

John Coleman Darnell

During the 1995/96 season, his eighth year with the Epigraphic Survey, **John Coleman Darnell** served as Senior Epigrapher. In Luxor, he continued collating drawings at the Eighteenth Dynasty temple at Medinet Habu and is now working on the final draft of the translation and commentary volume for *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Luxor Temple*, Volume 2. He has also been working on the texts to be included in the Epigraphic Survey's publication of the Eighteenth Dynasty Temple at Medinet Habu, concentrating on the difficult and important Ptolemaic and Roman Period hymns in the portals of the temple.

The 1995/96 season was the fourth field season of the Theban Desert Road Survey (renamed from the Luxor-Farshût Desert Road Survey; see separate report). With his wife Deborah Darnell, John continues to work on several manuscripts, and he hopes to begin seeing these through publication in the near future. In the meantime, reports of the ceramic finds of the first three seasons have appeared in the *Bulletin de liaison du Groupe international d'étude de la céramique égyptienne*. John is also preparing initial publications of the important literary inscription from the Wadi el-Ḥôl, and the road inscription of Tjauti from Gebel Tjauti on the 'Alamat Tal Road, in order to make these significant rock inscriptions known to scholars. John and his wife Deborah have lectured on their desert discoveries on a number of occasions during the past year: "Ancient Egyptian Caravan Routes of the Theban Western Desert," at the British Museum, London, April 16, 1996; "The Pharaonic Roads and Shrines of the Theban Western Desert," at the American Research Center in Egypt, Cairo, September 27, 1995; and "The Theban Desert Road Survey," in the series of lectures dedicated to the memory of Dr. Labib Habachi, sponsored by the Inspectorate of Antiquities for Upper Egypt and the Epigraphic Survey, Luxor, Egypt, November 16, 1995.

RESEARCH

As a result of their growing interest and experience in dealing with difficult rock inscriptions, John and Deborah were asked by Dr. Renée Friedman, director of the Hierakonpolis Expedition, to come to Hierakonpolis over two separate weekends in order to examine the pharaonic inscriptions at a desert site designated Hk64. Working with Renée Friedman and artist Will Schenck, they have been able to collate and read many of the wind-blasted texts. Together with the accompanying petroglyphs and associated ceramic and faunal remains, the inscriptions of Hk64 have revealed much of interest regarding religious celebrations and police/military activity in the desert behind Hierakonpolis, between the late Old Kingdom and the early New Kingdom (one inscription and associated finds show that somewhat obscure religious rites described in a Berlin papyrus of the ritual of the goddess Mut were actually celebrated at Hk64). Dr. Friedman has asked the Darnells to prepare the pharaonic inscriptions for her publication of the rock art and inscriptions from the site.

In July 1995 John Darnell successfully defended his dissertation on *The Enigmatic Netherworld Books of the Solar-Osirian Unity: Cryptographic Compositions in the Tombs of Tutankhamun, Ramesses VI, and Ramesses IX*; he is currently preparing the work for publication. In the spring his article "Hathor Returns to Medamûd," dealing with a Ptolemaic hymn describing the celebration accompanying the return of the far-wandering goddess of the eye of the sun, appeared in *Studien zur altägyptischen Kultur* 22 (Hamburg, 1995): 47–94. His review of J. Assmann's *Egyptian Solar Religion in the New Kingdom: Re, Amun, and the Crisis of Polytheism* (trans. A. Alcock) is in press in *The Journal of Religion* and should appear in October 1996. In May he completed three articles that are now in press in *Enchoria*: "A Hieroglyphic Antecedent of Coptic Ⲭⲉⲗⲃⲟⲗ, 'Massacre,'" "Whom Did Nestasen Overhear at Isderes?," and "Ⲭⲟⲡⲙ, 'to Train,' and Ⲓⲃⲙⲓⲧ, 'the Bit.'" He has submitted for publication "The Message of King Wahankh Antef II to Khety, Ruler of Heracleopolis," an offshoot of his work with the inscriptions from Gebel Tjauti, and he is in the process of completing another article, "The Apotropaic Goddess in the Eye," which he hopes to submit before the end of the summer.
