

# The Nubian Project

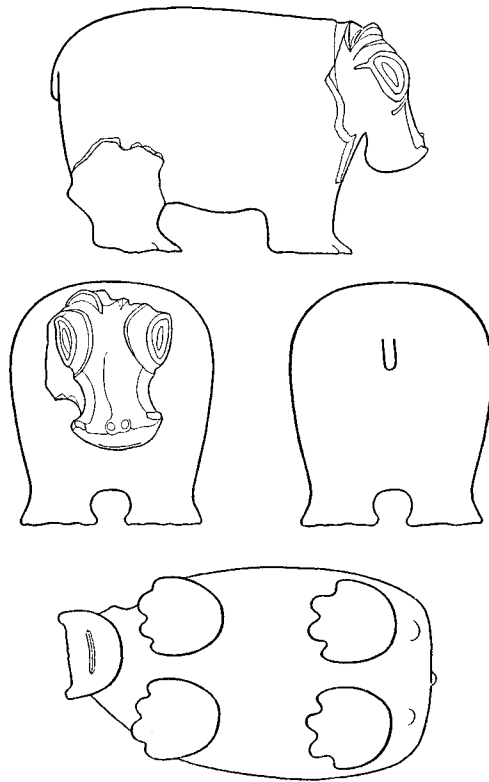
*Bruce  
Williams*

In 1960, the Oriental Institute began fieldwork in Egypt as part of the international effort sponsored by UNESCO to record immovable monuments and to explore sites which were threatened by the rise of Lake Nasser behind the new Aswan High Dam. Although the Oriental Institute was only one of many institutions from North America, Europe, Africa, and Asia that raced against the waters to fulfill this commitment, it carried a large share of the responsibility for the rescue. As part of that responsibility, the Oriental Institute Nubian Expedition was created, under the general direction of the late Prof. Keith C. Seele, to excavate and record in concession areas scattered from just south of Aswan to Semna South in the Republic of the Sudan. Prof. Seele personally directed two seasons in the concession between Abu Simbel and the Sudan frontier, excavating materials, some of them of unique importance, that spread across more than three thousand years. A new series was required to publish this significant mass of material, named OINE after the expedition in which two volumes have so far appeared.

This year, a draft manuscript dealing with the extraordinary remains from the A-Group Royal cemetery at Qustul (Cemetery L, ca. 3400–3200 B.C.) was submitted for publication. Large numbers of drawings and photographs still remain to be completed, and somewhat more detailed revisions will be made in the discussion of artistic and epigraphic evidence. Also this year, a manuscript was begun for the remaining material of A-Group date, principally from Cemetery W. This volume will also include a few interesting groups which appear to date to the late Archaic Period or the Old Kingdom; in recent years, it has been widely believed that Lower Nubia had no native population at all during these periods.

Much activity centered on a joint publication by the

Oriental Institute and the Art Institute of Chicago of a catalogue for the exhibit called "Ancient Textiles from Nubia" at the Art Institute. These fabrics were discovered by the Oriental Institute Nubian Expedition in 1962/63 and 1963/64 in tombs at Ballana and Qustul, of Meroitic, X-Group, and Christian date (ca. 100–600 A.D.). The Nubian Project contributed information on the findspots for the catalogue section, and text describing the historical and cultural background and the circumstances of discovery. The exhibit constitutes a part of the Art Institute's centennial observances.



*This year, among unsorted sherds from L 11 was found the large irregular piece that turned out to be the right hind foot of a terracotta hippopotamus. This foot was combined by project artist Joanna Steinkeller with the head from L 19, with the help of smaller parallels. The composite result shows how a complete figure, more than half a meter long, would have appeared. The two pieces are by far the oldest evidence of statuary this size in terracotta south of Aswan.*