

The Epigraphic Survey

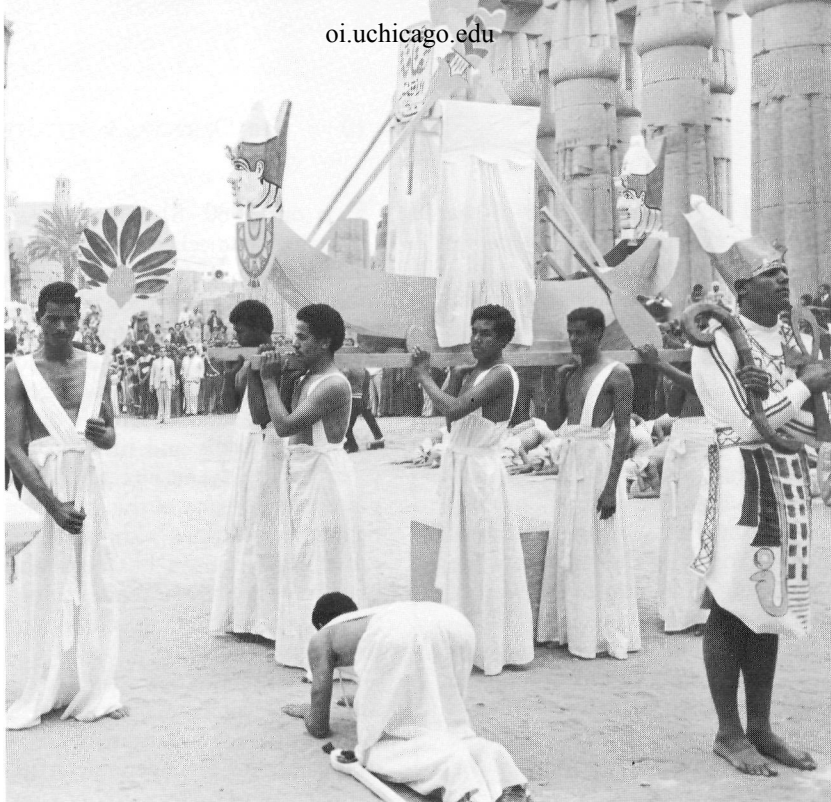
Lanny Bell

The 1985–86 season of the Epigraphic Survey was our sixty-second. This was a season of many extraordinary happenings in Luxor, beginning with a full lunar eclipse witnessed from the roof of Chicago House, and including a week of performances of the new Egyptian ballet “Osiris” set under the stars in the courtyard of Amenhotep III at Luxor Temple. Our field work began on October 21, one week later this year, so that I could attend the program “A Night in Egypt,” a benefit for the Epigraphic Survey held at the Oriental Institute in Chicago on the evening of October 8. The proceeds from this gala were nearly enough to cover the costs of our operations in Egypt for the entire season. The great success of this party is due primarily to our Honorary Chairman, Mohammed K. Azzazi, Consul General of the Arab Republic of Egypt in Chicago, our Co-chairmen Jill Carlotta Maher and Bernard Sahlins, and our Guarantors Mr. and Mrs. Maurice D. Schwartz.

Once on site, our funding-related activities continued even beyond the end of our official six-month season, culminating in a four-day/three-night Luxor tour on May 2–5, the Shemm el-Nessim weekend, encompassing Coptic Easter and the Egyptian national spring holiday. Organized to introduce Egyptian and American businessmen and their families living in Cairo to the important role played by the Epi-

graphic Survey in salvaging the endangered cultural heritage of ancient Egypt, this event led to the founding of a new support group called the Friends of Chicago House in Egypt. The results of our first efforts, begun just the previous season, to spread the news about the work of the Epigraphic Survey to Cairo have thus proven immensely satisfying for those of us engaged in it.

In all, I spent 33 days in Cairo this season pursuing our fund-raising campaign there, mostly accompanied by our Development Officer Jill Carlotta Maher, my wife Martha, or our Administrative Assistant Christian Loeben. Besides the tireless efforts of these three faithful and hardworking members of our team, we would like to extend special thanks for their help in the planning and preparations for this tour to Ron and Ann Wolfe of Professional Business Services, Fathi Salib of American Express in Luxor, our Luxor Oriental Institute member Ingeborg Aeschlimann, Ted Rosen and Dick Undeland of the United States Embassy, the management and staff of the Nile Hilton, the Luxor Mövenpick-Jolie Ville and Isis Hotels, the American Chamber of Commerce in Egypt, the Egyptian Businessmen’s Association, and the Joint Egypt-U.S. Business Council. In addition, we wish to note that our long-time friend David Maher flew to Luxor from America just to take part in this celebration.



The Festival of the Oars ceremony in Luxor Temple takes place in late December.

In the meantime, even in this year of much reduced tourism, we enjoyed the presence at Chicago House of more than a thousand visitors, including 18 Oriental Institute members. The scholars who came to our library represented some 80 institutions located in 20 countries. From the Oriental Institute we hosted Jan Johnson and Don Whitcomb with the staff of the Chicago Medieval Luxor Project. Those who signed our guestbook also included former United States Ambassador to Egypt Roy Atherton and his wife Betty; Pat Veliotes, wife of the current United States Ambassador; and Donald and Margaret Wilber—he had been an artist for the Epigraphic Survey in 1931–33.

Our field work this season was devoted almost exclusively to ongoing projects at Luxor Temple: the final adjustment of drawings of the relief

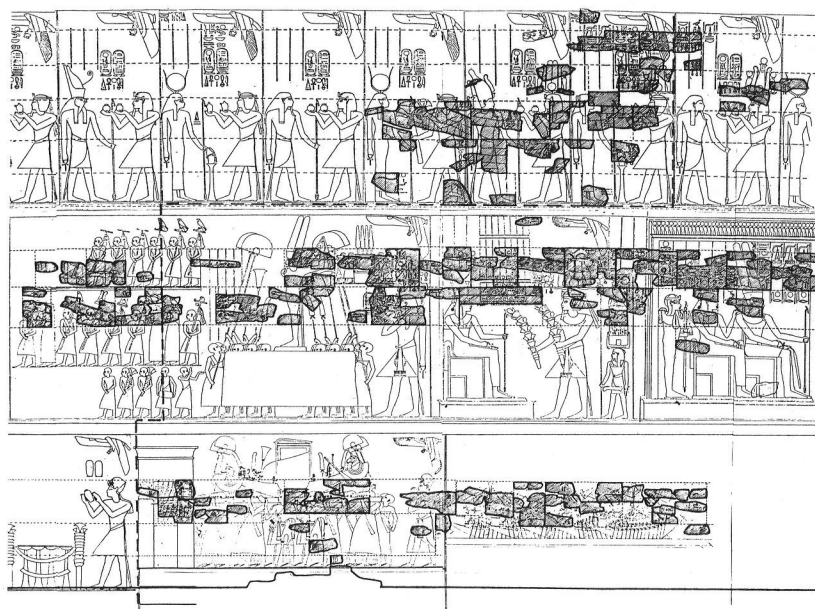
on the standing walls of the Colonnade and the identification and placement of decorated fragments removed from the Colonnade walls between the seventh and nineteenth centuries A.D. Up to now 69 of the Luxor drawings have been finalized, with work on 141 still in progress. Next season should see the joining up of the drawings of several major scenes.

Some 2000 fragments certain to have come from the Colonnade and the Court of Amenhotep III to the south are under study at present. The identification of three large decorated chunks of stone, which probably fell from the standing wall not long after its excavation in the last century, has been made; and these will be replaced in their original positions near the southwest corner of the Colonnade. With the help of the Sety I fragments re-

covered from the east side of the Avenue of Sphinxes last season, we can now establish the decorative program of all three registers of the southern half of the west wall of the Colonnade, with the scheme of the second register nearly complete along the whole length of the Colonnade. As a result, we can expect many other pieces to fall rapidly into place. During the excavations conducted by the Chicago Medieval Luxor Project on the remains of the ancient town mound to the west of the Avenue of Sphinxes in 1985–86, for instance, four additional stones belonging to the Colonnade came to light, one even joining a fragment we had already been able to assign to the decoration of the west wall.

In our 1980–81 season, Françoise Traunecker of the Franco-Egyptian Center at Karnak made a preliminary study of the architecture of the Colonnade for us. Now, working in close consultation with her, utilizing his knowledge of the whole decorative scheme of the Colonnade walls and his own observations on the architectural clues preserved by many of the fragments he has been working with, our Chief Artist Ray Johnson has been able to greatly expand and refine our picture of the ancient appearance of the Colonnade.

Some surprising new results of our work with fragments include the identification of 67 sandstone *talatat* (small building blocks characteristic of the constructions of Akhenaten)



Upper registers of southern end of west wall of Luxor Colonnade, as reconstructed from fragments. Drawing by Ray Johnson.

decorated in raised relief by Tutankhamun, 29 fragments from Akhenaten's Re-Horakhty Temple at Karnak, and even fragments belonging to the Mut Temple complex. Before this season we had isolated 29 raised relief fragments in the style of Tutankhamun but had been completely unable to incorporate them into our reconstructions. Finally recognizing them as talatat, Ray Johnson took another look at some of the talatat stacks at Luxor and found 38 additional pieces, including two more inscribed with the cartouche of Tutankhamun. Of the talatat he has been able to examine so far, at least 25% are reused, having sunk relief decoration of Akhenaten on another of their faces. These discoveries seem to indicate that it was actually Tutankhamun who began the demolition of Akhenaten's temples at Karnak, rather than Horemheb, as has been thought up to now. We have been in touch with Donald B. Redford of the Akhenaten Temple Project, who has agreed to let us examine his documentation on the 35,000 talatat photographed by Ray W. Smith in the late 1960's, in order to look for further pieces to add to our find. We have already looked through the documentation of the Franco-Egyptian Center at Karnak in search of more of such *talatat*.

These *talatat* were possibly brought to Luxor from the Second Pylon at Karnak, where at least one can still be seen and where other reused blocks of Tutankhamun's known Karnak monuments are also to be found. The remaining talatat at Luxor possibly came from the Ninth Pylon. The Akhenaten Re-

Horakhty material was certainly quarried from the Tenth Pylon where it had been placed by Horemheb. We have brought this to the attention of the University of Geneva expedition documenting the Tenth Pylon under the auspices of the Franco-Egyptian Center at Karnak; it should be included in their final publication. Likewise, Richard Fazini of the Brooklyn Museum's Mut Temple Project has been notified of the Luxor Mut fragments. All of these decorated stones seem to have been transported to Luxor Temple as building material for the rapidly growing town of medieval Luxor at a time when the Karnak site had been largely abandoned. Further study may allow us to identify the sources of many other fragments recovered in and around Luxor Temple.

Following up on some secondary cuttings which we had long ago noted on the architraves, as well as the patterns of damage observable on the column capitals, our Senior Epigrapher Bill Murnane, in consultation with Jean-Claude Golvin of the Franco-Egyptian Center, was also able to find evidence for Roman period repairs to the roof of the Colonnade at its northwest corner. He has very plausibly suggested that these repairs took place in conjunction with the conversion of Luxor Temple to a Roman camp, or *castrum*, in the early fourth century A.D. Bill made this discovery while enlarging and updating our report on the history of the Colonnade in the last century. Another of his field assignments was the relocation of the miscellaneous, non-Colonnade fragments

which, because of their intrinsic interest, will be included in the full report on our activities in Luxor Temple. These had tended to wander from where we first saw them as various areas of the fragment piles have been moved around, sorted, and restacked over the years.

Bill continued to work with our dictionary cards throughout the season, filling in most of the remaining gaps and beginning the revision of the files to eliminate the major inconsistencies. Much of his time, however, was occupied with sorting, cataloguing, indexing, and filing the rich materials contained in the Labib Habachi archives at Chicago House. He and Dr. Henri Riad, assisted by Atteiya Habachi, pursued the identification of the numerous photographs, negatives, slides, tracings, drawings, notebooks, and manuscripts, organizing them by site or present location, in preparation for storing them in an easily retrievable fashion. Some of these records have already been dispersed to scholars for completion and publication. During the course of the season, Atteiya also presented Labib's beautiful desk to the Epigraphic Survey for use in the Field Director's office.

In the Chicago House library Martha Bell accessioned 283 new items, in addition to current journals. Three volumes, the *Annual Egyptological Bibliography* for 1980 and 1981 and Eric Uphill's *The Temples of Per Ramesses* (the site of some of Labib's most important discoveries), were donated through the Labib Habachi Memorial Fund. In April some 200 volumes, mostly issues of journals and periodicals, were sent off to Cairo for binding under

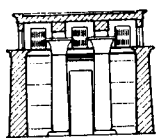
the supervision of May Trad. Other conservation measures included the purchase of acid-free interleaving paper for buffering valuable plates or photographs. This season 140 of our most precious books, which had been withdrawn from open shelving last season to a special collection in the librarian's office, were described so their condition can be better monitored. A dossier on the history and current price of each one will be kept, in preparation for undertaking the evaluation of our holdings. A rare book was identified in this process: *Historia Aegyptiaca Naturalis* by Prosper Alpin and John Wesling. Based on Alpin's travels to Egypt in 1581–84, this edition was printed in Leiden in 1735. The preface to the French Institute's republication cites only four known copies, two in the British Museum, one in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, and one in the public library of Lyon.

Another 146 decomposing large-format negatives were duplicated this season. These and the negatives copied in the previous eight seasons were then stored in acid-free envelopes and filed in metal cabinets away from the older negatives, to prevent recontamination. Till now, however, we have been able to handle less than 15% of our entire collection of 13,000 negatives in this way. All the remaining boxes of 5" × 7" sheet film were rechecked this year for signs of further deterioration (yellowing, dichroic stains, separation of emulsion from the base, etc.), and a spot check was made of the 8" × 10" negatives. An unexpected result of this work was the discovery

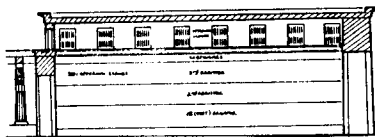
of a series of undocumented duplicate negatives, themselves now in need of reduplication. The circumstances and history of this previously unknown duplication effort at Chicago House await elucidation.

We were greatly assisted by the services of Helen Lindley who functioned as assistant to the photo archivist for more than two weeks in January. She was able to resolve some long-standing problems in the photo registry, noting unused numbers, straightening out a confused sequence of numbers, and searching for negatives when the notations "no negative," "negative destroyed," or

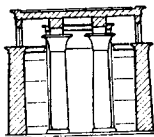
"negative in Chicago" appeared: of 400 negatives so marked, she located four actually still in the negative files. With Jill Maher she looked through more than 250 prints marked "duplicate," checked them against the print files, and restored the non-duplicates to their proper places. Jill also went through our Seele and Schott photos, correcting their attributions, and listing them in the appropriate place in the library copy of Porter and Moss, *Topographical Bibliography*. In addition she completed the registration of 48 rolls of 35 mm black-and-white negatives from past seasons. A major improvement in the darkroom was the installation of an exhaust fan in



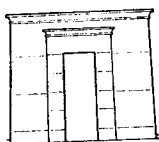
FACADE SOUTH



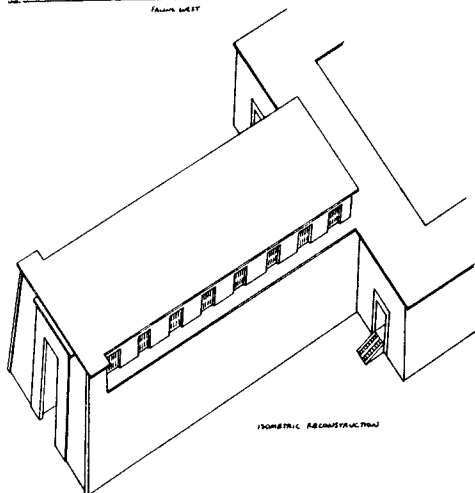
FACADE WEST



FACADE NORTH



NORTH FACADE



ISOMETRIC RECONSTRUCTION



A peaceful moment at the front gates of Chicago House.

the printing room, to reduce ambient chemical contaminants in the air.

Two of our staff members, Peter Der Manuelian and Christian Loeben, brought their personal Apple Macintosh computers with them to Chicago House this year. They both generously made them available for Epigraphic Survey business as well as for personal word-processing. This grand experiment was so successful, proving the computer's ability to function well in spite of heat, dust, periodic black-outs, and extremely variable electrical current, that the Epigraphic Survey plans to bring its own newly-acquired Macintosh to Luxor by the middle of next season. In March we enjoyed a brief visit from Will Schenk of the Metropolitan Museum in New York, on his way to join the expedition at Lisht. He drew most of the pottery in the small Chicago House antiquities collection, and several other pieces as well, as part of our effort to document this collection before turning it over to the Egyptian Antiquities Organization. Will also agreed to conduct a pottery drawing seminar for the benefit of the Epigraphic Survey artists while he was in residence with us.

In June the first bound copy of our long-awaited volume, *The Battle Reliefs of King Sety I*, finally ap-

peared. This publication was made possible, in part, by the continuing support and generous benefactions of the Friends of Chicago House.

For the first time in 50 years, a full-time Administrative Assistant was hired to work at Chicago House. This sorely needed position, admirably filled this season by Christian Loeben, relieves the Field Director of most of the routine daily administrative chores involved in running Chicago House, and frees him to participate more in the scientific work of the expedition. As an example of this aspect of the work load, let me quote the statistics on resident guests: 642 guest-nights were spent at Chicago House this season, averaging 3.6 guests per night for six months. For making up all the rooms at Chicago House, including those in the small Healy House in the garden, 96 pillow cases, 94 sheets, 56 towel and face-cloth sets, and 74 blankets were almost constantly in use. The first test in over ten years was made on the quality and purity of the water obtained from our 18-meter deep well; and our aluminum temple scaffolding was in use through most of the season in the first comprehensive pruning of the Chicago House garden conducted in over nine years.

A series of general staff meetings was instituted this season, with discussions ranging from general orientation (covering administrative procedures; an introduction to Chicago House: buildings and grounds, facilities, rules and regulations; health and safety procedures, medical advice; an introduction to modern Egypt: culture and customs, Arabic aids, and birds, trees, and astronomy) to an introduction to epigraphy and the work of the Epigraphic Survey, tours of the Luxor and Medinet Habu Temples, and progress reports on the work and fund-raising activities. The aim was to expedite settling into the life and work at Luxor, maintain high morale, and improve communication. In all, 12 sessions, amounting to more than 20 hours total, were held, the longest being a 6½ hour (all-day) mini-seminar. The success of these meetings may be gauged by the fact that of the five new staff members who started the season, four will be returning for the 1986-87 season.

Our professional staff this season, besides myself, consisted of Martha Bell as Librarian; William Murnane, Epigrapher; W. Raymond Johnson, Peter Der Manuelian, Carol Meyer, Barbara Arnold, and Susan Osgood, Artists; Robert Cedarwall, Photographer; Christian Loeben, Administrative Assistant; Jill Carlotta Maher, Photo Archivist and Assistant to the Field Director; and Saleh Shehat Suleiman, Chief Engineer. Henri Riad and Atteiya Habachi continued to play a major role in local liaison, Arabic translation, and crisis management. In addition to those already mentioned in connection with specific contributions, we would also like to

acknowledge the help of the following people: Robert Vergnieux, Françoise Le Saout, Claude Traunecker, Daniel Le Fur, Alain Bellod, and Jean Larronde of the Franco-Egyptian Center at Karnak; Bob Carr of the United States Embassy; Katherine Rosich, Gretel Braidwood, Ray Tindel, and Jim Richerson of the Oriental Institute. Some of our expenses in Egypt and our international air fare were defrayed by a final counterpart fund payment from the Foreign Currency Program of the Smithsonian Institution, administered through the offices of the American Research Center in Egypt: special thanks go to Dick Verdery, Paul Walker, and Francine Berkowitz. This year also saw the establishment of the David G. Kolch Memorial Fund for Photography and Conservation at Chicago House. The members of the Egyptian Antiquities Organization to whom we owe a special debt of gratitude are Dr. Ahmed Qadry, Chairman; Mutawia Balboush, Supervisor of Antiquities for Upper Egypt; Mohammed el-Sughayyir, Director of Antiquities for Southern Upper Egypt; Sayid Abd el-Hamid, Chief Inspector for Karnak and Luxor; Abd el-Hamid Marouf, Inspector at Karnak; and Mohammed Nasr, Chief Inspector of Qurna. Lastly we wish to express our appreciation to the many friends who continue to encourage and support our work. Let me once again extend our open invitation to all those planning to come to Luxor who want to visit Chicago House; please let us know your expected dates well in advance, and contact us as soon as you reach Luxor (at telephone 82525), so that we can arrange the most convenient time to meet you.