

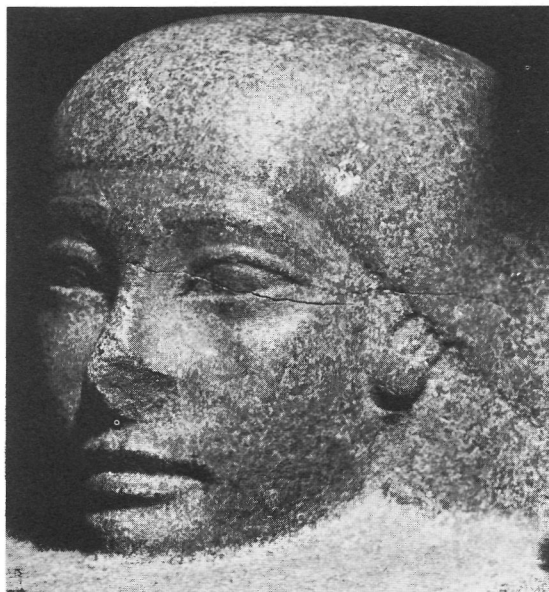
## *The Epigraphic Survey*

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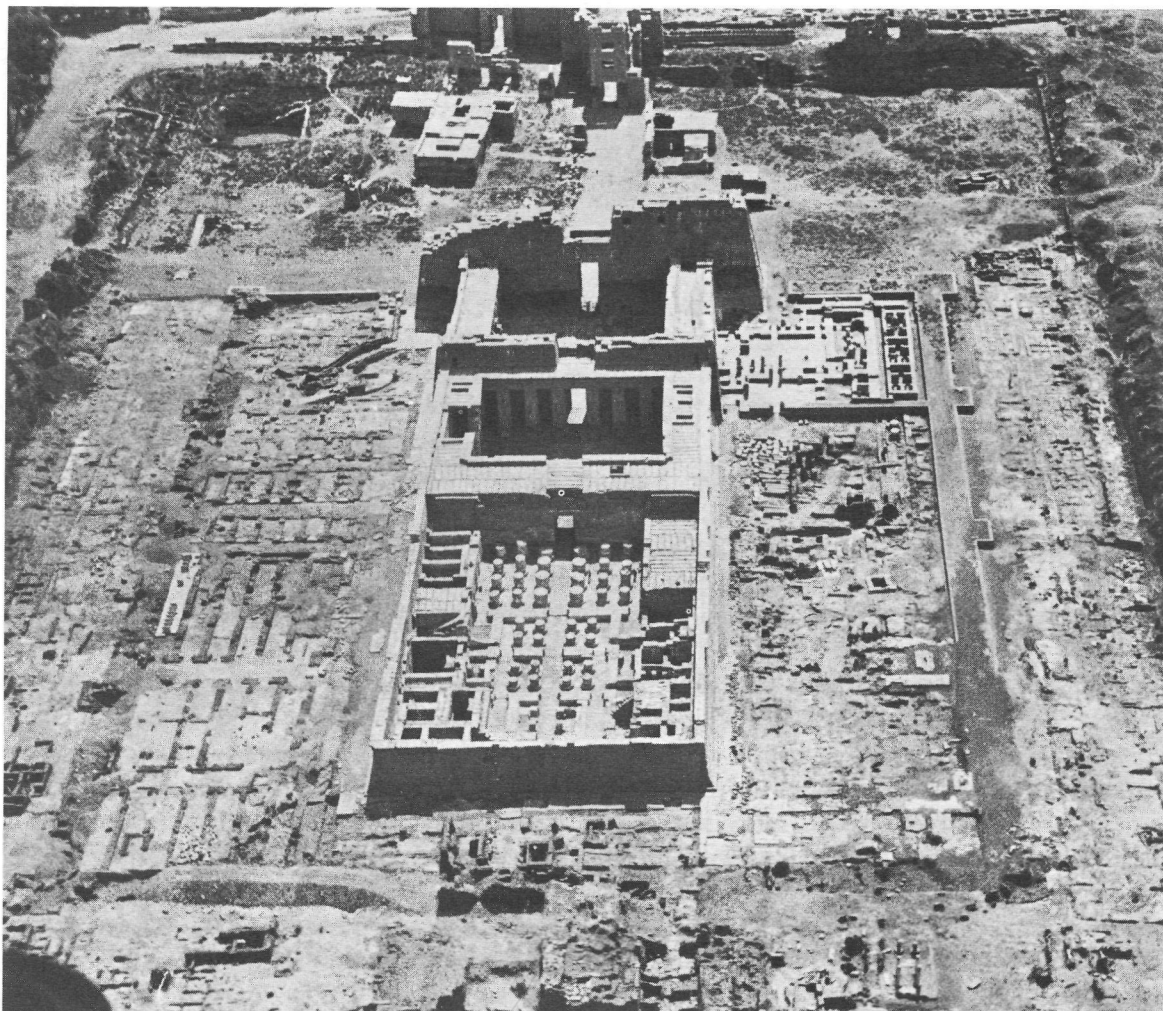
The Epigraphic Survey, launched in 1924 at Luxor, Egypt, is the fulfillment of a conviction which Breasted said he had reached in 1905 that it was "a supreme obligation of the present generation of orientologists to make a comprehensive effort to save for posterity the enormous body of ancient records still surviving in Egypt."

Chicago House, as it is called, at ancient Thebes, the site of a formidable concentration of inscribed monuments, is the headquarters established by Breasted for that "comprehensive effort" on the part of one institution. It is a base where a staff can live and work for six-month seasons each year with reasonable comfort and with the facilities to do the best possible job of recording the scenes and inscriptions on the monuments which surround it.

Most important to scholars, however, is the Epigraphic Survey's long established and rigorous working procedure and tradition of the highest accuracy in producing facsimile draw-



*Head of man found in debris of the great temple of Ramses III at Medinet Habu.*



*Air view of Medinet Habu from the west*

ings of the ancient records. The steps of the procedure combine the eye of the camera, the eyes and skill of the draftsmen who draw on photographic enlargements directly before the inscribed surfaces themselves, and the eyes and knowledge of at least two Egyptologists checking on the draftsmen and on each other. With a first-rate Egyptological library at their command the Egyptologists can bring the whole weight of scholarship to bear on any problem presented by damaged inscriptions virtually in the presence of the reliefs themselves.

The Epigraphic Survey has completely published the reliefs of the mortuary temple of Ramesses III at Medinet Habu in seven folio volumes, and the reliefs of the monumental

entrance gate to the temple compound will shortly appear as the eighth volume in the series. It has also published two smaller temples of Ramesses III and the Bubastite Portal of Shoshenq I, all in the Karnak complex, in three volumes. As part of the international rescue effort above the high dam being built at Assuan it recorded and has published the Beit el-Wali temple of Ramesses II in lower Nubia. In 1958-60 the Survey excavated the tomb of Kheruef, an Eighteenth Dynasty noble, in the Theban necropolis, and the record of the excellent but difficult reliefs is soon to appear in print. Work is now proceeding uninterruptedly on the reliefs of the Temple of Khonsu in the Karnak complex.