



News & Notes

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THE CHICAGO ASSYRIAN DICTIONARY AT SEVENTY

By Matthew W. Stolper, Professor,
The Oriental Institute and Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations



Headquarters of the Assyrian Dictionary. Members of the Resident Staff at Work, 1932.

On a sunny morning in the autumn of 1980, I passed a tour group standing at Frank Lloyd Wright's Robie House, a few yards from The Oriental Institute. I was new to Chicago. I had studied some architectural history years before, and it seemed to me that one of the fine things about working at The Oriental Institute was having a monument like the Robie House so close at hand. To my surprise, though, the tour guide was not talking about Frank Lloyd Wright. "That building," she said, pointing across the way, "is The Oriental Institute. They're writing a Babylonian dictionary there. They started work on it ... oh, a long time ago, and they'll probably go on working on it forever."

I had come to Chicago to work on the Assyrian Dictionary project, but I thought of the work ahead as an extended but finite apprenticeship, not as a lifelong vocation to an eternal service, and considered interrupting the guide to tell the listeners "No, the Dictionary is mostly done. It'll be finished in ten years ... or so." At the same time, the way the guide had characterized the Institute seemed remarkable. She might have said something like "That's where the mummies are," but instead she chose an example of long-term pure research. The arcane quality of the "Babylonian dictionary" was probably meant to be amusing, but only partly so.

She had picked an example that was more expressive than her listeners could possibly understand. The CAD was not primeval, but it was almost coeval with The Oriental Institute. It was conceived as a realization of the broadest and grandest original aims of the Institute. It was even one of the things that determined the physical layout of The Oriental Institute building itself.

The Assyrian Dictionary project came into existence in 1921, two years after The Oriental Institute was organized. At first, it was housed in the basement of the Haskell Oriental Museum, where "a commodious office has been built in, fitted with light, heat and ventilation and properly equipped".¹ (Readers of the recent biography of James Murray, the first editor of the *Oxford English Dictionary*, will appreciate this subterranean comfort for its contrast with Murray's galvanized metal hut and the boxes with which he kept his feet from the drafts.) By the time the new building was ready, the Dictionary's demands for space were already growing, but even if there is a hint of testiness in Breasted's curt statement in an otherwise expansive description of the new facility, "... the third floor of the Institute building provides spacious accommodation for the Assyrian Dictionary project, which needs a large amount of room,"² he had already

Continued on page two

DICTIONARY *Continued from page one*

taken a large view of the project in laying out the building plan, a view that is still plain in the interconnected rooms expressly designed for the tablet collection, the Dictionary's editors and assistants, the duplicating equipment, and the files.

Breasted's once temperate public utterances about The Oriental Institute and its projects came ever more to follow Daniel Burnham's celebrated exhortation to "make no small plans." In the hard times of 1933, Breasted characterized the Institute without a trace of academic deference as "essentially an organized endeavor to recover the lost story of the rise of man by salvaging the surviving evidence on a more comprehensive scale than has hitherto been possible and then by analysis and synthesis building up an account of human development on a broader basis of evidence than has heretofore been available".³ Time and again, he emphasized the scope and scale of the Institute's projects, the resulting sense of solidity of the results that they promised, and the commitments of resources that they demanded; sometimes he invoked the long expenditures of time required by the works he considered as worthy intellectual models, such as the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*: "although Mommsen [the German philologist and historian who was the principal founder of the *Corpus*] fully expected to see the completion of this impressive task in his own lifetime, the work is still under way a generation after his death, and ... , although it has been going on for more than a century, it is still incomplete".⁴ It seems that Breasted was used to the idea that some of the Institute's projects would outlive their founders and outgrow their founders' grandest expectations.

The explicit models for the Assyrian Dictionary were the *Oxford English Dictionary* and the Berlin Egyptian dictionary. The CAD, initiated as these dictionaries were nearing completion, was to share some of their characteristics: it was not to be a bald correlation of Akkadian words and English definitions, but was to consider and display every citation of every word in an extended context; it was to be organized historically, to reveal the evolution of meanings over the two millennia in which Akkadian was written; it was to draw on the cooperation and expertise of an international community of scholars; and it was to include, insofar as it was possible, the whole known corpus of Akkadian texts, to be a "thesaurus," a compendious encyclopaedia of the literal contents of Akkadian texts and, indirectly, of Mesopotamian civilizations.

While the dictionary itself was in process, its burgeoning files were to be a unique foundation for basic historical research. Breasted quoted Albert T. Olmstead, professor of ancient Near Eastern history in the Institute:

*The filing of cards with full context in one drawer permits an examination of all the material hitherto gathered on any one subject. For example, under ardu, "slave," we find all the material available for any desired study on slavery.*⁵

In retrospect, of course, this notion that complex social and economic relationships can be understood merely in lexical terms by tracing some words associated with them seems naive and even misleading, but it was true nevertheless that the resources for

historical exploration that the files offered to scholars at the Institute and that the Dictionary promised to open to the whole scholarly world were unparalleled in scale and quality.

The *Oxford English Dictionary* had begun work in 1879 and published the last volume of the "Principal Dictionary," as the main set excluding the supplements was known, just under fifty years later, in 1928. The speedier Egyptian dictionary had begun work in Berlin in 1897 and published the last of its five volumes in 1931. How long was the CAD, conceived on a similar scale, to take? Breasted was at first optimistic:

*It is as yet hardly possible to hazard a guess which would be of any value, as to the length of time required to complete the Assyrian dictionary; but eight to ten years of such progress as has already been made will probably be sufficient to bring it near completion.*⁶

but later he became purposely vague:

*With perhaps sixteen years altogether to be devoted to the carding of the texts, an indefinitely long period to be required for the preparation of the word-treatments, and further years to be needed for publication of six large and highly technical volumes, the outstanding magnitude of the Assyrian Dictionary project becomes somewhat easier to visualize.*⁷

After the Second World War, as the project reached the age of twenty-five, an impatient administration encouraged the reorganization under a plan with the basic requirement

*... that the Dictionary be completed and ready for publication within a ten-year period. The task was to be started in October 1947, ... and it was to be finished by the end of 1957.*⁸

Over time, as the tour guide's comment suggested, the project's perdurability became a distressingly conspicuous public quality:

*The folks at the University of Chicago's Oriental Institute ... say that the last of the hoped-for 21 volumes won't be out until around 1980.*⁹

*The Chicago Assyrian Dictionary Project ... may itself qualify as ancient. Work began in 1921, the first volume emerged in 1956, the 14th in 1977, and the world may be shuddering at the gates of 1984 before the CAD reaches an honorable conclusion.*¹⁰

But these joking suppositions that the Dictionary is unending and in some sense unchanging misapprehend the accomplishments of the project and the changing character of the task.

In fact, most of the main part of the job is in hand, and it exceeds even Breasted's generous expectations of its scale. Breasted guessed that the final product might run to about 3,000 pages in six volumes¹¹ but the first fifteen published volumes

THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE SUNDAY FILMS

MAY - JUNE, 1991

All films and slide talks are shown free of charge at 2:00 p.m. in Breasted Hall.

- | | | |
|------|----|---|
| MAY | 5 | Iraq: Stairway to the Gods (2:00)
Rivers of Time (3:30 - special showing
for Chicago Day program) |
| | 12 | Megiddo: City of Destruction |
| | 19 | Preserving Egypt's Past |
| | 26 | Iran: Landmarks in the Desert |
| JUNE | 2 | Turkey: Crossroads of the Ancient World |
| | 9 | Myth of the Pharaohs/Ancient Mesopotamia |
| | 16 | Rivers of Time |
| | 23 | Egypt's Pyramids: Houses of Eternity |
| | 30 | Iraq: Stairway to the Gods |

The Oriental Institute Museum, 1155 East 58th St., Chicago, IL 60637. For more information, call (312)702-9507.

UPCOMING EXHIBIT

SIFTING THE SANDS OF TIME: THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE AND THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST

October 6, 1991 - December 31, 1992

The Oriental Institute has been at the forefront of research and scholarship in ancient Near Eastern studies since its first expedition in 1919. "Sifting the Sands of Time" traces the history of The Oriental Institute at The University of Chicago, not only recounting past achievements but emphasizing current and future scholarly work.

News & Notes

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Fax: 312/702-9853

All inquiries, comments, and suggestions are welcome.

UPCOMING EXHIBIT

VANISHED KINGDOMS OF THE NILE: THE REDISCOVERY OF ANCIENT NUBIA

February 3 - December 31, 1992

Nubia, in today's Sudan and southern Egypt, supported a flourishing and sophisticated culture. This exhibit, spanning over 4000 years of Nubian history, offers an overview of this land and its people through objects excavated by The Oriental Institute.

Recovering Ancient Voices



THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE ANNUAL DINNER
Monday, May 20, 1991

Will Benefit the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary

For more information, call
the Membership Office at 312/702-1677.

THE POST-MORTEM TRIUMPH OF RAMSES II; OR, RAMSES GETS GREATER IN DALLAS

by Dr. Robert K. Ritner

Research Associate, The Oriental Institute, and Associate Editor, *The Demotic Dictionary*

The recent touring exhibit of artifacts associated with the reign of Ramses II produced many outbursts of "Egyptomania" in its sponsoring cities. Egyptian elements sprouted in department store windows, jewelry displays, stationery and book shops, and even on card racks and perfume counters. The enthusiasm was often civic as well as commercial: Memphis painted hieroglyphic crosswalks on its downtown streets. In 1989, the exhibit opened at the fittingly grandiose Art Deco State Fair grounds in Dallas (adjacent to the Cotton Bowl), and the results have been conservatively described as "wildly successful," with attendance of almost 1.5 million visitors in six months. The exhibit design was certainly the most dramatic that I have ever seen. At the conclusion of an introductory slide montage in a darkened theater, the opaque screen (in reality a scrim) became transparent to reveal the exhibit lying just behind. Then the screen parted like the Red Sea, and the amazed spectators filed into the light and Ramesside Egypt. The designers had created, in effect, a reversal of the Book of Exodus.

As a guest lecturer for the Dallas exhibit, I was able to witness the enthusiastic response firsthand. Nonetheless, I must admit to being rather surprised last year when I received a telephone call commissioning a new hieroglyphic text for a 7-foot tall commemorative stone stela.¹ As a native Texan, I should have known that we would outdo painted sidewalks. The inspiration for the stela came from noted local sculptor William Easley, whose works include a monument to the Alamo war dead in San Antonio. With the approval of the Dallas city council and private donations of \$15,000, Easley had begun sculpting a 2,800-pound slab of Texas limestone as a personal tribute to Ramses. In fidelity to Egyptian prototypes, he had envisioned a round-topped

stela depicting Ramses II offering before an altar to the god Osiris. My task was to act as referee for authenticity, and to provide the hieroglyphic labels and dedication.

It is a rare opportunity for an Egyptologist to be called upon to compose in hieroglyphs; the last officially-sponsored hieroglyphic inscription was carved in A.D. 394. This was a chance not to be overlooked. Via the modern intermediaries of fax machine, telephone, and U. S. mail, an ancient Egyptian art form was to be evoked in the American Southwest. Easley's schematic conception was the result of research and long-standing interest in Egyptology, and labels for the primary offering scene were thus straightforward. The Pharaoh is provided with his throne name Usermaatre ("Ozymandias"), and his ritual action is conventionally styled: "offering wine to his father that he might achieve the state of being given life." As a concession to the posthumous nature of the monument, the king is designated "true of voice," meaning "justified" (before the court of the underworld) or "deceased." With the label of Osiris, I was unable to resist an inside pun (fully in keeping with Egyptian preferences), and the god of the dead ("Osiris, foremost of the West") implies a double meaning in his response: "I have given to you a repetition of life in the *land of the West*." With some restraint, I did not insert the word "wild." Had the stela been erected in neighboring Fort Worth, the temptation would have been overwhelming.

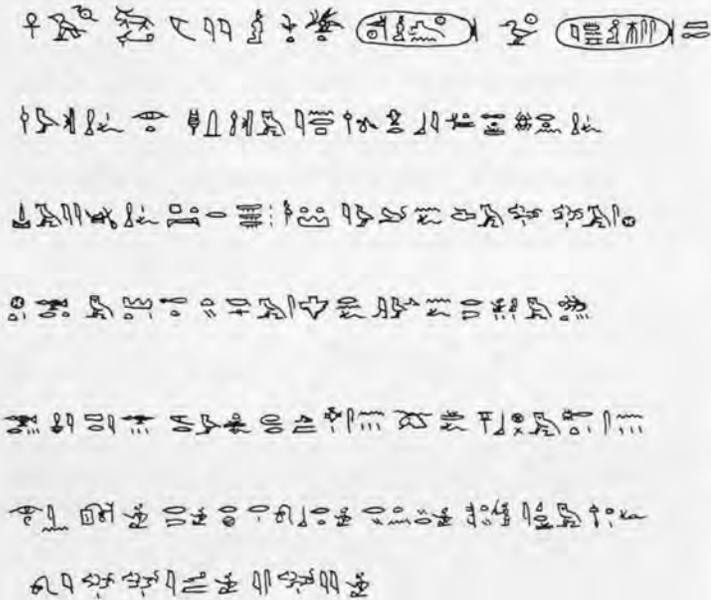
The dedication itself was a more complicated problem. My guidelines specified that the inscription commemorate the Ramses visit and occupy approximately four carved lines. Egyptian memorial texts were traditionally quite formulaic, and to enhance the authenticity of the inscription my resulting dedication is something of a "cento," borrowing expressions and idioms from other Ramesside texts. For prototypes I did not rely exclusively upon Ramses' own monuments, however, since a stela of a later age actually provided the closest approximation to the Dallas memorial. Easley's stela was not the first monument to be attributed posthumously to Ramses II; this had already been done by Egyptians of later antiquity. So great was this ruler's continuing prestige that a stela of Persian/Ptolemaic date "adopts" his reign for the events it relates.² Popularly known as the "Bentresh Stela," this memorial is now in the Louvre in Paris and details the magical cure of a possessed foreign princess by a healing statue dispatched by Ramses. The Dallas stela also recorded a "post-mortem, pseudo-epigraphic" dispatch of Egyptian items to a for-



Dedicatory inscription of the Dallas stela.

eign land. The kindred Bentresh Stela is acknowledged in the Dallas dedication by the insertion of a few post-Ramesside anachronisms.

My initial version of the composition appeared in the Institute's *Docent Digest* of September 1990 and ran as follows:



"May there live the Horus, Strong Bull Beloved of Maat, King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Usermaatre, the Son of Re, Ramses Beloved of Amon, the justified. His Majesty commanded to make a large stela of hard limestone concerning a great wonder which happened to His Majesty when His Majesty crossed heaven to the lands of the West. He reached Dallas, a large city in the great foreign land named Texas. People came to him in multitudes, both the great and the small, since love of him captivated their hearts and respect of him permeated their bodies. Made by the wise scribe, Robert Ritner and the sculptor who is excellent in his craft, William Easley."

With the exception of the lavish royal titulary, which was reduced to "Ramses Beloved of Amon," and a *nom de ciseau* for the sculptor Easley, the final, engraved text was unchanged

A glance at the hieroglyphic text will show that composition of the inscription allowed for a bit of inventive spelling. Readers of *The Oriental Institute's News & Notes* are aware that Egyptian hieroglyphic script commonly makes use of "determinatives" at the end of words to indicate their range of meaning. Thus, titles and names are determined by seated persons, the verb "to cross" by a boat, etc. With the writing of "Dallas," I selected the standard city determinative, but the spelling of "Texas" demanded its own, easily-recognizable determinative. Few lands have made such an icon of their shape. Italy might be an exception, but when did you ever see a belt buckle, cake pan or ice cubes in the shape of Italy? Careful spacing of the carved text placed this "determinative" directly in the center of the dedicatory inscription. It should be noted that the concluding laudatory epithets of scribe and sculptor



Dedicatory inscription, with determinative of "Texas" in center and the name of the author on the last line (beginning second figure from left and ending with the second seated man).

are fully traditional (neither Egyptians nor Texans have prized humility), and besides, who would pass up the opportunity to be immortalized on a hieroglyphic stela?

My hieroglyphic task was completed by the end of July, but William Easley's was just beginning. I can only assume that this stela was a true labor of love, for he was forced to work throughout a typically scorching summer in less than ideal surroundings. In order to be close to the site of the stela's proposed placement, Easley used as a studio the unairconditioned - and still fragrant - barn that had housed camels (for rides and photo opportunities) during the Ramses exhibit. Ancient Egyptian literature was certainly accurate when it praised the easy life of the hieroglyphic scribe over the many tribulations of the sculptor!

The completed stela was formally unveiled at 2 p.m. on October 7, 1990 before the Dallas Museum of Natural History in Fair Park. Standing 7 feet (with an additional 2 feet embedded in concrete beneath ground), the white limestone monument was 4 feet wide, carefully carved and brightly painted, with an inscription of five lines at its base. The reverse of the stela is occupied by an inscription in English that explains the general purpose of the monument with a list of its donors and sculptor. There are, however, no translations of the individual hieroglyphic inscriptions. Only students of hieroglyphs - or readers of *News & Notes* - will be able to follow these arcane writings in detail. A second dedication ceremony on November 15, 1990 featured Dr. Zahi Hawass, Director General of Giza and Saqqara, who received a smaller replica (8" x 10") of the memorial for his office by the pyramids.

My first opportunity to view the stela occurred this past January, when I returned to Dallas to deliver a lecture before the Dallas Museum of Fine Arts. On the morning



The Dallas stela

MUSEUM VIEWS

By Emily Teeter, Assistant Curator



Why is the bull smiling?
Figure 1.

Since returning to The Oriental Institute as Assistant Curator in September 1990, I have been enthralled with the opportunities that my position holds. It is an exciting time at the Museum, for there are so many new projects in the wind: pure research, revising displays and planning for two new exhibits which we will present in conjunction with the University's centennial.

Many of you who have the opportunity to visit the Museum may have already noticed some of the changes. Since the summer of

1989, the museum staff has been modifying the lighting in the galleries, following the recommendations of a lighting consultant. The plans have gradually been implemented by the preparators, Phil Petrie and his assistant Mary Carlisle. You can hardly believe the difference! The winged bull looks like a different creature. You can now see the beautiful expression on his face (figure 1). Although the relighting is not complete yet, the sculpture cases at the end of the Egyptian gallery also show dramatic improvement. Now the Old Kingdom pair statue of the man Nenkhefka and his wife Nefershemes have a new radiance that brings the couple to life (figure 2).

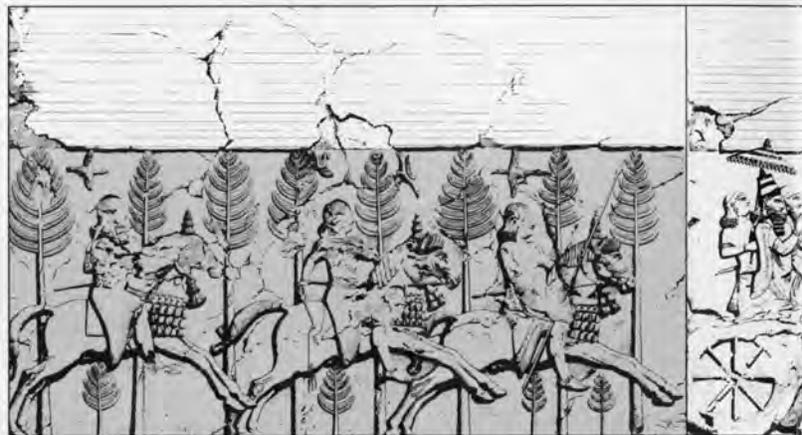
The museum staff has been putting lots of work into the appearance of the galleries. The Assyrian and Egyptian galleries have been completely repainted and Persia is next on the list for new paint. We have worked out a unified color scheme for the



Nenkhefka and Nefershemes in a new light. Figure 2.

Egyptian gallery which includes two basic colors of fabric for the back of the cases, one a neutral, the other a green tone, both of which appear in the painted ceilings. We will gradually replace the other colors which have been added to the back of the cases over the years.

A new addition which should be in place by the time you read this is a series of banners which will be suspended over the gallery doors. The banners, designed by assistant preparator Mary Carlisle, will bear an object from the gallery (wdjat eyes, Persepolis bull, lion of Ishtar, Megiddo capital) (figure 3). The color of each banner is taken from a color which appears in the painted ceilings, and so they not only serve as markers for the galleries but they will also bring attention to the gorgeous ceilings which are so often over (or under?) looked.



Sample of new labels for the Khorsabad reliefs. Note that the fragment on the left

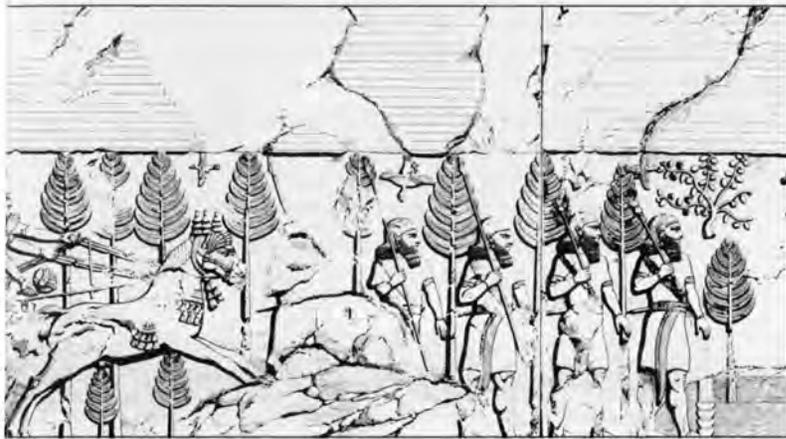
One of the greatest pleasures of my position has been the opportunity to study objects in the galleries and in the basement and to gradually work through the Egyptian gallery making sure that the exhibits are understandable and attractive and reflect current thought on the material. Any changes in the galleries, be it labels or objects is slow but steady, for as in any museum, nothing is done in isolation.

To replace or add a label, one of the curators revises or composes the text and then passes it to another member of the museum staff for editing. After this step, the copy is reviewed by Joan Barghusen in the education department and Janet Helman in the volunteer office. This additional editing serves several purposes: first, it is always good to have someone with a different perspective look at the written material; Joan and Janet relate to how the information will be used by the public. Secondly, passing the copy to the education and volunteer offices is the best way of keeping the docents informed about changes in the galleries. After this step, the curators laser-print the label in final form on flexible acetate sheets. Finally, the preparators mount the labels on rigid plexiglass and mount them in the display case.

As with labels, there are many steps in changing any of the objects which are on exhibit. Once a member of the curatorial staff decides to make a change, the request is given to the registrar Ray Tindel, who moves the object from storage into a temporary holding cabinet. From this transit area, the object moves to

conservation where Laura d'Alessandro, the conservator, and her assistant, Barbara Hamann, record the condition of the object. They specifically ensure that the object is in good enough condition for exhibit and they may elect to clean the surface of the object and redo old repairs.

My first challenge in revising exhibits in the museum was the Egyptian pottery cases in Alcove C. Since this valuable collection is foremost a study collection, I decided to concentrate on exhibiting excavated materials, although purchased materials were included when they filled a gap in a sequence. Next, the pottery was regrouped and labeled, each label giving complete information about its origin and when possible, the year that it was excavated or added to the collection. I rearranged the cases to create contrasts between pottery used in daily life to that used



is shaded to indicate its position in the overall sequence. Figure 4.

in ritual purposes, and also to contrast the pottery of Upper and Lower Egypt during the intermediate periods when the the lack of unity in the country was echoed by distinctive pottery styles. Take a look next time you are in the galleries.

Another major undertaking was the rearrangement of the Egyptian cosmetics case. The back of the case is now covered in the new green accent color and the objects are grouped according to use. Assistant preparator Mary Carlisle built new mounts for many of the objects. We added labels which deal with razors, hair curling, perfume and the different types of unguent bottles. This type of material is of great interest to the public because it relates to everyday life. We hope that the changes will make the exhibit even more useful.



Designer's sketch for Persian gallery banner. Figure 3.

Another very welcome change is in the Assyrian Hall where curator Karen Wilson has developed a new series of graphics for the Khorsabad reliefs. Each relief now has a series of labels, one of which shows the original location of the particular orthostat in the overall sequence (figure 4), a photo of the relief before restoration and a detailed label describing the scene.

Although we have been working on the existing exhibits, much of our energy is now being directed toward two very special exhibitions which are being presented in conjunction with The University of Chicago's centennial (see announcement elsewhere in this issue). "Sifting the Sands of Time" provides an opportunity to review the history of The Oriental Institute. The exhibit will concentrate upon the present and future work of the Institute. We will use our wealth of archival material (photos and letters) to illuminate the many expeditions and projects. The exhibit will also give us the opportunity to display many objects that are in storage due to lack of space in the galleries.

The second exhibit, "Vanished Kingdoms of the Nile" offers us the chance to again show some of our Nubian material which has, unfortunately, been off display for many years.

As you can tell, the museum is an active place these days. We encourage you to visit the Museum often to see old "friends" and to acquaint yourself with new ones.

Join us for a special
Assyrian Evening
 as the mold of Sargon's winged bull
 nears completion!

Wednesday, May 1, 1991

6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Gallery talk 7:00 p.m.

*Then, at 8:00 p.m., join us for
 the last members' lecture of the spring season.*

Peter Dorman

Chicago House 1990-1991: A Tale of Two Temples
 Breasted Hall

There will be a reception after the lecture
 in the Egyptian Gallery.

RAMSES II *Continued from page five*

before the lecture William Easley drove me to the state fairgrounds, and I had the thrill of seeing my own words rendered in stone. Facing the rising sun, the monument vividly recaptures the intent and surely much of the effect of its ancient forebears. The accompanying black and white photographs cannot do justice to the visual impact of the painted stela, which truly glows with color in the morning sun: appropriate green skin tones for Osiris, copious gilt for jewelry, scepters and wine vessel, rich blue for the royal crown, bowl, armbands and hieroglyphs, and vibrant red for the crown of Osiris, streamers and necklaces. Particularly subtle effects characterize the translucent linen kilt of Ramses and the layered skins of the offered onions. The hieroglyphic texts, of course, were excellent.



The wise scribe, Dr. Robert Ritner (left), and sculptor William Easley.

Exhibits of Egyptian artifacts will continue to tour, and department store windows will continue to offer their transient tributes of plaster sphinxes, papyrus and oddly postured mannequins passing for Egyptians. In Dallas, however, Ramses has left a permanent memorial, and, as he certainly would have wished, his name now stands immortal in the lands of the West. As for myself, I now have a funerary memorial before Osiris, and my fears for an afterlife can be laid to rest.

¹ I would like to thank John Larson of The Oriental Institute Museum for putting me in contact with Mr. Easley.

² See Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, vol. 3, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980, pp. 90-94. Fragments of a slightly earlier version of this text have been found by the Epigraphic Survey at Luxor; see *The Oriental Institute Annual Report* 1978-79, p. 25; 1980-81, p. 17; and 1982-83, p. 9.

SUMMER MEMBERS' COURSES

WOMEN IN ANCIENT EGYPT

The prominence of women is noticeable in ancient Egyptian monuments, reliefs and paintings. In literary sources as well, women are well-represented in Egyptian life and society. Herodotus, the Greek historian who visited Egypt ca. 448 B.C., remarked that while in Greece men ran the markets and women stayed at home, in Egypt it was just the reverse, with women running the markets and men staying at home. This course will explore in depth the topic of women in ancient Egypt, ranging from questions of the status of women in Egyptian society, to the roles of royal, elite, and ordinary women as well. Documentation relevant to women's rights and roles will be reviewed, and literature reflecting these roles and rights will be considered. Evidence about marriage and family will also be presented. The course will include a visit to The Oriental Institute's Egyptian gallery to examine pertinent objects and documents that are exhibited.

Readings will be assigned from the following books:

Lesko, Barbara S. *The Remarkable Women of Ancient Egypt*, 2nd. ed. (Providence, B.C. Scribe Publications, 1987).

Lichtheim, Miriam. *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 3 vols. (Berkeley: University of California, 1975, 76, and 1980).

Macurdy, Grace H. *Hellenistic Queens* (Chicago: Ares Press, 1986).

Instructor: Frank Yurco is a Ph.D. candidate in Egyptology at The Oriental Institute and an experienced teacher of Egyptological topics.

Class will meet at The Oriental Institute on Wednesday evenings from 7 till 9 p.m. beginning June 12 and continuing through August 7, with no class meeting on July 3. Tuition is \$65 plus \$30 annual membership in The Oriental Institute if you are not already a member. **Preregistration is required.** Call the Museum Education office at 312/702-9507 for further information.



SUMMER MEMBERS' COURSES

FROM ALEXANDER TO MUHAMMAD

Near Eastern Late Antiquity

The period of late antiquity covers roughly the time separating Herodotus from The Thousand and One Nights. It has most commonly been seen as a time dominated by the decline of the pagan classical world and the rise of the Christian Middle Ages. In contrast, however, this course will develop a picture of late antiquity in broader structural and historical terms - a picture based on an outline of the chronological sequence of events and an analysis of the major characteristics of the lands from India to Ethiopia during this period.

Eight lectures will present a narrative depiction of the political, social, economic and religious developments of the Near East from the conquest of Alexander the Great to the coming of the prophet Muhammad. Each lecture will include a discussion reevaluating a major theme in the portrait of late antiquity. Topics include hellenization, the late antique city, the late antique state, the classical legacy and late antiquity, authority in late antiquity, and the evolution of state-sponsored religions. Contemporary Near Eastern texts in translation will be used to help students evaluate scholarly ideas about late antiquity and the historical significance of the late antique period.

Readings will be assigned from:

Brown, Peter. *The World of Late Antiquity*. W. and W. Norton, 1979.

Instructor: Brannon Wheeler is a Ph. D. candidate in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations. His speciality is Islamic history and religion.

Class will meet at The Oriental Institute from 10 a.m. till noon on Saturdays, beginning June 15 and continuing through August 10 with no class meeting on July 6. Tuition is \$65 plus \$30 annual membership in The Oriental Institute if you are not already a member. **Preregistration is required.**

ANCIENT EGYPTIAN MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

Living in one of the great civilizations of antiquity, the ancient Egyptians practiced many crafts and exercised many skills employing numbers and mathematical calculations. For example, scribes in the state bureaucracy kept inventories, assessed taxes, recorded the Nile inundation and conducted a census of cattle. Some of these tasks required the use of high-value numbers. Their mathematical computations included addition, subtraction, multiplication and division; fractions were also used, although they remained at a somewhat rudimentary level. The need to lay out and survey fields, and the building of monuments also involved the use of numbers and mathematical computations. The Egyptians developed a figure comparable to the Greek π , which they used in geometric computations to calculate areas and volumes involving circles or cylinders.

This course will discuss the nature of the Egyptian number system and the evidence of the mathematical papyri. It will examine geometric calculations and formulas, including their uses and problems, and the extended use of mathematics in arts and sciences. It will also talk about the Egyptian system of weights and measures and the 365-day calendar. The course will finish with an examination of the question of Egyptian influence on Greek and Classical mathematics and science.

Books from which readings will be assigned are:

Gillings, Ronald J. *Mathematics in the Time of the Pharaohs* (Cambridge, MIT Press, 1971).

Harris, James R. *The Legacy of Egypt*, 2nd. ed. (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1971).

Iverson, Erik. *Canon and Proportion in Egypt*, 2nd ed. (Warminster: Aris and Phillips, 1975).

Cerny, Jaroslav. *Paper and Books in Ancient Egypt*. (Chicago: Ares Press, 1952, reprint of London: University College, 1952 publication).

Instructor: Egyptologist Frank Yurco has taught many classes on diverse aspects of Egyptian history and culture, both at the Field Museum and at The Oriental Institute.

Class will meet at The Oriental Institute on Saturdays from 10 a.m. till noon beginning June 15 and continuing through August 10, with no class meeting on July 6. Tuition is \$65 plus \$30 for an annual membership in The Oriental Institute if you are not already a member. **Preregistration is required.** For further information, call the Museum Education office, 312/702-9507.

Please register me for the following course:

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DICTIONARY *Continued from page two*

(A, B, D, E, G, H, I/J, K, L, M, N, Q, S, Š, and Z) already include about 6,200 pages. Of the six volumes that remain, the first part of one (Š) has just been published (another 492 pages) with the balance of it in press, the manuscript of another (T) is about to be sent to press, and the basic drafts of three more (P, R and T) are nearly complete. Only one volume (U/W) remains to be started from scratch, and even here, because of historical and phonetic peculiarities of Akkadian, much of what other dictionaries or glossaries would enter under U or W has already been published under A or M. The end of the "Principal Dictionary" is in sight, even if the date of the end is unknown.

The Dictionary has distinctly not become the sort of thesaurus that Breasted envisioned, for various reasons. One is the fact that although the language is dead, the corpus of Akkadian texts is very much alive. Newly published texts produce a constant supply of "new" words, "new" nuances of known words, evidence of usage from "new" sites and areas, and new evidence of known usages. Another reason is less apparent, the result of a basic policy decision.

Breasted's supposition in 1933 about a six-volume CAD presumed that the whole dictionary would be published more or less simultaneously, an internally consistent document that would reflect the best scholarly results of a given time, enhanced precisely by the broad perspectives and exact insights that would be enforced by making the whole document consistent. The ten-year plan of 1946 still held to a similar assumption, proposing that actually writing the dictionary would take the last five years of the period. But in 1954, the decision was made to publish one volume per letter of the alphabet, and to publish the volumes as they were ready, one volume at a time for as long as it would take to finish the Dictionary. That decision completely changed the original notion of the Dictionary's consistency, and endowed the Dictionary with development and change, a career of scholarly publication, and even a sort of personality.

The first volumes (H and G, published in that order in 1956) were, among other things, field trials meant to shake out problems of procedure, format and content that would be remedied in later volumes. By the early 1960s, the editorial format of the Dictionary was mostly set. The Dictionary had found its voice and had begun to engage philologists and historians in a series of debates that has continued throughout the thirty-five years in which volumes have been published. The present editor-in-charge, Erica Reiner, is quoted in this way:

*This is not a bland dictionary.... We stick out our necks, and then somebody comes along ten years later and corrects the guess. I don't think corrections will come out unless we say something. One writes a dictionary **against** something—against an accepted opinion.¹²*

As a result—and to the distress of users who want a dictionary to be a simple key to the word-by-word decoding of another language, precise, exact and immutable—the Dictionary's translations run a gamut between conclusions founded on an unshakable array of evidence and provocative assertions about slim data. The field responds by writing against something, too—against the Dictionary's authority—in critical scholarship on the vocabulary of social and economic institutions and practices, material culture, the natural setting of Mesopotamian societies, and other such complex conceptual and historical fields. To a degree that is not always readily apparent, the process of bringing forth the Dictionary has provoked, cajoled, advanced and shaped the scholarship of a generation of not always cheerful Mesopotamianists.

A feedback loop results—actually, at least two such loops. The criticism that the Dictionary provokes is incorporated into later volumes in the form of reconsideration, rebuttal, amendment or mere changes of emphasis. Furthermore, to an ever-growing degree, collaborators on the Dictionary have had their basic understanding of the language and the issues of interpreting it shaped by the Dictionary itself from their earliest professional training.

In effect, the Dictionary itself has had a career in scholarship. When it was thirty-five years old, like a junior scholar at the peak of his powers, it produced its first volume and began to learn from its public mistakes. Now, at seventy, after a career of vigorous debate with the Assyriological community, it has some of the characteristics of an eminent senior scholar: set, sometimes old-fashioned ways of expression, coupled with such attributes of maturity as an immensely complex and subtle understanding of the material and its interrelationship, constant reflection and re-evaluation, leading sometimes to refinement of older views, sometimes to acknowledgment of uncertainty, and often to wholly new insights about the words, the texts that carry the words and the historical moments that produced the texts.

¹James Henry Breasted, *American Journal of Semitic Languages*, v. 38 (1921/22), p. 297.

²James Henry Breasted, *The Oriental Institute* (1933), p. 125.

³*The Oriental Institute*, p. ix.

⁴*The Oriental Institute*, p. 13.

⁵*The Oriental Institute*, p. 393.

⁶*American Journal of Semitic Languages*, v.38 (1921/22), p. 305.

⁷*The Oriental Institute*, p. 400.

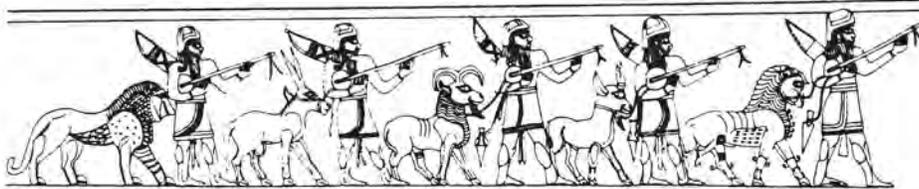
⁸J. Gelb, *Orientalia*, N.S., v.18 (1949), p. 376.

⁹*The Wall Street Journal*, November 19, 1972, p. 1.

¹⁰Israel Shenker, *Harmless Drudges* (1979), p. 39.

¹¹*The Oriental Institute*, p. 400.

¹²*Harmless Drudges*, p. 41.



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Below is a partial listing of out-of-town lectures by the faculty and staff of The Oriental Institute. For more information, please call the Membership Office at 312/702-1677.

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Lanny Bell Seminar für Ägyptologie der Johannes
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PUBLICATIONS

Just Published

Earliest Land Tenure Systems in the Near East: Ancient Kudurrus (Two vols. Text, Plates). I. J. Gelb, P. Steinkeller, and R. M. Whiting, Jr. ORIENTAL INSTITUTE PUBLICATIONS 104. The aim of this volume is the elucidation of the ancient Mesopotamian land-tenure systems, as they may be reconstructed mainly from the "ancient kudurrus" on stone and sale documents on clay. These land-tenure systems extend in time from the earliest periods of written history down to the end of the Third Dynasty of Ur. The work presented in this volume is the culmination of a long effort which extends over a period of four decades. 1989, 1991. Pp. xviii + 303; 166 plates. \$140.00 (+ P & H and 8% Illinois sales tax).

Excavations Between Abu Simbel and the Sudan Frontier, Part 8: Meroitic Remains from Qustul Cemetery Q, Ballana Cemetery B, and a Ballana Settlement (Two volumes). Bruce B. Williams. ORIENTAL INSTITUTE NUBIAN EXPEDITION Volume VIII. The two parts present Meroitic period materials from two large cemeteries at Qustul and Ballana and a small settlement at Ballana. These sites at the southern end of Egyptian Nubia were excavated by The Oriental Institute Nubian Expedition under the direction of Professor Keith C. Seele in two seasons, 1962-1963 and 1963-1964. Together, the cemeteries make up one of the largest bodies of evidence available from the period.

Part 1 contains text Chapters 1-5 and Appendices A and B, as well as the text figures. Part 2 is devoted to the registers and the plates. A chapter on Meroitic inscriptions by Nicholas B. Millet is included. 1991. Pp. xlvii + 458 (Part 1), xiii + 423 (Part 2); 308 figures, 114 plates, 33 tables. \$115.00 (+ P & H and 8% Illinois sales tax).

The Organization of Power: Aspects of Bureaucracy in the Ancient Near East. (2nd Ed. with Corrections) McG. Gibson and R. D. Biggs, eds. STUDIES IN ANCIENT ORIENTAL CIVILIZATION 46. This volume presents ten essays delivered at a symposium on the aspects of bureaucracy in the ancient Near East that was sponsored by The Oriental Institute of The University of Chicago and the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations on April 16-17, 1983. The essayists are Michael G. Morony, Piotr Steinkeller, Miguel Civil, Piotr Michalowski, Irene J. Winter, Richard L. Zettler, Ann Macy Roth, Janet H. Johnson, Emil Kaegi, Jr., and Robert C. Hunt. 1991. Pp. xii + 168; 15 figures, 10 plates, 1 table, and 3 appendices. \$22.00 (+ P & H and 8% Illinois sales tax).

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