

# **Akhenaten Temple Project records**

1015

**Finding aid prepared by Ruth Ann Bohlander.**

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University of Pennsylvania, Penn Museum Archives

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository</b>	University of Pennsylvania: Penn Museum Archives
<b>Creator</b>	Redford, Donald B.
<b>Creator</b>	Smith, Ray Winfield
<b>Title</b>	Akhenaten Temple Project records
<b>Call number</b>	1015
<b>Date [inclusive]</b>	1966-1978
<b>Extent</b>	10 linear feet (the akhenaten temple project records are contained in ten archival boxes of correspondence, reports, financial records, publicity and publication material, and contact sheets. drawings and negatives are housed separately)
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Abstract</b>	<p>The Akhenaten Temple Project was the first computer project assumed by the University of Pennsylvania Museum. It was proposed in 1965 by Ray Winfield Smith, and in 1966 he began the project with the aid of IBM's nascent computer technology. The IBM computer was abandoned in 1976. This collection spans Ray Winfield Smith's entire involvement as director of the project 1968-1971, and begins the career of Dr. Donald B. Redford who acted as a consultant in 1971 and has been director since 1972. The records contain papers and photographs relating to the foundation of the Akhenaten Temple Project, and are divided into seven series: Financial; Correspondence and Reports; Publications and Publicity; Project Negatives; Photographs; Drawings; Misc.</p>

**Cite as:**

[Item name]. Box [Box number]. Akhenaten Temple Project records. Penn Museum Archives.  
 Accessed [Date accessed].

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## Biography/History

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The Akhenaten Temple Project was the first computer project assumed by the University of Pennsylvania Museum. The project was proposed in 1965 by Ray Winfield Smith, who became interested in the stones at Karnak, colloquially known as “talatat.” These specific polychrome relief-cut blocks are from the Aten Temple built by Akhenaten (reign c.1352 BCE–1336 BCE) at Thebes/Karnak. In 1966 Ray Winfield Smith secured sponsorship from the University of Pennsylvania Museum, and along with the Department of Antiquities in Cairo and under a “generous grant of counterpart funds from the Smithsonian Institution,” he began the long and tedious project of reassembling this structure with the aid of IBM’s nascent computer technology.

Smith earned his BS from Dartmouth in 1918 and received an honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters from the same college in 1958. He worked in the oil industry, military, and in government service. He was a scholar and prolific collector of ancient glass, described by the New York Times as an archaeologist by “avocation.” With the aid of IBM in Cairo, he attempted to reconstruct the temple, some of which had already been removed from the site and taken to Europe and the United States. This particular collection includes photographs of an estimated 30-45,000 decorated pieces. It is estimated that there were 100,000 stones used to make up the entire temple. During the fourteenth century BCE there was a “large scale reuse” of the blocks. Smith asserted that the stones without decoration “were considered unimportant and were reinserted invisibly at various points during the repair and restoration work.”

The IBM computer project was abandoned in 1976. This collection spans Ray Winfield Smith’s entire involvement as director of the project 1968-1971, and begins the career of Dr. Donald B. Redford who acted as a consultant in 1971 and has been director since 1972 (and, as of 2007, still is). As of 2007, Redford is a professor of Egyptology in Classics and Ancient Mediterranean Studies at Penn State University, an expert on eighteenth Dynasty Amarna period, and an internationally renowned scholar of Ancient Egypt and Biblical Studies.

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## Scope and Contents

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The Akhenaten Temple Project was the first computer project assumed by the University of Pennsylvania Museum. The project was proposed in 1965 by Ray Winfield Smith, who became interested in the stones

at Karnak, colloquially known as “talatat.” These specific polychrome relief-cut blocks are from the Aten Temple built by Akhenaten (reign c.1352 BCE – 1336 BCE) at Thebes/Karnak. In 1966 Ray Winfield Smith secured sponsorship from the University of Pennsylvania Museum, and along with the Department of Antiquities in Cairo and under a “generous grant of counterpart funds from the Smithsonian Institution,” he began the long and tedious project of reassembling this structure with the aid of IBM’s nascent computer technology. This collection documenting the Akhenaten Temple Project spans the period from 1966-1978 and primarily contains papers and photographs relating to the foundation of the Akhenaten Temple Project. This was a “project to study and reconstitute Karnak”

The collection is divided into seven series: correspondence and reports; financial; project negatives; publications and publicity; photographs; drawings; and miscellanea. It is contained in ten archival boxes. The material is organized in reverse chronological order within the folders.

The Correspondence and Reports series is housed in boxes one and two. The eight folders of correspondence date from July 1965 to November 1978. Most letters are to personnel at the museum and the Foreign Currency Program of The Smithsonian Institution. There is some communication from Ahmed Fakhry and with individuals at the U.S. Embassy in Cairo. Among the reports are applications submitted to the Social Science and Humanities Council of Canada, the Office of Grants at the University of Pennsylvania and The National Geographic Society for funding. There are numerous interim reports from 1966 through 1972 along with progress reports and technical reports and some related correspondence.

The financial series is comprised of four folders. Most of the information relates to day-to-day expenses for workers, equipment and supplies, with a representative sample of receipts. Additional lists of expenses itemized for the grant agencies are with the financial records.

Three folders of publications and publicity material include the Akhenaten Temple Project Newsletters from September 1991 to May 1994 along with reprints of other articles. News releases and press clippings are present. Among this material are two sets of index cards of bibliography from Redford assembled for publication.

The photographs are housed in boxes three to ten. The majority of the folders hold contact sheets of the original photographs. There is one folder of prints of individual blocks.

The drawings and project negatives are housed elsewhere in the archives.

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## **Administrative Information**

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University of Pennsylvania, Penn Museum Archives  
Finding aid prepared by Ruth Ann Bohlander.

### **Use Restrictions**

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## **Controlled Access Headings**

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**CORPORATE NAME(S)**

- University of Pennsylvania. Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology.

**FORM/GENRE(S)**

- Correspondence
- Negatives (photographic)
- Photographs

**GEOGRAPHIC NAME(S)**

- Karnak (Egypt)

**PERSONAL NAME(S)**

- Redford, Donald B.
- Smith, Ray Winfield

**SUBJECT(S)**

- Archaeological expeditions
- Archaeology--Architecture, ancient
- Archaeology--Burials
- Excavations (Archaeology)

## Collection Inventory

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### CORRESPONDENCE AND REPORTS, 1966-1995.

#### Scope and Contents note

This series includes Grant and Fellowship applications completed for the project, letters, scholarship, reports on the project, contract with the Antiquities Service, the outline of the project in 1966, and the key to the IBM coding. This series is arranged in reverse chronological order. Correspondence is mainly between Froelich Rainey, Ray Winfeild Smith, David O'Connor, and Donald Redford, and there is discussion of Malkata (see Egypt, 2) Please find Smithsonian grant applications in folder 2, Application for a Killam Senior Research Scholarship in folder 5. and "Aims, Methods and Standards of East Karnak Excavations" by Professor D.B. Redford 1978 in folder 7. Folder 6 holds the Interim Reports, which includes Progress, Technical, and Budget Reports, and arze numbered from 13 to 1. Missing are 12, 8, and 3. Filed with the Interim Reports are several scholarly reports; "Hieroglyph Inscriptions on Sandstone Blocks from Aten Temple at Karnak" May 29, 1968, "Scenes of the Celebration of the Jubilee on the Blocks of Amenhotep IV" by Charles F. Nims, and a draft of a talk given for Ray Winfeild Smith by Nims, entitled "Akhenaten Temple Project." Several Photographs are included in the reports along with a description of the blocks pictured and corresponding to the film number and stone number cataloging method described in later series. The artist Leslie Greener was brought into the project from Tasmania December 1968 to aid in the visual reconstruction of the Temple.

	Box
1. Correspondence (1 of 8), 1965-1966.	1
Correspondence (2 of 8), 1966.	1
Correspondence (3 of 8), 1967.	1
Correspondence (4 of 8), 1967-1968.	1
Correspondence (5 of 8), 1969.	1

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Correspondence (6 of 8), 1970.	1
Correspondence (7 of 8), 1971-1972.	1
Correspondence (8 of 8), 1977-1978.	1
Proposals, Grant Applications, 1966-1995.	2
Outline of Projects, 1966.	2
Interim Reports, 1966-1972.	2
7. Contract with Antiquities Service, 1967. .	2
9. IBM Coding Schedule.	2

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**FINANCIAL, 1966-1970.**

**Scope and Contents note**

This series includes Payroll, Bank statements, Receipts, and Cash outlays. It spans from December 1967 – December 1970, but is not complete. It is arranged in reverse chronological order. Folder 3 includes the 1968 budget.

	Box
Foreign Currency Grant Reports, 1966-1969.	2
Payroll (1 of 2), 1966-1972.	2
	Box
Payroll (2 of 2).	M 20
	Box



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Purchase Orders, Invoices, 1969.	2
Equipment, 1966.	2
Sample Receipts.	2
	Box
<b>Ledgers.</b>	M-19
	Oversize
National Bank of Egypt Account (Jan.-Dec. 1967; Feb.-Dec. 1969).	M-19
Petty Cash Account (Jan-Dec. 1970).	M-19
Headquarters Cash Account (May-July 1967; Jan-Dec. 1970).	M-19

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**PUBLICATIONS AND PUBLICITY, 1968-1993.**

	Box
Newsletters and reprints, 1986-1993.	2
Publication plans, 1966-1969.	2
Notes.	2
Drawings.	2
Block Diagrams.	2
Publicity.	2

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## PHOTOGRAPHS.

### Scope and Contents note

This series includes one folder of miscellaneous prints, and the rest consists of contact sheet prints picturing the blocks that were investigated in the Akhenaten Temple Project. Original negatives are kept in the Centre Franco-Egyptien where they have been digitized. This includes approximately 2600 rolls of large format, taken with a Hasselblad by Jimmy Delmege. A few negatives were lost in an accident while being transported from Luxor to Ciara in 1977. [E-mail from Donald Redford May 11, 2007.]

	Box
Miscellaneous Photographs.	3
Miscellaneous Blocks.	3
Photo Mock-ups (1 of 2).	2
Photo Mock-ups (2 of 2).	2
Photographs 1-350 [14 folders].	3
Photographs 361-650 [12 folders].	4
Photographs 650-950 [12 folders].	5
Photographs 950-1200 [10 folders].	6
Photographs 1200-1500 [12 folders].	7
Photographs 1500-1825 [12 folders].	8
Photographs 1825-2225 [15 folders].	9
Photographs 2200-2484 [11 folders] [Missing – 2135, 2316-17, 2434-35, 2455-66, 2472-74].	10

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**MISCELLANEOUS.**

**Scope and Contents note**

This includes four mini reels that hold IBM computer data for the project.

[Sample computer punch cards].

IBM Tapes of Data – 4 Data Processing Magnetic Tape Mini Reels.

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**DRAWINGS.**

Drawer  
P-31

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**PROJECT NEGATIVES.**

**Scope and Contents note**

The Project Negatives series includes negatives which describe the blocks in a grid in an attempt to realize the original structure of the Temple. These are arranged by film number and range from 1-2476. As of June 26, 2007 all negatives except those that were uncut (1924-1450) are catalogued in the Archives image database. These processed negatives are numbered from 171738-171758, 172481-172516 and are kept in the Photo Archives with the 35mm negatives. According to the current Director Dr. Donald B. Redford, "The first sheet {sketches on a grid describing numbered blocks joined together} is a "Temporary Scene" layout, as the blocks would actually have fit together. The numbers on the blocks correspond to Film numbers and frame numbers. (The numbers here indicate that most of the components came from storehouse 1 (a few from 2). The specific Temporary Scene (TS) involved here should be indicated on the upper left corner, or on the back. The second sheet {negative is completely blocked off labeled with numbers} is a mystery to me. It reproduces the film and frame numbers, but I do not know whether this is a Temporary scene or not. I see one note in the upper left "K & Q" which refers to a scene type "King and Queen." [E-mail received from Donald Redford May 8, 2007.]