THE PRINCESS WHO NEVER WAS

A Tale of Scholarly Agonizing, Piracy and Revenge

What follows is *not* one of the great discoveries in the annals of Egyptology. But it makes a diverting story, and it illustrates how scholars sometimes have to use a jackhammer to squash a fly.

The story begins with something tourists never see, and which most Egyptologists, even if they know of its existence, have to be shown. High up on one of the columns of the Processional Colonnade at Luxor Temple. there is a graffito: a small cartouche, only a few inches long, which the Topographical Bibliography for the Theban temples identifies as belonging to an "Amarna princess". Members have already been introduced to it in the Oriental Institute Annual Report, 1980-81, pp. 10-12; otherwise, however, no published drawing or photograph is known for this inscription, which the Bibliography includes only on the authority of the unedited manuscripts of two Egyptologists, now deceased. Since the Amarna Period is one of my interests, I was keenly curious about this seemingly neglected reference to one of Akhenaten's royal ladies, and shortly after the Epigraphic Survey began its work at Luxor I set about looking for her.

When I found the cartouche, the mystery deepened. Viewed with binoculars from the ground, it was clear that the name did include the hieroglyphic group for "Aton" (the divine solar disk), and at its end was a seated female figure, used as a determinative: to all appearances, an "Amarna princess" . . . but the rest of the name was unfamiliar. It did not belong to any of the six daughters born to Akhenaten by his chief queen, Nefertiti, nor to anyone else who is known to have lived during the Amarna Period. The placement of this graffito, over thirty feet above the floor of the Colonnade, and what we could see of its style both suggested that it had been scratched onto the column in a hurry, while Luxor Temple lay empty during the Amarna Period and when the unfinished Colonnade was still engulfed in the mud brick ramps that had been used to build it, before the work was resumed and nearly completed by Tutankhamun. But who this person was, and how her name came to be written in such a place, remained obscure.



The "Amarna princess" cartouche: note how the ring cuts through the bottom of the frieze, above the figure of the seated woman.

When our new aluminum scaffolding arrived at Chicago House in 1977, we were able to photograph the cartouche and study it properly for the first time. As it so often happens, the result was an even greater puzzlement—for the inscription, when closely examined, had all the hallmarks of a modern forgery. The name itself, uncharacteristically for ancient Egyptian, made no sense: to be sure, it could be tortured into something like "True Daughter of the Disk", but not even the most wretched apprentice scribe would have written it that way in the Eighteenth Dynasty. The carving of the signs was also not typical, even for rough work of the period (the seated female hieroglyph, in particular, was a palaeographic monstrosity that would not be at home at any time in antiquity); and just as damning was the placement of this inscription with relation to the other, undeniably ancient carvings that surround it. The "Amarna princess" is situated beneath a frieze of large, vertical cartouches that run around the column, below the capital. Although these cartouches are carved in the name of Amenhotep III, we know them to be the work of Tutankhamun: not only do they lack the Atenist erasures of "Amun" that would be expected-and, indeed, are normal-in the pre-Amarna material at Luxor; but they also form part of a conspicuous tendency of Tutankhamun's to associate his name in the Colonnade with that of his distinguished predecessor, the last "orthodox" ruler before the outbreak of the Atenist heresy. This frieze, in other words, is not unique, and it is clearly post-Amarna in date—so it was disturbing to find the supposed earlier cartouche of the "Amarna princess" cutting through the lower elements of the later frieze in a way that would have surely resulted in the partial obliteration of any earlier carvings once the wall's surface had been smoothed down to form the background of the later bas-relief frieze. By all the criteria of our training and experience, then, the "Amarna princess" had to be a fraud: her authenticity could only be upheld by the sort of special pleading we prefer not to use in our scientific work.

So, why were we still puzzled? Modern graffiti abound in the Colonnade-where we have systematically collected them—and many are found high up on the columns, placed there by visitors in the Nineteenth Century, when the hall was still buried under the debris of millennia. What made this graffito different was that it was said to have been seen by Ipolitto Rosellini, Champollion's student and colleague, who had accompanied the decipherer of the hieroglyphs through Egypt and Nubia in 1828/29. And therein lies the puzzle. If the "Amarna princess" was seen by Rosellini, her cartouche must have been inscribed no later than 1829, barely seven years after the decipherment of the hieroglyphs. The first Egyptologists might well have spent an idle moment putting their friends' names into Egyptian (Champollion, we know, certainly did); but a transcription of the signs in the cartouche into their modern alphabetic values did not suggest the name of anyone on Rosellini's expedition-or, indeed, anyone or anything else that would have been relevant back in the infant days of Egyptology. Moreover, although Champollion and Rosellini visited El Amarna, they brought relatively little away from that site, and there is no reason to believe that what they saw there made much of an impression. Certainly neither of these scholars, working at the dawn of Egyptological science, made much of the Atenist heresy: Rosellini, in fact, even though he had a good grasp of the royal succession of the Eighteenth Dynasty up to and including Amenhotep III, did not even include Akhenaten in his reconstruction of the period, but relegated him to somewhere in the dark ages of before the Fifteenth Dynasty-clear proof that Rosellini did not know what to do with Akhenaten and had no idea of his importance. This made the "Atenist" form of the name all the more perplexing-for who would forge such a thing in 1829, when the Amarna Period was not even suspected, let alone controversial? On such slender grounds rested the last desperate possibility that the "Amarna princess" might, after all, be ancient.

It was only after we had tracked down our sources that the fog began to lift. Through the courtesy of the Centre Documentaire de l'Histoire des Réligions in Paris, we were able to verify the sighting by the French Egyptologist Pierre Lacau, who saw the "Amarna princess" in the earlier Twentieth Century. But the crucial breakthrough was made possible by two other friends, Professor Edda Bresciani of the University of Pisa and Dr. Jaromír Málek, editor of the Topographical Bibliography, at the Griffith Institute in Oxford. From their checking

of files and original documents, it emerged that the Rosellini reference was one of those unfortunate mistakes that can creep into any serious undertaking of any magnitude. In brief, it was a red herring: the "Amarna princess" appears nowhere in Rosellini's papers, and with that early "sighting" now eliminated, we had a wider and more realistic period in which to look for the perpetrator of this apparent hoax. Happily, the result is something that goes some of the way towards justifying the time and effort we had already spent on it. Given the location of the "Amarna princess", so high off the ground, it was a fair bet that it was not carved after 1889, when we know the Colonnade was cleared down to its floor. Whoever carved this graffito must have had a grounding in Egyptian language, based on the grammars and dictionaries available up to that time. We already knew how Champollion would have read the name. Making a fresh transcription which incorporated the values given to the signs by such later authorities as Brugsch and Pierret was easily done, and yielded the following:

A/E-T/D-N S-MA/ME-TH



The "Amarna princess" in context: see black arrow.

This gave us the skeleton of a name, "Aton" or "Edon Smath". Even so, this is not a strict phonological equivalent for any orthodox name; but if we allow for the distortion that would result from the author's attempt to write his name in a mongrel "Egyptian", using common words such as that for the sun's disk, what we have is a recognizable name in English. I now firmly believe that we can identify its owner as none other than "Edwin Smith".

The name of Edwin Smith will not be unknown to members of the Oriental Institute, and he fills rather well the specifications one would imagine for the author of this

hitherto puzzling cartouche. One of scholarship's soldiers of fortune, he was one of the earliest specialists in the study of the cursive hieratic script, excelling in this many of his more eminent contemporaries. But there was a darker side to Smith's nature as well, one that was very probably abetted by the unconventional circumstances in which he chose to live. Readers who want to know more about him than I can tell here may go to the introduction of James Henry Breasted's The Edwin Smith Surgical Papyrus, Vol. I (Chicago, 1930), pp. 20-25, and to John A. Wilson's history of American Egyptology, Signs and Wonders upon Pharaoh (Chicago, 1964), pp. 52-57. In brief, Smith was an American who, having studied Egyptology in London and Paris, came during the 1850's to live in Luxor, where he stayed until about 1876. He supported himself as a money lender, also selling antikkasof both the genuine and forged varieties-to European tourists. Though himself a tireless worker, Smith never published anything, and his few surviving letters reveal the workings of a powerful but undisciplined erudition. Contemporaries regarded him as something of an eccentric, respect for his genuine scholarly attainments being overshadowed by the bemusement or outright distrust which his uncommon lifestyle inspired.

Edwin Smith's connection to Chicago goes back, in the first instance, to Breasted's publication of the ancient surgical treatise that bears Smith's name. Most recently, he comes to our attention not only as the likely author of the "Amarna princess", but also because of his association with another important figure in the Luxor Colonnade's history before its excavation, Mustapha Agha Ayat. Members will also have read about him in past Annual Reports. For many years the consular agent for England, Belgium and Russia, Mustapha was a well-known figure in Luxor and, like many other Egyptians who dealt with foreigners on a regular basis, he was a prominent dealer in antiquities. He lived in an imposing house, built early in the 1850's against three of the eastern columns



The Processional Colonnade of Luxor Temple, from the top of the Pylon: the 'Amarna princess' graffito is located on the fifth column from the left, in the back row, facing southeast.

in the Luxor Colonnade (one of which is the very column on which the "Amarna princess" is found): indeed, on the evidence of contemporary photographs, the spot where this graffito was carved would have been within easy reach from the ground in front of Mustapha's house. It comes as no surprise to learn that Edwin Smith and Mustapha Agha knew one another for most, if not all of the period that Smith lived in Luxor. Smith, in fact, lived in Mustapha's house, bought antiquities from him (including the famous "Edwin Smith Surgical Papyrus"), and helped him arrange entertainments for such notable visitors as the Prince of Wales. In effect, the two men were partners. Smith's financial dealings, I suspect, provided the capital and Mustapha's local connections the contacts for a highly profitable business which allowed Smith to acquire a store of interesting and saleable antiquities.

Smith's and Mustapha's biggest coup came in connection with the sale of a large medical papyrus (not the surgical treatise published by Breasted, but a much larger work) which Smith had in his possession for many years. Travelling scholars in Luxor were regaled, not only with Smith's collection of forged scarabs, but with tantalizing glimpses of his hieratic papyri. Smith was by no means unaware of what he owned: it was he who called his visitors' attention to one of the curiosities of his great medical papyrus, the festival calendar it contained; and it was he who supplied them with the tracings from which were made the first publications of this section, the proper interpretation of which has bedeviled Egyptology ever since. The scholar in Edwin Smith did not want to sell this document: he preferred to keep and study it. But "Papyrus Smith" (as it was now coming to be known) had attracted the interest of the formidable German Egyptologist, Georg Ebers. Not only did Ebers covet the document for German scholarship, he also was desperately eager to have it known as "Papyrus Ebers"-and since, by tradition, papyri were named after their first non-Egyptian owners, Ebers had to secure not only the papyrus itself, but also his claim against Edwin Smith's prior ownership of it.

He succeeded in doing both in 1872. By this time, Luxor was no longer so comfortable for Edwin Smith: he was



A view of Mustapha Agha's house, with its porch of sugarcane stalks, in the Luxor Colonnade during the third quarter of the Nineteenth Century.

plagued by bouts of ill-health, government regulations were cutting into the profits of the usury business, and he was ready to sell his beloved medical papyrus. At the same time-if I am right in so interpreting the scattered references to this affair-the old pirate in Edwin Smith devised an elaborate charade to convince Ebers that he was in fact coming into the first "legitimate" ownership of the papyrus. One evening, when Ebers' houseboat was moored in Luxor, an Egyptian who had shown Ebers a number of antiquities for sale came by and, after civilities had been exchanged, informed his astonished host that he, and not Edwin Smith, was the true owner of the great medical papyrus, and that he would sell it to Ebers without Smith's knowledge. Ebers' visitor-who else but Mustapha Agha?-might well have undertaken to sell the great medical papyrus out from under his old friend, "Mister Smid", but one wonders. It is a truly interesting coincidence that, at just this time, Smith let it be known that he was negotiating with an agent from the British Museum and that the sale of the papyrus was imminent. I suspect that Smith, knowing what Ebers wanted, determined that he would pay dearly for it, and combined with Mustapha to "set him up". Or perhaps both men-Ebers and the British Museum's representative-were gulled. However all this may be. Ebers' interest was whipped up to such a pitch that he convinced himself that this would be his last chance to obtain "Papyrus Ebers". Lacking the funds for such a purchase, he found a wealthy German businessman, in Luxor on a holiday, and managed to persuade him that it was his patriotic duty to come up with the asking price of the papyrus then and there. The exchanges were duly made and, with the prize in his hands. Ebers wasted no more time in Luxor, but weighed anchor at once and did not pause in his travels until he was safely back in Leipzig. One can imagine the hilarity with which Edwin Smith and Mustapha watched him go. Giving chicanery its due, Smith had enjoyed the last laugh. He and Mustapha had Ebers' money: Ebers was welcome to "Papyrus Smith".

One final word, on vengeance of another sort. In one of his letters from Egypt, after explaining at length his own quite bizarre theory on the structure of the ancient Egyptian language, Smith conceded that "I have not the least idea that it will be adopted by any but myself", as his conclusions ran so contrary to the mainstream of Egyptological opinion. He would surely be amused at the amount of serious effort we have expended on the *jeu d'esprit* he carved one day, from his lodgings in Mustapha Agha's house, onto one of the columns in the Processional Colonnade of the Temple of Luxor.

William J. Murnane

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FREE SUNDAY FILMS MARCH-MAY 1984

All films are shown at 2 PM in Breasted Hall, The Oriental Institute

- March 4 Turkey: Crossroads of the Ancient World
- March 11 Of Time, Tombs and Treasure
- March 18 The Big Dig
- March 25 Iraq: Stairway to the Gods
 April 1 Egypt: Gift of the Nile
 April 8 Preserving Egypt's Past
- April 15 Iran: Landmarks in the Desert April 22 Megiddo: City of Destruction
- April 29 Myth of the Pharaohs: Ancient Mesopotamia (2 shorts)
- May 6 Rivers of Time
 May 13 The Egyptologists
- May 20 Turkey: Crossroads of the Ancient World
- May 27 Of Time, Tombs and Treasure

1984 MEMBERSHIP SCHEDULE

- March 27 Peter I. Kuniholm, Cornell University, a joint lecture with the A.I.A., The Aegean Dendochronology Project.
- April 11 John D. Ray, Cambridge University, Five Characters: Dream Interpretation in An-
- may 2 cient Egypt.

 Harry A. Hoffner, The Oriental Institute,

 Adventures in a World of Words: How We
- Write a Dictionary of the Hittite Language.

 May 14 Oriental Institute annual dinner
- May 14 Oriental Institute annual dinne May 20 Members' Day
- May 23 Elizabeth F. Carter, University of California, Los Angeles.

MARCH LECTURE

Peter I. Kuniholm, Cornell University, will present an illustrated lecture, *The Aegean Dendrochronology Project*, on Tuesday, March 27 at 8 PM in Breasted Hall. This is a joint lecture with the A.I.A.

APRIL LECTURE

John D. Ray, Faculty of Oriental Studies, Cambridge University will present a lecture, *Five Characters: Dream Interpretation in Ancient Egypt*, on Wednesday, April 11 at 8 PM in Breasted Hall.

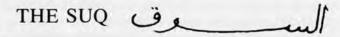
EARLY MAY LECTURE

Harry A. Hoffner, The Oriental Institute, will present an illustrated lecture, Adventures in a World of Words: How We Write a Dictionary of the Hittite Language, on Wednesday, May 2 at 8 PM in Breasted Hall.

INSTITUTE PROFESSOR IS NEW HEAD OF SMITHSONIAN

Robert McC. Adams, twice Director of the Oriental Institute and currently Provost of the University of Chicago, will become the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington in September. Replacing the current Secretary, S. Dillon Ripley, Adams will become the ninth Secretary since the Smithsonian's founding 137 years ago.

Adams has been on the faculty of the University of Chicago since 1955, after receiving his Ph.B., A.M., and Ph.D. from the University. He was Director of the Oriental Institute from 1962 to 1968 and from 1981 to 1983 and is the Harold H. Swift Distinguished Service Professor in the Oriental Institute and the Departments of Anthropology and Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations. An authority on the urban and agricultural history of the Near East, Adams has made extensive archaeological studies of settlement patterns and the comparative social and economic history of pre-modern societies.





JARMO FERTILITY FIGURE

Replica of a fertility figure (ca. 6750 B.C.) found at Jarmo, Robert and Linda Braidwood's Oriental Institute excavation in Iraq.

Made of a white resin, figure stands 1½ inches high. Figure is available from The Suq at \$7.00 each minus a 10% discount for members. Please add 8% sales tax for shipping in Illinois plus .50 postage and handling for each figurine.



Robert McCormick Adams

DOCENT TRAINING CLASSES TO BE HELD IN APRIL

Members will be interested to know that we have a few vacancies for volunteer guides in the Museum.

The 8-week training program will begin on Monday, April 2 and will meet on the following 4 Mondays. The last three classes will be held on Saturdays.

The program which lasts from 9:30 to 2:15 consists of lectures by the faculty of the Oriental Institute, movies and gallery workshops conducted by the Educational Coordinator and the Docent Chairmen, past and present.

If accepted in the program, the prospective docent must be willing to serve as a Museum guide a half a day a week. In addition to the regular membership in the Oriental Institute, a one-time fee of \$25.00 is charged for a Docent Kit of materials as well as a copy of the Guide to the Oriental Institute Museum.

For those not able to come on Mondays, a Saturday seminar beginning on April 7 may be held. Weekend docents may choose to serve every other weekend.

Please call Peggy Grant or Janet Helman, Docent Chairmen, at 962-9507 for more information or to make an appointment.

SPRING MEMBERS' COURSES

ANATOLIA: CROSSROADS OF THE ANCIENT WORLD

Anatolia was an integral part of the ancient world. Because of its strategic location it has always been a crucial link between east and west. Yet, few people realize the important role this land played in ancient history. This course is designed to illustrate Anatolia's significance as both a crossroads and a point of contact for the many civilizations that surrounded her.

After a brief look at the geographical and ecological factors that have influenced Anatolian civilizations throughout the ages, we will begin by considering prehistoric settlements and go on to discuss the site of Troy, known from Homeric legend, and excavated in the 1870s by Schliemann, who found there a treasure of gold and silver. We will then consider the Old Assyrian trading colonies established in Anatolia around 1900 B.C. Special emphasis will be placed on the Hittites because of the abundance of textual materials from the Hittite capital of Hattusha. The development of the Old Hittite Kingdom and its culmination in the later Hittite Empire will be considered along with an overview of the general Hittite culture—its literature, religion and law. The Neo-Hittites and the Iron Age civilizations in Anatolia-Phrygian, Urartian, and Greek-will then be discussed. The final session will look at Greeks and Romans in Anatolia.

While much of the discussion will be based on the Hittite texts, available archaeological information will be used as well. Slides will illustrate many topics of discussion.

Ronald Gorny, Lecturer

ART OF ANCIENT EGYPT

To the eyes of anyone who has not had the experience of visiting Egypt or looking at a great deal of ancient Egyptian art from various periods, the art of ancient Egypt may seem to be frozen into a state of almost monotonous sameness. For over three millennia, the inhabitants of the Nile valley participated in a cultural continuity that is almost unparalleled in the history of the world. The conservatism of the ancient Egyptians and the over-riding religious purpose for most of their artistic out-put resulted in considerable resistance to change in the forms and techniques associated with their art. Despite these considerations, the artist was able to exercise some freedom of expression, while working within the confines of a conservative, and sometimes rigid, artistic heritage.

The ancient Egyptians were among the most visuallyoriented of the ancient peoples, and their manner of depicting the human form and the natural elements in their environment demonstrates their keen appreciation of Nature and the world around them. This course will emphasize the role of the artist in ancient Egypt and his skill in turning various media into works of art. It is hoped that the student will gain a greater appreciation for the variety of ancient Egyptian art and for the contribution of Egyptian art to the culture of Western civilization. Each lecture will be illustrated with slides.

John A. Larson, Lecturer Oriental Institute Museum Archivist

THE FIRST CIVILIZATION:

Archaeology and the Sumerians

Ancient Mesopotamia, the land between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, saw the birth of many important civilizations in antiquity prior to the Greeks and Romans. Of these, this course will focus on Sumerian civilization—the earliest and one of the most important cultures to flourish in the land that was to become Babylon. Until the middle of the last century, the existence of this remarkable culture was unknown to modern man. The science of archaeology has revealed its material remains and made possible a reconstruction of much of Sumerian history, social and intellectual culture.

The lectures, illustrated with slides, will emphasize the origins, growth and development of these people who lived in the first cities, invented writing and the sexagesimal system of mathematics, worshipped a pantheon of gods and goddesses, including the great mother goddess, Inanna, and left us such enduring treasures as the Royal Tombs of Ur. Also emphasized will be the history of modern archaeological discovery and decipherment of this vanished civilization, including the contribution of Oriental Institute archaeologists, historians and language experts.

Guillermo Algaze, Lecturer

Courses will begin Saturday, April 7 and continue on Saturdays until June 2 (no meeting on May 26). Classes meet at the Oriental Institute. Tuition is \$50 for members. For more information call the Education Office, 962-9507.

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INSTITUTE. I Mail to: EDUC	checks payable to Please register by V	o THE ORIENTAL Wednesday, April 4. The Oriental Insti- go, IL 60637.

ORIENTAL INSTITUTE 1984 ARCHAEOLOGICAL TOURS

EGYPT June 29-July 15, 1984

Bruce Williams, Research Associate at the Oriental Institute, will be the lecturer for a 17-day summer tour to Egypt. Designed for people who cannot travel in the winter months, touring will be in an air-conditioned motor coach. Egypt is extremely hot in the summer months and this tour should not be undertaken by people who are not in excellent physical condition. A complete itinerary is available from the Membership Office. Cost of the trip from Chicago is:

Land arrangements

\$1915.00

Round trip air fare from Chicago (APEX) \$1167.00

Single supplement \$400.00

plus a \$350 tax-deductible contribution to the Oriental Institute. This includes deluxe accommodations, all land arrangements and all but eleven meals. A \$300 deposit (payable to Archaeological Tours) is required at time of booking.

YEMEN September 14-29, 1984

Ray Tindel, Yemen scholar and PhD candidate at the Oriental Institute, will lead a 16 day tour to Yemen. Long closed to the outside world, this little known land shelters a culture reminiscent of medieval Arabia. A complete itinerary is available from the Membership Office. Cost of the trip from Chicago is:

Land arrangements
Single room supplement

\$2640

\$380

Round trip air fare from Chicago APEX (approximate)

\$1500

plus a \$350 tax-deductible contribution to the Oriental Institute. Cost includes hotels, all land arrangements and all meals. A \$1000 deposit (payable to Society Expeditions) is required at time of booking.

TURKEY October 12-November 2, 1984

A tour of Turkey, highlighted by visits to two of the Oriental Institute's Turkish excavations in Anatolia, Harran and Çayönü, will be led by Institute professor Robert J. Braidwood and Linda Braidwood. A complete itinerary for this 22-day tour is available from the Membership Office. Cost of the trip from Chicago is:

Land arrangements

\$1795.00

Round trip air fare from Chicago (APEX) \$1062.00

Single supplement

\$300

plus a \$350 tax-deductible contribution to the Oriental Institute. This includes hotels, all land arrangements and all but four meals. A \$300 deposit (payable to Archaeological Tours) is required at time of booking.

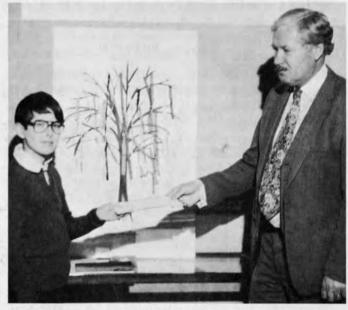
On each of these tours arrangements may be made beforehand with the travel agent to travel in Europe or the Near East before or after the tour. The travel agent will be glad to help you with these arrangements but you will be responsible for any additional travel costs or surcharges.

Information on all tours is available from the Membership Office, The Oriental Institute, 1155 East 58th Street, Chicago, Illinois, 60637. (312) 962-9513.

	14-29		
Yemen, September 14-29			
Turkey, October 12-November 2			
Name(s)			
Address			
City	State	Zip	
Daytime telephone	Home telephone		
Enclosed is \$	as a deposit to hold my/our place, (payable to the travel agent).		

LOCAL STUDENT WINS TREE-SEARCH CONTEST AT MUSEUM

Michael Levy, 6th-grade student at the University Lab School, has won the Oriental Institute Museum's Tree Search Contest. His was the first correct entry chosen in the drawing January 9. The contest, a search for trees depicted or used in the ancient artifacts and artworks displayed in the museum, was held in conjunction with the museum's holiday exhibit "The Sacred Tree." Michael was awarded his prize—\$25 and a copy of the new Guide to the Oriental Institute Museum—by John Carswell, museum curator, on Tuesday, January 17. Asked how he felt about winning the contest, Michael replied: "The questions were not too hard to answer. I suppose I was just lucky that my answer sheet was drawn first."



Michael Levy with curator John Carswell awarding his prize in the Oriental Institute Museum's Tree-Search Contest.



The Oriental Institute

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