

The Epigraphic Survey

Lanny Bell

1988-89 marked the sixty-fifth season of the Epigraphic Survey and my own twelfth and final year as Field Director. The major field work of both the artists and epigraphers this year consisted of continuing the checking and correcting of facsimile drawings of the relief decoration on the standing walls of the Colonnade of Luxor Temple; final collation was undertaken or completed on a total of thirty drawings, including some of our new 1:6 scale productions, as well as gigantic offering scenes on columns. Student epigrapher John Darnell authored several detailed epigraphic commentaries, including a study of the first representations of classic Hittites by the ancient Egyptians. He has now chosen as his dissertation topic the interpretation of cryptographic or enigmatic hieroglyphic writing prior to the Ptolemaic period. Will Schenck and Rick Velleu of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York were able to join us briefly this season; while Will continued inking his earlier penciled drawings of the Chicago House pottery collection, Rick produced an isometric projection illustrating the present state of our knowledge of the architecture of the Luxor Colonnade. This and the rest of our architectural observations were made available to Catherine Hanen of the Franco-Egyptian Center at Karnak to supplement her own study on the architecture of Luxor Temple.

Chief artist Ray Johnson, working with Marc Gabolde of the Franco-Egyptian Center at Karnak, was able to confirm Marc's earlier suggestion that both Ray's recently identified *talataat* of Tutankhamun and Marc's larger Karnak blocks mentioning the Chapel of Nebkheperure (Tutankhamun) in Thebes all originated in a single structure at Karnak. Decorated by Tutankhamun with additions by King Ay, this building had been dismantled by Horemheb and employed as filler in the construction of his Second Pylon at Karnak. Among the many *talataat* known to have been removed from this pylon for reuse around Luxor in the Byzantine period and later, more than 200 Tutankhamun pieces have been recovered from as far away as the Temple of Medamoud, about eight kilometers to the north.

Conservation efforts this season were focused entirely at Medinet Habu, where our conservators tinted all the plaster gaffill in the walls of the

Hatshepsut-Thutmose III chapels to blend with the tones of the preserved original background surfaces, in preparation for color photography. Since the condition of the surviving wall decoration varies considerably from room to room, depending on the particular nature and extent of the ancient damage which individual areas have suffered, some aesthetic judgment was required throughout this operation. The results have been most successful, with the modern work clearly distinguishable in such a way as not to distract from the visual effect. A few patches had to be redone several times, as rising damp resulting from the continuing infiltration of high ground water into the foundations of the building rapidly stained their newly tinted repair surfaces.

◆ Our previous conservation program had resulted in the cleaning and consolidation of these rooms; and since most of the paint has already disappeared from the reliefs which we normally record, its survival here is especially important. To this end, a volume of color photographs, made possible by the offer of a very generous gift from Walter Tower of Nimrod Press, will soon be published in anticipation of, and as a supplement to, a future volume of facsimile line-drawings. Other volumes nearing completion, and for which I also have editorial responsibility, are *Khonsu III (The Architecture)*, by Françoise Traunecker) and *The Processional Colonnade of Tutankhamun at Luxor Temple*, in addition to a projected annotated volume of selected prints produced from our newly acquired collection of more than 1000 glass plates. In 1988-89 two semi-popular publications related to the work of the Epigraphic Survey were published: I wrote the entry on "Medinet Habou" for *Dossiers Histoire et Archeologie*, vol. 136 (March 1989); and, in

November, the *Chicago House Map and Mini Guide: Luxor* appeared, with my text and Carol Meyer's maps, plans, and drawings. Currently available only in Egypt, international rights have been arranged, and French and German editions of the map are also underway. All proceeds from sales go to the Epigraphic Survey.

◆ The primary field work accomplished by photographer Tom Van Eynde this season was the production of large-format (8"x 10") Ektachrome transparencies documenting the substantial color remains inside the early Eighteenth Dynasty temple at Medinet Habu. Tom was assisted in this task by photographers Danny Lanka and Sue Lezon. The work was greatly facilitated by our new Calumet 8"x 10" camera which has the many adjustments necessary to correct for distortions of perspective in our exacting work, especially in tight places. Its great flexibility allows us to square-up scenes much more accurately and quickly, and to employ our wide-angle lens more effectively. Preliminary lighting tests were made possible by the contribution of sheet film and a processor for our use in the field; for this we are especially grateful to Greg Graalfs of the Polaroid Corporation and Eelco Wolf. Meanwhile, Danny spent most of his first year catching up on the large backlog of unprinted negatives, in addition to photographing more Luxor Temple block fragments; and Sue continued her conservation work on our new glass negatives.

This season 440 books and pamphlets, numbers 15061 to 15500, were accessioned in the Chicago House library, bringing the twelve-year total to 3551, averaging 296 items per year. Over these years areas of weak holdings, such as conservation, archaeological technique,

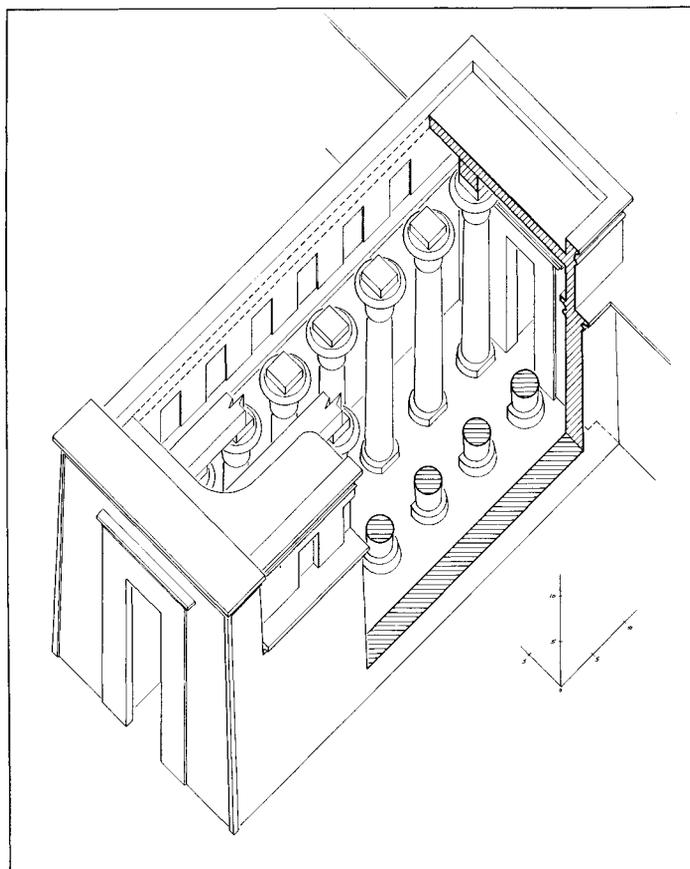
Roman pottery, glass, ancient economics, prehistory, and doctoral dissertations, have been built up; and the extremely useful collection of exhibition and sales catalogues was expanded. In the 1988-89 total are many publications presented by their authors—including the first Japanese-language grammar of ancient Egyptian—and donations from the personal libraries of the late Labib and Atteiya Habachi. This year the splendid reprint edition of the antiquities plates from the Napoleonic Commission's *Description de l'Égypte* (Princeton Architectural Press, New York, 1987) was purchased through the Labib Habachi Memorial Fund. Sharon Herbert was instrumental in arranging for us to receive the gift of Donald B. Harden's *Roman Glass from Karanis* (University of Michigan Press, 1936) from Ann Taylor van Rosevelt; out of print for years, this work remains a classic. Computerization of the library continued with the expansion of the on-line accessions data-base to print out shelf-list cards, an enormous saving of time and labor. Specialized catalogues, such as listings of rare or oversized books, can also be generated from the same program, allowing easy updates on, for example, condition and value.

♦ The professional staff this season consisted of myself as Field Director; Dr. Peter Dorman, Associate Director; John Darnell, epigrapher; W. Raymond Johnson, Dr. Carol Meyer, Barbara Arnold, and Vivienne Groves, artists; Thomas Van Eynde, Danny Lanka, and Susan Lezon, photographers; Christel Faltermeier and Rudolf Meyer, conservators; Martha Bell, Chicago House librarian; Rita Joyce, Roxanne Gordon, and Jill Carlotta Maher, administrative assistants; and Saleh Shehat Suleiman, chief engineer. Our thanks go to Dr.

Henri Riad for his continuing role in organizing and making available for study and publication materials from the Labib Habachi archives, and for all his efforts on our behalf in the areas of public relations, official liaison, and translation. The members of the Egyptian Antiquities Organization to whom we owe a special debt of gratitude include Dr. Sayid Tawfiq, Chairman; Mutawia Balboush, Supervisor of Antiquities for Upper Egypt; Dr. Mohammed el-Sogheir, Director of Antiquities for Southern Upper Egypt; Sayid el-Higazy, Chief Inspector of Karnak and Luxor, and Co-Director of the Franco-Egyptian Center at Karnak; Abd el-Hamid Marouf, Inspector of Karnak; and Dr. Mohammed Nasr, Chief Inspector of Qurna.

♦ On July 1, 1989, Peter Dorman became the new Field Director of the Epigraphic Survey. But he and I overlapped four months in the field this season, in an attempt to ease the transition by giving Peter the opportunity to hone his own epigraphic skills and observe the diverse administrative operations close-up, before assuming responsibility for the expedition as a whole. Peter was accompanied for three months at Chicago House by his wife Kathy and their two delightful daughters Margaret and Emily, so that they could begin to establish their family life there, and Kathy could start learning about the management of the house and the functioning of the library and the photographic archives.

The fund raising efforts for Chicago House, begun when the United States government PL-480 ("counterpart") funds program, which supported private American archaeological work in Egypt, was discontinued in the mid 1980s, has been very successful. With the help



*Isometric drawing by
 Rick Velleu of the
 Colonnade at Luxor
 Temple.*

of Jill Carlotta Maher, whose combination of dedication, charm, and enthusiasm contributed immeasurably to the tremendous success of our joint effort, the money was raised to continue our field operations at the same level, as well as to establish and add to our endowment at the University of Chicago for the Epigraphic Survey. This is truly an achievement in which all our donors and supporters in every capacity may take great pride. I am also certain that our efforts have contributed significantly to increasing international awareness of the fragility of the ancient Egyptian monuments.

In addition to those already mentioned for specific contributions, I would like to acknowledge formally the assistance and support of Jean-Claude Goyon, Jean-Claude Golvin, Robert Vergnieux, and Daniel Le Fur of the Franco-Egyptian Center at Karnak; His Excellency Frank Wisner, the United States Ambassador to Egypt, and Mrs. Wisner; His Excellency Dr. Fouad Sultan, Egyptian Minister for Tourism and Civil Aviation; Kenton Keith, Ken Robinson, Bob Blake, and Conrad Drescher of the United States Embassy in Cairo; Roger Fecher, Don Carlson, and Terry Strain of the World Business Council; Ann and Ron

Wolfe; Peter Duchin and Brooke Hayward; Frank and Barbara Miller; Richard Weinberger and Jack Britain of Trans World Airlines; John Marrs of Xerox Egypt; Csaba Trombitas of Eveready Egypt; Terry Walz, Bob Betts, Amira Khattab, and Albert Abdel Ahad of the American Research Center in Egypt; Jerry Fougerousse, Jr.; Linda Noe Laine and Christel Noe Laine; May Trad; Saad Riad; Fathi Salib; Herman te Velde; Bill Spreadbury; Mary Ann Niewiedzial Lanka; and Gretel Braidwood, Evada Waller, Jean Grant, and Joan Hives of the Oriental Institute. I also wish to specially acknowledge the members of the Friends of Chicago House tour to Egypt in November. Their unbounded enthusiasm for the work of Chicago House resulted in special contributions earmarked particularly to support our photographic conservation program and the

consolidation of some of the rarest and most valuable folio volumes in the Chicago House library.

◆ **W**e are pleased to be able to welcome Oriental Institute members and other friends to Chicago House from October 15 through April 15. Just let Peter or Gretel know, as far ahead as you can, exactly when you expect to be in Luxor; and contact the House immediately upon your arrival there, to reconfirm your visit. The address is simply: Chicago House, Nile Street ("Corniche el-Nil"), Luxor, Arab Republic of Egypt; the telephone number is 382525 (from the United States, dial direct 011-20-95-382525).