

The Epigraphic Survey

CHARLES FRANCIS NIMS, *Field Director*

It is always difficult to make a summary of the year's work. All we can do is count the number of drawings finished and those still in the process of collation and correction or in the hands of the artists for the preliminary work of penciling in. On this basis we can report that during the season we have completed 48 drawings, that 15 are being collated or corrected and 10 more have reached the end of the preliminary stage and are ready for the Egyptologists to begin their collation. In addition, the artists have in hand 24 drawings for summer work. It must be remembered that it is impossible to compare the work on one drawing with that on another—some may be finished in a week, some may take a month. So our record of accomplishment is only a relative one.

The number awaiting collation is larger than we should expect. The backlog from the last season, 1969/70, the far more difficult work of collation because of the severe damage to parts of the reliefs and the great amount of preserved painted decoration has made it impossible for the Egyptologists to keep ahead of the artists. All the ten drawings awaiting collation were begun in the present season.

It has been our goal to finish the documentation of the inscriptions and reliefs of the court and the first hypostyle hall in the Temple of Khonsu by the end of the 1971/72 season. It now appears that we may not quite make it. The scenes about the great doorways and the marginal inscriptions, such as those on the architraves, will take some time to complete, and we were unable to complete the photography of the architraves during the present season. But by April 15, 1972, all the remaining work in the two areas mentioned should be well under way.

Both Carl DeVries and David Larkin spent many afternoons as well as most mornings at the temple and carried out their other tasks on the expedition as well. David has been in charge of the library, which means that he must go through book catalogs and other sources of information to see what books on pharaonic Egypt have been published. Then he must make out orders, and when the books arrive, accession them. We have now passed 10,000 accessioned books and pamphlets. David also has brought up to date the translations of the inscriptions on all the drawings which have been completed. Carl has prepared the palaeography of the hieroglyphs from this temple, cutting out from the blueprints and putting on cards typical and atypical



Richard Turner, on a 25-foot scaffold, taking a picture of the scenes at the back of the pylon above the great gateway. Photo by Carl DeVries.

examples of the signs shown on our drawings of the walls. In the Temple of Khonsu these forms vary considerably, making additional labor for the person in charge of the files.

We regret that Carl is leaving us. He has accepted a position as assistant to Professor Keith Seele in the task of preparing for publication the important results of the Oriental Institute Nubian Expedition, of which Carl was a member for a season. We shall miss him in Luxor; he has always willingly taken hold when we have had emergencies.

Of course the Egyptologists would not be pushed so hard had not the artists continued to turn out their drawings of scenes. They have done valiantly and have been patient with the epigraphers who have returned to them the collation sheets with myriads of corrections. All of them have developed an excellent line and a feel for the ancient Egyptian reliefs. Reginald Coleman has completed fourteen years with the Epigraphic Survey, next to Alexander Floroff the longest contin-

uous service of an artist, though Leslie Greener was with us the same number of years in two different periods. The other artists have been with us various numbers of years, Grace Huxtable, Martyn Lack, and Richard Turner.

The present field director has been in charge of the photography on the Epigraphic Survey for a quarter of a century. Since he retires during the next season and will hand over the direction to Edward Wentz, Richard Turner has been learning the peculiar demands of the photography of the expedition. He has been doing excellent work and next season will be able to assume full responsibility for the photographic work.

Werner Fliege has been kept busy with the maintenance and repair of our mechanical facilities. Many have been in operation since 1931, and with the almost complete lack of available repair parts in the country improvisation is frequently necessary. Werner has never failed to meet the challenge.

The four wives of the staff members have made Chicago House brighter. Myrtle Nims has continued her task of the supervision of all of the household, a job which occupies much of her time and ingenuity. Marie Coleman, Phyllis Lack and Carlota Fliege all have been welcome members of our community.

We should more often give credit to our Rais, Hagg Ibrahim Mohammed Abd-el-Rahman, on whom depends much of the smooth running of the expedition in its many facets, particularly in regard to external matters. Without his willingness, intelligence and loyalty there would be many drags on our operations. While all the other members of the local labor force do their particular tasks, Hagg Ibrahim works long hours and, if any man can be, is irreplaceable.

For the sixth successive year the Epigraphic Survey has received a grant from the Foreign Currency Program, Office of International Activities, of the Smithsonian Institution through the American Research Center in Egypt. These grants have defrayed the expenses of operation and maintenance and most of the travel of the staff members. For this help we are most appreciative; without it, it is questionable that we could have continued our expedition at its present level of production.

During the year we have had visits from a few members of the Oriental Institute and from some of the faculty and the alumni of the University of Chicago. All persons interested in the Institute and the University are always welcome at Chicago House during the season. We hope we may greet more of you in the season of 1971/72.