

### John Coleman Darnell

In addition to his work as epigrapher with the Epigraphic Survey in Luxor, Egypt, and work (with his wife Deborah Darnell) on the Luxor-Farshût Desert Road Survey (see full report earlier in this publication), **John Coleman Darnell**'s personal research in 1993–1994 has been concerned with cryptography and graffiti. In addition to polishing up his dissertation, dealing with three versions of a cryptographic religious treatise of the New Kingdom, he is completing a study of two enigmatic texts from Dra Abu el-Naga, recently discovered by Karl-Joachim Seyfried and Friederike Kampp. He is in the preliminary stages of an examination of two cryptographic ostraca which Jiro Kondo and his Waseda University team unearthed this past season in debris near the entrance to the tomb of Amenhotep III. He has also begun work on yet another fragment of cryptic text from Dra Abu el-Naga, a portion of a solar hymn, long exposed but essentially ignored. In addition to the vast amount of pharaonic graffiti which with his wife he is recording in the Wadi el-Hôl and near the Gebel Antef temple, Mr. Darnell is also working on the copious graffiti from the monastery of Poseidonios/the *topos* of Apa Tyrannos in the desert behind Armant (for the demotic texts here, see Richard Jasnow's account of his personal research in this report). The site, which Oliver H. Myers located in the 1930s, has never been fully published (only about six photographs have appeared) and has recently been heavily vandalized. There are mysterious early dynastic

serekhs, depictions of caravans of loaded donkeys, and Coptic inscriptions recording the dates of Easter pilgrimages. There is also a lively depiction of a Coptic visitor being winched up to the top of the doorless monastery tower in a chair (the name of the establishment appears in the pediment as “Poseid[onios]”). Deborah and John hope soon to produce an architectural and ceramic study of the site as well.

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