

THE EPIGRAPHIC SURVEY

Charles Francis Nims, *Field Director*

At the end of the summer of 1967 the prospects for the immediate continuation of the work of the Epigraphic Survey were uncertain. Diplomatic relations between the United States and the United Arab Republic were severed; our country forbade American citizens to travel in Egypt, and there was little information as to how Americans would be received in that country. In late September the Field Director was told indirectly that the Department of Antiquities in Egypt hoped that our work would continue. He went to Washington to consult with the appropriate officials at the Department of State. There it was agreed that he alone might go to Egypt to explore the possibilities of resuming the work of the Epigraphic Survey.

He arrived in Cairo on October 5th. Everyone there was most friendly and helpful. However, the security section of the government still had under consideration the position of all foreign archeological enterprises, and it was not until three weeks later that permission for such work to continue was given, with each group to be considered separately. Permission for the work of the Epigraphic Survey was given concurrently. It took two more weeks for members of the staff to complete their travel arrangements and arrive. The season opened on November 15th, a month late.

First attention was given to the completion of our projects at Medinet Habu and the Tomb Chapel of Kheruef. John Romer made pencil reinforcements of photographs of the rubbed painted designs in the reveals of an upper

window at the former site. The work of editing the volume on the High Gate will continue this summer, and we hope to turn the material over to the University of Chicago Press before we return to Luxor.

Reginald Coleman, who was completing his drawings at Kheruef, was joined at this site by Grace Huxtable and John Romer in the copying of the marginal material. The finishing touches on the copies of all scenes and inscriptions on the walls will be done this summer and autumn, leaving only a few fragments to be gathered together and copied.

Because of the delays, and because we were short an artist, the work at the Temple of Khonsu did not progress as far as we had earlier hoped. It was expected that we would be joined on January 1st by Martyn Lack, who, as a young man, had served as an artist on the Sakkarah Expedition. Mr. Lack was holding a teaching position in Hastings, England, and our permission to work came subsequent to the time he would have had to tender his resignation. He will join us at the beginning of the 1968/69 season.

There are few exciting discoveries in our work. However, one of great importance to a historical problem was made just before the close of the season. On the basis of a drawing from the Temple of Khonsu in Lepsius, *Denkmäler*, Egyptologists had always considered that Piankh, who succeeded Herihor as First Prophet of Amon, was the son of his predecessor. Reginald Coleman, who was drawing the scene, and Edward Wente, who was helping him to interpret the traces on

the damaged wall, discovered that where Lepsius had indicated a broken area the wall surface was preserved, and that the son named, whoever he was, could not have been Piankh. This was an important discovery for all of us, and particularly to Edward Wente, who is one of the foremost authorities on this period of Egyptian history.

This discovery was made in Wente's last few days on the expedition; henceforth he will be at the Oriental Institute teaching Egyptology. In the next season he will be succeeded as epigrapher by David Larkin, who was with us in 1966/67, joining Carl DeVries and the Field Director.

In 1932 John Healey joined the Epigraphic Survey as Superintendent in charge of maintenance. Through his skill and efforts, often heroic in the face of almost insurmountable difficulties, Chicago House has functioned smoothly. Though he has been with the Oriental Institute longer than all but a few members of its staff, he had never been to the United States. In June,

with his wife Doris, he came to Chicago that he might confer with us concerning the physical problems of our plant and explore the matter of finding his successor. He must retire at the end of the 1969/70 season.

Since the beginning of the 1965/66 season the greatest part of the operational and travel expenses of the expedition have come from grants from the Smithsonian Institution made through the American Research Center in Egypt. This has enabled us to use funds from the Oriental Institute for needed replacement of capital equipment.

In the first months of our past season we found it inadvisable to receive guests at Chicago House. Later we were able to do so, but there were few visitors in Luxor until almost the time of our departure. We expect that next season there will be many more coming to Egypt, and we invite the members of the Oriental Institute to visit us at Chicago House. Insofar as we have room we will welcome you as guests.