



# The Rundle Foundation for Egyptian Archaeology

NEWSLETTER No. 24

March, 1988



A Family Scene & Biographical Descriptions of great  
Historical Importance, found at Saqqara  
(see Excavations at Saqqara Vol.II)

## Excavations at Saqqara

After an interruption of three years during which time work was concentrated at El-Hawawish, the Macquarie team returned to Saqqara in January this year to continue their dig to the north-west of Teti's pyramid. Excavating to a depth of 8 metres through accumulated sand and debris revealed that the cemetery had been re-used a number of times - in the Old Kingdom, First Intermediate Period, the second half of Dynasty XVIII and the Roman/Coptic Period. Burials from each of these periods were recorded and will appear in volume II of Excavations at Saqqara later this year.

## News from Sohag

The Macquarie team working at Sohag, was extremely busy this season. The excavation at El-Hawawish (Akhmim) is drawing to a close with only a limited number of tombs with fragmentary scenes and inscriptions to be recorded. Because of their bad state of preservation these scenes are most difficult to copy. Nevertheless they provide invaluable information for a complete study of the province.

The coming season or two will be study seasons with special emphasis on art, architecture, palaeography and the general history of the province. During these seasons restoration and preservation work will also continue.

The team has also made a start at its new concession at El-Hagarsa on the west bank of the Nile opposite Akhmim. The results are very promising and the tombs are in good condition. The work of recording will begin in the coming season.

### The Fourth and Fifth Study Tours of Egypt

In November (1987) Dr Boyo Ockinga of Macquarie University and Mr John Twyford, President of The Australian Museum Society, accompanied a group of 27 members of the Rundle Foundation and the Museum Society on a tour of Egypt. They were followed some weeks later by 13 members of the Foundation from Newcastle, led by Mrs Esther Kilkelly.

Both groups visited sites from Cairo to Aswan, cruising the Nile between Aswan and Luxor. Unfortunately, due to the low Nile, the Newcastle group found themselves high and dry on a sand bank and had to finish the "cruise" by coach!

Visits to the Macquarie dig proved to be the highlight of both tours. All commented on the hospitality of Professor Kanawati and the Macquarie team and the unforgettable time spent on the mountain of El-Hawawish.

It was the opinion of the November group that Dr Ockinga's contribution as lecturer raised the tour "to a genuine learning experience".

### Research Fellowship in Egyptian Architecture

Mr Naguib Victor has been appointed to a Fellowship in Egyptian Architecture at Macquarie University. His main research will be a study of the tombs at El-Hawawish with the purpose of establishing a chronological development of the architecture of rock tombs in the Old Kingdom and First Intermediate Period.

Mr Victor has been associated with excavations at El-Hawawish since its second year, 1980. His work will also involve a study of the architecture of tombs at both El-Hagarsa and Saqqara.

### Introduction to Hieroglyphs

Professor Kanawati will conduct an 8-weeks course in hieroglyphs commencing Friday 4 March in W6A 420 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. each Friday. No previous knowledge of the language is required and a booklet of texts, vocabulary and sign list will be provided. Fee: \$65 (members \$55).

Enquiries: Joan Beck (805 8848 9 a.m.-3 p.m.)

### Annual Dinner

The Annual Dinner will be held at the North Sydney Leagues Club on Friday 20 May, 1988 from 7 p.m. Tickets \$25. Enquiries: Joan Beck.

### Discussion Group

The Discussion group has been meeting each Friday night in W6A 420, and we would like to thank Dr Rene Grogard for the interesting talks he has given during February as well as assisting us with our hieroglyphs. The group will not be meeting again until later in the year as Friday nights will be fully occupied.

## MAYA, TREASURER OF TUTANKHAMUN

Geoffrey T. Martin



Maya & his wife

MAYA was one of the chief ministers in the government of Tutankhamun, holding the responsible position of overseer of the Treasury. As such he would have been in overall charge of one of the most prestigious departments of state at a time when Egypt was at the height of its power and influence.

Maya's name has been known to Egyptology since the early decades of the nineteenth century. Part of his tomb was exposed in the desert south of the Zoser complex when the great Prussian Egyptologist K.R. Lepsius visited Saqqara in 1843 during his mission to Egypt and Nubia. His objective was to record as much as possible of the standing monuments of the Nile Valley, which even then were subject to vandalism and deterioration. Only a small part of Maya's funerary monument was cleared of the encroaching sand in 1843, but enough to give Lepsius and his draughtsmen an excellent idea of the quality of the relief carving on the walls. It has recently been conclusively proved that Lepsius was working in the southern part of the inner courtyard of the tomb; nothing else at that time was accessible, and the substructure was not entered.

In the inner court of the tomb Lepsius also saw one column still standing, and against the south wall a damaged dyad or double statue of Maya and his wife, the Chantress of Amun, Merit. Lepsius duly made line drawings of all the surviving reliefs on the walls, removed one series of the blocks to the Berlin Museum (these were part of the south wall) and made a good plan of the court as exposed.

Even before Lepsius' work three statues of Maya and Merit had been excavated from another part of the tomb, and these were acquired by Giovanni Anastasy, a well-known antiquities agent and collector. They were sold to the National Museum of Antiquities at Leiden, where they figure among the choicest exhibits of the Egyptian galleries. The statues are in almost pristine condition, and are without any doubt masterpieces of the

sculptor's art of the late Eighteenth Dynasty. During the last century the Louvre Museum in Paris acquired a cubit or measuring-rod which once belonged to Maya, but whether he used it in his day-to-day work or whether it was made to be placed as an item of equipment in his tomb is unknown. At any rate it seems to be the only object in a public collection inscribed with the great official's name. No small objects of Merit are known.

There the matter rested until the early years of the present century. J.E. Quibell, an English Egyptologist excavated from 1908-10 the Monastery of Apa Jeremias, just below the desert scarp in Saqqara, south of the causeway leading to the pyramid of Unas (the causeway itself was excavated much later). Quibell found that the architects of the early Christian monastery had demolished some of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Dynasty tombs in the vicinity and had used their masonry for the building of the monastery. Among the blocks re-used were a number of fine reliefs and inscribed doorjambs from the tomb of Maya. These were removed to the Cairo Museum. Over the years one or two small pieces of relief from Maya's tomb surfaced on the art market, and these pieces are now in Hanover, Baltimore, Rochester (New York) and Toronto. With all this material - Lepsius' drawings and the blocks in the museums - Egyptologists had a good idea of the scheme of decoration of Maya's funerary monument, so much so that a complete publication of all the known material was made, in the form of a journal article, in 1975.

The present writer, with the generous permission of the Egyptian Antiquities Organization, initiated work in the necropolis south of the Unas Causeway in 1975 on behalf of the Egypt Exploration Society and the Leiden Museum. Our objective is to provide a mass of new material of all kinds for the study of the Memphite area, particularly in the New Kingdom. The first essential was to establish a fixed point in the necropolis, and with this in view we attempted to relocate Maya's tomb, last seen in 1843, utilizing the map of the area drawn by Lepsius' surveyor. Initially we were not successful: the map seems to be slightly inaccurate, and instead we hit on the tomb of Horemheb, commander of the armies of Tutankhamun, and himself a future pharaoh. This tomb has revealed a wealth of new facts on the history, art, and iconography of the New Kingdom.

In the meantime we had not forgotten Maya. Our campaign in 1986 involved the excavation and recording of three small tomb chapels of the New Kingdom north-west of Horemheb's tomb. One of them was the tomb of a certain Ramose, a military officer apparently contemporary with Horemheb. A shaft in the courtyard of Ramose's tomb led us, by way of a robbers' tunnel, to the subterranean parts of another tomb. We were completely astonished when we penetrated to this area on February 8th, 1986, to find ourselves in a room lined with thin slabs of stone superbly carved and decorated with large-scale figures of an official and his wife adoring the gods. The accompanying text told us immediately that we were in the presence of Maya and Merit! The reliefs are coloured yellow, symbolizing rebirth and resurrection, and the whole conception is distinctly regal. In any case it is totally unprecedented for a private tomb of this period. A corridor choked with rubble leads off, and in the distance other painted rooms can be discerned. The prospect of excavating these is exciting, and we hope to begin the work in the winter of 1988.

The finding of the substructure of Maya's tomb immediately put us in possession of the precise location of the superstructure of the courts and chapels above-ground. These we excavated in 1987, finding some of the reliefs, the column, and the statue group last seen by Lepsius almost a century and a half ago. We also found a number of other reliefs, and many objects. None of the latter bear the name of the tomb owners!

Our work on the superstructure is almost complete, revealing the plan of the great monument, which is similar to that of his colleague Horemheb. Maya, in his tomb, is somewhat reticent about his public career, unlike Horemheb. However, a fragment of a stela in Liverpool, recently published, throws some light on his administrative activity, one that doubtless was not particularly popular with his fellow-citizens. The inscription reads:

'Year 8, third month of the winter season, day 22, under the Majesty of Horus ... son of Re [Tutankh]amun, given life. On this day His Majesty commanded the hereditary prince and count, the fanbearer on the right of the King, royal scribe, Overseer of the Treasury Maya .. to tax the entire land and to institute divine offerings [for] all [the gods] of the land of Egypt ...'

The great official was also responsible for inspecting and re-sealing the tomb of Tuthmosis IV in the Valley of the Kings, and left behind a graffito there dated in the reign of Horemheb. Maya, as treasurer, was no doubt the official chiefly responsible for assembling the enormous cache of objects found by Howard Carter in 1922 in the tomb of Tutankhamun. He was also given the privilege of presenting two funerary gifts inscribed with his name for the royal funeral.

Maya himself survived into the reign of Horemheb, as we have just seen. We hope that the excavation of the substructure of his tomb will provide us with more information on the career and family of one of the most influential and wealthy officials of his day in Memphis.

#### LITERATURE

- E. Graefe, 'Das Grab des Schatzhausvorstehers und Bauleiters Maya in Saqqara'. Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Abteilung Kairo, 31 (1975), 187-220.
- A. A.M.A. Amer, 'Tutankhamun's decree for the Chief Treasurer Maya'. Revue d'Égyptologie, 36 (1985), 17-20.

#### **The Brophy Library Fund for Egyptology**

Following their visit to the Macquarie excavations in Egypt, Mr and Mrs John Brophy made a generous donation of \$2500 to Macquarie University and suggested the establishment of a separate fund for the purpose of building up a research library in Egyptology. Such a library is desperately needed at a young institution with active interest in research in this field.

Donations to the Brophy Library Fund from the general public will be gratefully appreciated by both staff and students working in Egyptology.

### Sixth Study Tour of Egypt

A tour of Egypt is being organised for early January 1989. For Itinerary and details, contact Joan Beck (805 8848).

### Visiting Fellow, 1988

Dr Sheila Whale of the University of Auckland will be the Foundation's Visiting Fellow in 1988. Dr Whale will give public lectures while in Sydney and participate in a week-end Conference, 'THE WOMAN IN THE ANCIENT MEDITERRANEAN WORLD' on Saturday 14 and Sunday 15 May, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. in W5A T2. Adults \$30, School Students \$15. (Enquiries: J Beck) Speakers at the Conference will cover a wide range of topics related to women in ancient Assyria, Greece, Rome and Egypt.

### Activities in Newcastle

Mrs Esther Kilkelly will be in charge of activities in Newcastle. On Saturday 7 May, Dr Sheila Whale will take part in a one-day Seminar assisted by lecturers from Macquarie University and Newcastle University. The topic of lectures will deal with women in the ancient Mediterranean, and H.S.C. students and teachers will find the lectures of great benefit.

Professor Kanawati will be lecturing in Newcastle at a date to be decided in June and Dr Ockinga will also give a lecture in Newcastle in October.

Mrs Juliette Bentley will conduct two week-end courses "The El-Amarna Period" on 6/7 and 13/14 August. Details of these lectures and courses will be available from Mrs Kilkelly (049)33.2528 after 5 p.m.

### General Notice

Members are reminded that copies of Rock Tombs of El-Hawawish, Vols. I-VII are available (Vol.VIII available this year); Excavations at Saqqara Vol.II; and Two Ramesside Tombs at Mashayekh, will also be available later in the year. Lapel badges (\$5) and Key-rings (\$6.50) are available.

Enquiries: Joan Beck, School of History 805 8848.

### "Women's Lib in Ancient Egypt"

Dr Sheila Whale, the Visiting Fellow of the Foundation, will lecture on "Women's Lib in Ancient Egypt", in Price Theatre, on Wednesday 11 May, 1988 at 8 p.m. Tickets \$4 (members \$2).

### Ancient Egyptian Religion

Dr Boyo Ockinga will conduct an 8-weeks course on the Ancient Egyptian Religion. The course will be held each Friday night from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. commencing June 10, 1988. Fee: \$60 (members \$55).

Enquiries: Joan Beck 805.8848 between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m.

### The Rundle Foundation Membership

Ordinary members' subscriptions to the Rundle Foundation, date from 1 March each year and are paid annually.

New members joining after September in any year receive membership cards for the following year.

Subscribers may become LIFE MEMBERS or GOVERNORS at any time upon payment of the appropriate subscriptions.

We would like to emphasise once more that the success and progress of the Foundation relies only on the support of its members and in this respect the Foundation urges its members to renew their subscriptions and in anticipation of your early reply we thank you.

We gratefully acknowledge the receipt of donations above membership which ranged from \$2 to \$2500 during 1987. These donations as well as your memberships have assisted us with the smooth running of the Foundation, in maintaining our varied program and in supporting archaeological fieldwork.

In future a list of donations above membership will be published in the last Newsletter each year. Donors are kindly requested to indicate if they do not wish their names to be published.

### Visiting Fellows

Each year the Rundle Foundation has brought an eminent scholar to Australia to lecture and to conduct seminars. Our first Visiting Fellow was Mr G.T.H. James, Keeper of the Egyptian Antiquities of the British Museum. His visit was a great success and was followed by scholars in other relevant fields. Interest in Coptic archaeology had been aroused by visits to the White and Red Monasteries in Sohag, so our second Visiting Fellow was Dr Leslie McCoull of the Department of Coptic Studies, Cairo.

We were very fortunate to have Dr (now Professor) Kitchen of Liverpool University, as our next Fellow. This great scholar has devoted many years to the study of the inscriptions and the history of the Ramesside Period. His interest also extends to Ancient Near Eastern and Old Testament studies.

Dr (now Professor) Geoffrey Martin visited us in 1985 and his lectures attracted large audiences. All his lectures were first-hand reports on his personal excavations in Egypt.

In 1986, Dr Revel Coles of Oxford was the fifth Visiting Fellow, and although the visit was very late in the year, the lectures were well attended and appreciated by all.

Dr Peter Kuhlmann of the German Institute of Archaeology at Cairo was the Visiting Fellow for 1987 and his lectures drew capacity audiences at Macquarie University and Newcastle.

Many of our Visiting Fellows have visited other States to lecture and have been very well received.



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