

Edward F. Wente

During the fall of 1995 Edward F. Wente was asked by Professor Donald Ryan of Pacific Lutheran University to examine a number of inscribed documents, chiefly pot fragments and ostraca, deriving from his recent excavations in the Valley of the Kings. One pot fragment is particularly important in that it has a bearing on the dating of the undecorated KV tomb 60, which contained two mummies of elderly women. When this tomb was discovered by Howard Carter in 1903, a fragment of a coffin inscription was found bearing the name of a royal wet nurse named In. Although in his brief report on this tomb Carter followed Newberry's suggestion that the two mummies were of nurses of Thutmose IV, an inscription in Vienna informs us that the chief wet nurse of Hatshepsut was a Sitre, nicknamed In. The hieratic docket on the jar fragment indicates that the pot once contained olive oil donated by the granary overseer Minmose. Since this individual is named and depicted as a participant in the transport of obelisks in Hatshepsut's mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahri, the docket confirms the dating of the tomb to the time of Hatshepsut rather than Thutmose IV. The identification of the two female mummies has been a matter of some speculation. One mummy could well be that of Sitre, Hatshepsut's nurse, and Elizabeth Thomas's suggestion in *The Royal Necropoleis of Thebes* that the other mummy could be that of Hatshepsut perhaps receives a bit of support from the hieratic docket if one assumes that the highly honored Minmose more likely contributed oil at the burial of Hatshepsut than at the interment of her nurse. Whether the second mummy, whose arms, I have been told, are positioned in the manner attested for queens, is that of Hatshepsut can only be resolved by further scientific examination and comparison with the royal mummies in Cairo. In November 1995, Mr. Wente presented an illustrated lecture, "Workers in the Valley of the Kings," to the Oriental Institute membership.

Mr. Wente's article, "Creation in Ancient Egypt," is to be published in a volume of essays entitled, *The Epic of Creation: Scientific and Religious Perspectives on Our Origins*, and two reviews relating to Ramesside historical inscriptions and the chronology of the New Kingdom have been accepted for publication in the *Journal of the American Oriental Society* and *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*. For a second printing of his *Letters from Ancient Egypt*, Mr. Wente has made some minor revisions. His article, "The

RESEARCH

Scribes of Ancient Egypt," appeared in the fourth volume of *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*, edited by Jack M. Sasson.
