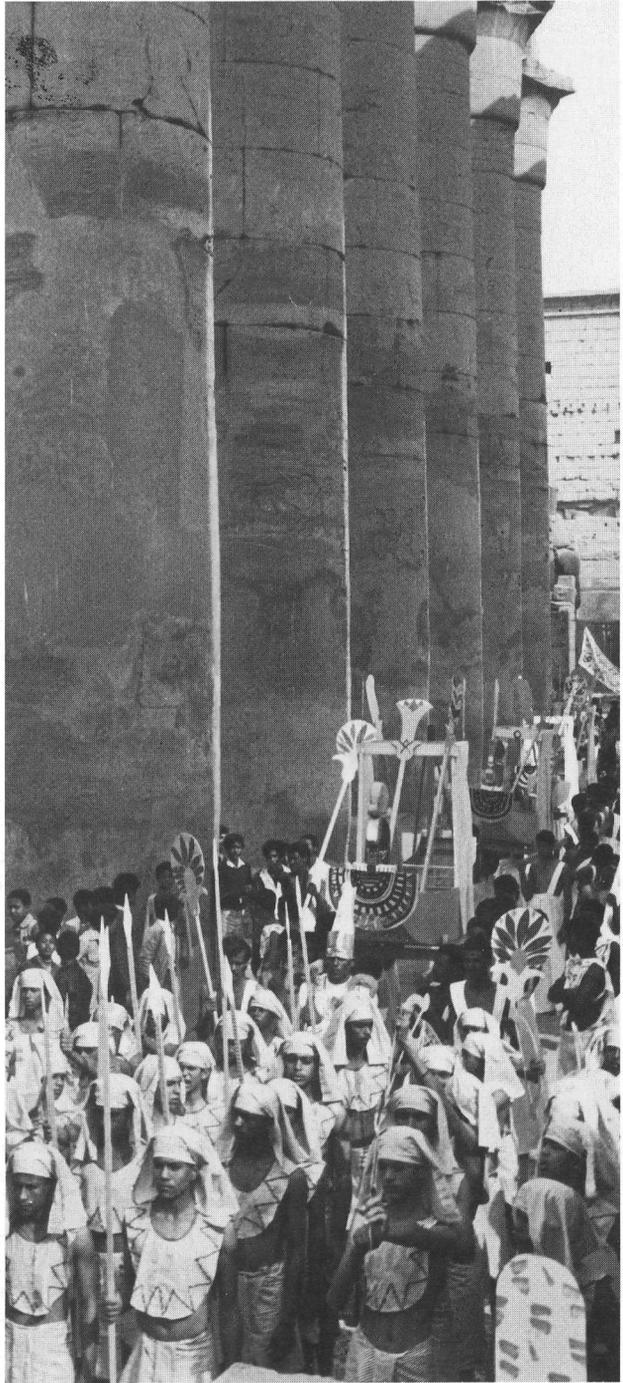
Epigraphy at Luxor Temple was centered around the unpublished Koch photographs recently made available to us through Elke Blumenthal of the Egyptian Museum of Karl Marx University in Leipzig. As each print was compared with the standing walls and collated against our drawings, the tremendous value of this new tool became immediately obvious. Probably taken in 1913, these high quality photographs provide countless details already lost by the time of the Wreszinski series (taken in 1926) and clarify many points which are obscure in the Daressy series (published in 1894) or show areas which are not covered by Daressy. Of the 180 separate drawings we have produced of the interior decoration of the standing walls of the Colonnade, nearly half will be enhanced by significant additions or improvements made from this remarkable set of photographs. Our study of them has even called attention to a detail of the barque of Amun-Re which, although actually visible on the wall, is so faintly preserved today that it had been overlooked completely before. To our growing resources on the history of prior work at Luxor were added this season copies of pages from the notebooks of Charles Edwin Wilbour, kindly presented by Richard Fazzini of the Brooklyn Museum's Mut Temple Project. Epigraphic housekeeping included the preparation of dictionary and palaeography cards for *The Beit el-Wali Temple of Ramesses II*, published in collaboration with the Epigraphic Survey in 1967. In yet another attempt to place our current research in Luxor Temple in its proper perspective, Bill Murnane, Ray Johnson, Richard and Helena Jaeschke, former staff member Frank Yurco, and myself all contributed short texts for a special issue of the semi-popular

French magazine *Histoire et archéologie*, scheduled for 1986. Our publication of *The Battle Reliefs of King Sety I* should appear by December of 1985, Bill Murnane's *The Road to Kadesh: A Historical Interpretation of the Battle Reliefs of King Sety I at Karnak* is already in print, and Françoise Traunecker's *Khonsu III* (the architecture) should be ready for editing in the spring of 1986.

In the library, 373 new items were accessioned, besides current periodicals, bringing our holdings to more than 14,000 items. In addition, the serial files were revised, incorporating articles from journals not regularly received at Chicago House. The repairs undertaken this season included the removal of strapping tape (once used in mending), taping damaged pages and tipping-in detached plates with archival tape, and completely recasing 9 books. New archival measures include the use of mylar folders and acid-free boxes for the storage of unbound materials and loose sheets, and lamination of paperbacks to preserve their covers. Additional rare or valuable volumes were identified through antiquarian catalogues and removed from open shelves to help protect them, and a reprint edition of David Roberts' *Egypt and Nubia* (1846–49) was purchased to replace the set of original drawings withdrawn from daily use in 1979. As a measure of the beneficial effect exercised on our valuable collection by the Chicago House library building itself, we may note that the outdoor humidity, as measured in our garden between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM daily during May and the first week of June, varied between 25% and 56%, while inside the fluctuation was only 36% to 44%. The temperature inside the library reached 90 degrees during that time, with 108 degrees registered outside. Our library facilities were utilized this season by scholars representing institutions in the United States, Egypt, and twelve other nations.

We hung a commemorative wall cabinet in the library this year at Labib Habachi's old table, in the alcove where he sat and worked so long, to display the many international medals awarded to him over the years in recognition of his scholarly achievements. In accordance with his last wishes, his invaluable personal archive of photographs, notebooks, and manuscripts is being transferred to Chicago House for safekeeping and eventual publication. The organization of this material has now begun with the assistance of Labib's widow Atteiya and his long-time friend and colleague, Henri Riad. During the time they were in Luxor with us, both Atteiya and Dr. Riad were also of great help to me in the translation of various official Arabic language documents relating to Chicago House.

In 1983 I reported the discovery of some sandstone blocks from the the barque station which Queen Hatshepsut con-



*Re-enactment of the  
Opet Festival  
procession as staged  
in Luxor Temple in  
December of 1984.  
Photo by Susan  
Lezon.*

structed near the southern end of the 2 km processional way linking Karnak and Luxor for the celebration of the Opet Festival. Ramesses II had reused this material in building the Triple Barque Shrine which now stands in his Court at Luxor Temple. This spring Ray Johnson and I traced a total of 21 fragments with visible relief, which will be used in attempting to reconstruct the architecture and decoration of the Hatshepsut chapel. The motifs include at least four depictions of bound Nine Bow prisoners (representing the traditional domains of the Egyptian ruler) presented before the *sm3-t3wy* design, symbolizing the unification of Upper and Lower Egypt. While these are the earliest canonical Nine Bow lists known to us, they also contain the second oldest reference to the *Shosu*-bedouin of southern Palestine (the first occurrence of this term being from the reign of Thutmose II, the husband and half-brother of Hatshepsut). Of two additional incomplete geographical names, one is probably to be restored as *Retenu*, a general designation for Syria-Palestine; the other cannot yet be identified. These fragments thus seem to corroborate the historicity of the Syro-Palestinian campaign already postulated for this queen on the basis of other evidence. In fact, this campaign may well underlie some of the rhetoric of Hatshepsut's great Speos Artemidos inscription in regard to her role in redressing the evils of the recently terminated Hyksos rule over Egypt.

Despite the current extremely favorable dollar exchange rate, high inflation continues to push up real costs. As an example, in just 10 years the base salaries of two of our senior full-time Egyptian workmen have shot up by 330%! This was hardly a typical year for me as Field Director, necessitating my spending by far the greater part of our six-month field season away from direct supervision of the primary documentary work of the Epigraphic Survey. Besides dealing with the protracted problem of a trespassing tour boat, settling a court case brought by a workman dismissed from Chicago House in 1981, and eventually prevailing upon the municipal garbage collectors to pick up the Chicago House trash, I was ably introduced to my new role in the fund-raising process, both in Chicago and in Cairo, by Jill Maher, our Development Officer. Together we joined the American Chamber of Commerce in Egypt and learned to cope with incredible traffic and the Cairo telephone system in the throes of computerization, the connection of new lines, and the changing of numbers virtually throughout the city. Everywhere we went we received a very warm reception and have begun to see the success of our efforts. All in all, I spent 22 days in Cairo visiting American and Egyptian business people with Jill or with my wife Martha; 3 days in Middle Egypt

with the Oriental Institute tour, led by former Epigraphic Survey staff member Ann Roth; and 2 days in Alexandria, where I was honored to represent American Egyptology, as Field Director of the Epigraphic Survey, at the celebration of 150 years of Egyptian-American diplomatic relations (1835–1985). Both James Henry Breasted and Chicago House appeared in a photographic exhibition at the American Center and Consulate. In the past twelve months the Epigraphic Survey was also featured or mentioned in the *University of Chicago Magazine*, the *National Geographic* magazine, an Associated Press syndicated release, *Time*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Chicago Reader*, *Cairo Today*, and the *Newsletter* of the American Chamber of Commerce in Egypt; in addition, we gave interviews to the *New York Times* and *Al-Majal*, the Arabic magazine of the USIS.

We received well over 1000 visitors this season, including several colleagues from the Oriental Institute and other associates of the University of Chicago: Harry and Wini Hoffner, Bob and Linda Braidwood, Halet Çambel, Ray Tindel, Isak and Nancy Gerson, Dick and Mary Gray, Bob and Janet Helman, Homer and Joan Rosenberg; John Ulmann, Associate Dean for Research Programs in the Biological Sciences and the Medical School, and his wife Ruth; and Life Trustee Robert C. Gunness. Many University of Chicago alumni and 30 members of the Oriental Institute paid calls on us, in addition to those who accompanied our Egyptian tour when it came to Luxor in February. Richard Verdery, Director of the American Research Center in Egypt, was also able to spend some time with us. Many friends attended our Halloween and New Year's Eve parties, with up to 40 people seated at our long table for Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners. We also screened six movies in our lounge, to which the whole archaeological community of Luxor was invited; and 175 passengers appeared at the Chicago House landing on April 8 to board the local ferry boat rented for our farewell fantasia on the Nile. Since Chicago House maintains the only sidewalk on both sides of the street along the river in Luxor, when a television crew taping for "The Love Boat" needed a clean, attractive spot in which to shoot, they came to the front of our house. Alongside library users and casual visitors, 420 guest nights were spent at Chicago House, for an average of more than two resident guests per night over the course of the whole season. Four of our house guests agreed to speak to us informally after dinner on the topics of their current research: Lorelei Corcoran Schwabe on Roman period painted mummy portraits, Marianne Eaton-Krauss on problems associated with the reign of Tutankhamun, Lise Manniche on lost Theban tombs, and Geoffrey Martin on the Amarna

royal necropolis; Bill Murnane also spoke in-house about his El Amarna Boundary Stelae Project.

The 1984–85 season of the Epigraphic Survey was our sixty-first. Our professional staff, besides myself, consisted of Martha Bell as Chicago House Librarian; William Murnane, Steven Shubert, and Peter Dorman, Epigraphers; W. Raymond Johnson, Peter Der Manuelian, Salvatore and Barbara Garfi, Artists; Helena Jaeschke, Artist and Conservator; Richard Jaeschke, Conservator; Susan Lezon, Photographer; Jill Maher, Administrative Assistant; and Saleh Shehat Suleiman, Chief Engineer. In addition to those already mentioned in connection with their specific contributions, we would like to acknowledge the efforts of the the following people for helping us in a great variety of ways: Jean-Claude Golvin, Claude Traunecker, Alain Bellod, and Jean Larronde of the Franco-Egyptian Center at Karnak; Zygmunt Wysocki of the Polish Mission to Deir el-Bahari; Henry Precht, Theodore Rosen, Camille Caliendo, and Ahmed Lutfy of the United States Embassy in Cairo; Frances Cook of the American Consulate in Alexandria; Mohammed K. el-Azazzi of the Egyptian Consulate in Chicago; Dennis Kane, Marjorie Moomey, and Betty Kotcher of the National Geographic Society; Peter Lacovara, Ricardo Caminos, May Trad, Katherine Rosich, David Maher, Bernard Sahlins, Gretel Braidwood, Fathi Salib, Catherine Roehrig, Nigel and Helen Strudwick, Marianne Eaton-Krauss, and Christian Loeben. Most of our expenses in Egypt and our international air fare were paid out of a counterpart grant from the Foreign Currency Program of the Smithsonian Institution, administered through the offices of the American Research Center in Egypt: special thanks go to Dick Verdery, Paul Walker, and Francine Berkowitz. The members of the Egyptian Antiquities Organization to whom we owe a special debt of gratitude are Dr. Ahmed Qadry, Chairman; Mutawia Balboush, Supervisor of Antiquities for Upper Egypt; Shawqy Nakhla, Director of Conservation and Restoration; Mohammed el-Sughayyir, Director of Antiquities for Southern Upper Egypt; Sayid Abd el-Hamid, Chief Inspector for Karnak and Luxor; Abd el-Hamid Marouf, Inspector at Karnak; and Mohammed Nasr, Chief Inspector of Qurna. Lastly we wish to express our deep appreciation to the many friends of the Epigraphic Survey who have continued to encourage and support our work in these trying financial times. Let me once more extend our invitation to those who are visiting Luxor and want to include Chicago House in their itinerary; please just let us know your plans well in advance, and contact us as soon as you arrive in Luxor (at telephone 82525), so that we can arrange the most convenient time for you to see us at work or home.