



# CHICAGO HOUSE BULLETIN

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## THE 1995-1996 SEASON AT CHICAGO HOUSE

By Peter Dorman, Field Director

"The mound of the fathers and mothers"—the Eighteenth Dynasty temple dedicated to the worship of Amun at Medinet Habu—was the primary venue of work during the seventy-second season of the Epigraphic Survey, which opened on October 2, 1995, and ended on April 1, 1996. This relatively small but most significant cult center on the west bank of the Nile, believed in antiquity to be the burial mound of the eight primeval gods of Egypt, continues to offer us surprises every year. In addition, progress continued on the preparation of the Epigraphic Survey's second volume on the Colonnade Hall of Luxor Temple, including occasional last-minute checks and photography at Luxor.

The collation of drawings this season concentrated almost exclusively on the areas of the Eighteenth Dynasty temple that are slated for publication in the first volume on that monument: the six interior chapels decorated by Hatshepsut and Thutmose III, as well as the exterior facade of those chapels. Epigraphers John and Debbie Darnell, Ted Castle, and Steve Vinson, joined when possible by artist Drew Baumann and myself, completed collations on thirty-seven drawings, and artists Ray Johnson, Tina Di Cerbo, Sue Osgood, Margaret De Jong, Drew Baumann, and Linda Cohn-Kobylecky undertook the penciling and inking on thirty-four additional enlargements, in addition to five graffiti. Most of these new drawing enlargements pertain to the exterior portions of the 18th Dynasty temple: the bark sanctuary and the peripteros around it, which are to appear in a second volume on the temple. Seventeen drawings were given final director's checks, and we seem in a good position to complete the documentation of the six chapels by the end of the 1996-1997 season.

The court in front of the Eighteenth Dynasty temple at Medinet Habu, which was built up in the first major expansion of the original building during the Kushite Twenty-fifth Dynasty (c. 715-664 B.C.), has recently posed a number of interesting architectural questions. In the fall of 1993 it was discovered that the present flanking walls of the court, built during the later Ptolemaic period, consisted very largely of reused blocks containing Kushite decoration, and the suspicion remains that these stones were dismantled from that now-vanished Twenty-fifth Dynasty building. This past season, our colleagues from the French Institute Drs. Jean and Helen Jacquet were able to complete their preliminary investigation of the fleeting architectural traces of the original Kushite building, and their observations will significantly alter our

understanding of how the temple expanded during the later periods of Egyptian history.

When the Kushite structure was first excavated by Uvo Hölscher and published in 1939, it was reconstructed as a narrow, windowless gallery stretching from the small pylon to the east all the way to the facade of the ambulatory—an unusual architectural appendage that seemed unique in its proportions and purpose. But Jean and Helen Jacquet, in clearing and mapping the last surviving paving stones, now much eroded, discovered that this odd gallery never existed. Taking careful note of the foundation trenches and mason's marks left on the pavement, they have concluded that only a small vestibule had been built directly behind the small pylon, and the remaining open space in front of the ambulatory had been filled by a double colonnade consisting of six columns on each side. Low intercolumnar walls connected the column shafts, thus screening religious processions from the common gaze. Such open colonnades, also of Kushite date, are known from several other temples in the Theban area; the new reconstruction is therefore quite typical of contemporary architecture and is a more satisfying interpretation of the temple's expansion.

Photographer Yarko Kobylecky was employed in reshooting a number of difficult scenes for enlargement purposes: the four columns in the peripteros, inserted at a late date by king Akoris of Dynasty 29 to prop up the sagging roof; the small Taharqa gateway located at the northwest corner of the temple; the recarved Ptolemaic lintel of the temple facade; and the portions of the exterior walls that are now enclosed by the Ptolemaic annexes to the north and south. Other photographic projects included recording several new graffiti discovered by Egyptian conservators in the course of their work at the mortuary temple of Ramesses III and a number of documentary views of the Chicago House compound after the renovation. Assisting Yarko in the photo archives, Ellie Smith returned for two months this season to contribute her invaluable organizational skills, completing the registration of new negatives, lending a hand with the field photography, and compiling a list of glass and nitrate negatives that will require duplication.

At Luxor Temple a number of new discoveries came to light, thanks to Ray Johnson's detective skills and interest in late Eighteenth Dynasty sculpture. At the invitation of our good friend Dr. Hourig Sourouzian and with the kind permission of Dr. Mohammed Saleh, director of the Cairo Museum, Ray was able to examine photographs taken by Dr. Sourouzian

of certain statue fragments in the museum basement. Several of these fragments turned out to be directly relevant to our concessions in Luxor and Karnak. One lovely facial fragment can now be rejoined to the largest sculpture in the Colonnade Hall, a colossal dyad of Amun and Mut; in antiquity the goddess's face had sheared off but was carefully reattached by dowels, then finally lost again, eventually being taken to Cairo. A plaster cast made by Dr. Saleh allowed Ray to confirm the join of the fragment in situ (the dowel holes on the fragment match those of the statue), and we hope to reattach the face to the statue next season, restoring a large measure of Mut's beauty. Two other blocks were identified as belonging to the missing torso and head of Mut in a smaller dyad in the Colonnade; but the surprise in this case is that the blocks are of much later date—perhaps even Ptolemaic—than the statue itself. This situation again testifies to a late repair undertaken to restore a yet more ancient statue. And still another torso in the Cairo Museum, we trust, will eventually rejoin its statue group still standing in the Temple of Khonsu at Karnak.

Once again this season, Debbie Darnell devoted a good portion of her time to the management of the Chicago House library, whose collection continues to grow. It is primarily due to her organization, meticulous checking, and hard work in ordering books, cataloguing them, and arranging payment that the library has been able to maintain the completeness and currency of its holdings. New accessions received this year totaled 203 books and offprints, raising the collection to 17,180 items. Debbie's tasks were made easier by a project she began with Nan Ray two years ago and which was brought to fruition this year: a database file that holds the titles to all of our journals and monograph series. This database now totals 360 different series titles, several of which contain over one hundred volumes each. Nan joined us for six weeks during the winter to complete the last entries and to pursue a number of other tasks, including reorganizing the library's offprint file. And at the end of the season our good friend May Trad visited the house to arrange for a large shipment of new and damaged books to be sent to the binderies in Cairo over the summer; her continuing supervision of this chore is an invaluable service for which we are truly grateful.

During the summer of 1995 and the spring of 1996, John Darnell and I spent a good deal of time augmenting and editing the manuscript for the next projected volume on Luxor: *The Facade, Portals, Upper Registers, Columns, and Marginalia of the Colonnade Hall*, to appear in the new subseries *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Luxor Temple*. The forthcoming publication is a remarkable potpourri of reliefs and graffiti of all periods, and will document the many alterations suffered by the Colonnade Hall from the reign of Ramesses II to the ultimate destruction of the Hall at the hands of stone quarriers after the Roman period.

Physical conservation of the monuments in our concessions is becoming an ever more urgent priority. As part of a grant from the Egyptian Antiquities Project (EAP) of the American Research Center in Egypt, we were very pleased to have conservator Dr. John Stewart of the National Trust of

Great Britain at Chicago House for two weeks, in order to complete a condition survey on the block fragments he had treated in 1985-1987.

In addition, the Survey was selected as the recipient of another very generous grant from the EAP for major conservation efforts at the Eighteenth Dynasty temple at Medinet Habu. This new program will enable us to consolidate the subsiding walls of the Kushite court, to clean temple reliefs that were smeared with dirt by the torrential rains of 1994, to recover reused block fragments and prepare them for study and publication, to improve water drainage in the area, and to provide the temple with proper access and information for tourists when the task of epigraphic documentation is finished. For their very helpful advice and their efforts in helping to prepare and finalize the grant proposal, I wish to express my special gratitude to Dr. Chip Vincent, Dr. Bill Remsen, and Cynthia Scharzter of the EAP, as well as to the members of the Supreme Council for Antiquities who readily approved the project.

The daily operations of the household and the main office were in the hands of our administrator Ahmed Harfoush, who handled these very critical functions with skill, good humor, and imagination. The Survey lent assistance to several expeditions in the course of the season, among the most memorable of which was Dr. Carol Meyer's excavations at Bir Umm Fawakhir. It was a pleasure having Carol, a former Survey artist, and her staff at Chicago House prior to, and after, their season at the Wadi Hammamat. An unusual opportunity for collaboration arose at the kind invitation of Dr. Vivian Davies, Keeper of Egyptian Antiquities at the British Museum, who was working with the Belgian Mission at Elkab. Arrangements were made to send Yarko Kobylecky to Elkab for a day in order to make color transparencies of the painted tomb of Ahmose, son of Ibana, a monument that remains one of the chief historical witnesses to the military campaigns that hurled the Hyksos out of Egypt and whose first publication is almost a century old.

Dr. Mohammed Saghir also cosponsored with the Epigraphic Survey a memorial lecture series in honor of the late Dr. Labib Habachi at the Cultural Palace in Luxor. Dr. Saghir himself led off the list of speakers, discussing his finds at the nearby site of Abu'l Goud, which has yielded vital information on the vanished town quarters of ancient Thebes; John and Debbie Darnell gave a lively presentation on their epigraphic and survey work on the desert roads west of Luxor; and Dr. Nigel Strudwick spoke on his excavation of the tomb of Sennefer (Theban tomb 99) on the west bank. The logistics for the series were indomitably managed by Tina and by Dr. Henri Riad as local liaison, and their joint efforts made the entire series a remarkably well attended success.

Our continuing fundraising efforts were most successful, thanks to the manifold talents and energy of Carlotta Maher, whose informative and gracious public presentations in our library are matched only by her devotion to maintaining her correspondence with a huge coterie of Chicago House friends. Her humor and vivacity enlivened much of our season and were equally lavished on great numbers of tea and dinner

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guests, who seem only to approach our gates in increasing numbers.

The Survey received two important gifts this season that will facilitate the logistics of supply and administration. Through the kind sponsorship of Thomas Heagy and Norman Bobins, the LaSalle National Corporation of Chicago provided a generous grant to purchase a new fifteen-passenger Toyota minivan for Chicago House that will greatly alleviate the problem of importing spare parts for our two aging Land Rovers (now 33 and 18 years old) and allow us to carry the entire staff in a single trip; the grant also included funds for vehicle registration and repair. And in January Mr. Gilles Acogny, General Director of Xerox Egypt, approved the long-term lease of a new copying machine to replace a much older model (received in 1987), a gift that has already made a noticeable improvement in our office efficiency. We owe a great debt of gratitude to both LaSalle National Corporation and Xerox Egypt.

The long-range financial stability of the Survey received a great boost with the successful conclusion in June of negotiations with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) for an augmentation of our existing operating endowment funds. In accordance with legislation passed by the U.S. Congress last year, USAID in Cairo has authorized a separate trust fund for the preservation of Egyptian antiquities, a fund that the Survey will administer jointly with the American Research Center.

We were very pleased this year to welcome the American Ambassador, H. E. Edward Walker, and Mrs. Wendy Walker to the Friends of Chicago House tour over Thanksgiving weekend, which featured a memorable day trip to the magical site of Gebel el Silsila, where John and Drew led the group through the quarries and private shrines scattered about the sandstone cliffs overlooking the Nile. The now-traditional black-tie dinner dance in the residence courtyard proved to be a huge hit, as did the spacious quarters of the Winter Palace Hotel, where the group stayed. Once again, I wish to acknowledge the unbounded assistance and good will of Ibrahim Sadek of the American Research Center, without whose kind persistence and relentless organization the weekend would not have happened.

With tourism markedly up this year over last, 747 visitors registered their names in our guest book during the six-month season. We gave thirty-one library lectures to organized

groups, and at least twenty-five more to smaller groups and individuals. In the course of the season we welcomed twenty-one overnight guests, most of them professional colleagues who were able to utilize our research facilities to the fullest, and who spent a total of 160 guest nights under our roof. One of the great highlights of the season was a delightful reception and dinner hosted by Ambassador and Mrs. Walker in March at their embassy residence in honor of Chicago House, providing us with a venue for meeting new business contacts and for speaking on the priorities of monument conservation and documentation. Special visitors to Chicago House this season included Barbara Breasted Whitesides, granddaughter of the founder of the Oriental Institute and the Survey; a tour from the Oriental Institute, which was observed with a special reception in our courtyard; and a visit to Medinet Habu from former President George Bush, whom I had the pleasure of showing the mortuary temple of Ramesses III.

It was a great pleasure for me to share the company and the efforts of a talented and dedicated staff this season, which in addition to the author as field director, consisted of: John Darnell, Deborah Darnell, Edward Castle, and Steven Vinson, epigraphers; W. Raymond Johnson (Assistant Director), Christina Di Cerbo, Susan Osgood, Margaret De Jong, Andrew Baumann, and Linda Cohn-Kobylecky, artists; Yarko Kobylecky, photographer; John Stewart, conservator; Jean and Helen Jacquet, field architects; Ahmed Harfoush, house and office administrator; Jill Carlotta Maher, assistant to the director; and Elinor Smith, photographic archives assistant. I am deeply grateful to all of them. Saleh Suleiman Shehat, chief engineer, rendered invaluable services to the expedition that touched every aspect of our daily lives, and Dr. Henri Riad, our distinguished colleague and friend, continued to help us unfailingly with all matters dealing with the local constabulary, the Culture Palace, police security, and administering the Labib Habachi Archives on behalf of the Survey. I express deep gratitude in particular to Ray Johnson, who cheerfully and capably shouldered the burdens of field director during my absence from Chicago House in January and part of February.

We are especially grateful to the many members of the Supreme Council for Antiquities who contributed directly to the success of the season: Dr. Abd el-Halim Nur ed-Din, Secretary General of the Supreme Council, Dr. Ali Hassan, Director of Pharaonic Antiquities; Dr. Mohammed el-Saghir,

Supervisor of Pharaonic Antiquities for Upper Egypt; Dr. Sabry Abd el-Aziz, Chief Inspector of Qurna; Dr. Mohammed Nasr, Chief Inspector of Luxor; Dr. Abd el-Hamid Marouf, Chief Inspector of Karnak; and Dr. Madeleine el-Mallah, Director of the Luxor Museum.

In addition to those mentioned for specific contributions, I gratefully express thanks to many other colleagues and friends: the United States Ambassador to Egypt, H. E. Edward Walker, and Mrs. Wendy Walker; Edmund Hull and William Cavness of the United States Embassy in Cairo; John Westley, Justin Doyle, and Randall Parks of the United States Agency for International Development; Gerry Vincent; Mohammed Ozalp of Misr International Bank; David Maher; David Ray; Tony Barrett and Marguerite Kelly; Mark Rudkin; Lucia Woods Lindley and Daniel Lindley, Jr.; Barbara Mertz; Louis Byron, Jr.; Terry Walz, Mark Easton, Ibrahim Sadek, and Amira Khattab of the American Research Center in Egypt; Fathi Salib of American Express in Luxor; and Cynthia Echols

and Florence Bonnick of the Oriental Institute. I would like to single out three institutions in particular that have provided fundamental assistance and support for a number of years, and of whose association with Chicago House we are especially proud: the Amoco Foundation, Inc., The J. Paul Getty Trust, and The Xerox Foundation.

As always, we will be very pleased to welcome members of the Oriental Institute and other friends to Chicago House from October 1st to April 1st. Please write to us in advance, to let us know the dates of your visit, and call us as soon as you arrive in Luxor, so that we can confirm a time for a library tour that is mutually convenient. Our address in Egypt: Chicago House, Corniche el-Nil, Luxor, Arab Republic of Egypt; the phone number is 372525 (direct dial from the United States: 011-20-95-372525) and the fax number is 381620 (011-20-95-381620). Net surfers can find our Oriental Institute home page at <http://www-oi.uchicago.edu/OI/PROJ/EPI/Epigraphic.html>.

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### ADDRESSES OF THE EPIGRAPHIC SURVEY:

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