Elizabeth Gwyn Caskey

By Martha Heath Wiencke

The life of Elizabeth Caskey spanned most of the twentieth century, and embodies many of its profound changes. Her earliest days were spent in the hardships of the newly settled Canadian prairies. She distinguished herself as a classical scholar in her university years, but as a woman, and then also as the wife and colleague of an archaeologist, her achievements in teaching and scholarship were scarcely recognized until she established an independent life for herself in her latter years. Much of her married life was spent in Greece, where she contributed greatly to the success of two of the most significant prehistoric excavations of that time, Kea and Lerna.

Betty Caskey was born Clara Elizabeth Coningsby Gwyn, in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, on May 20,1910, the first child of Stratton Gwn and Fanny Coningsby Kempster. Stratton Gwyn came from Ontario, where he was born in Dundas in March 1882, of English-born parents, Gerald Gwyn and Clara Woodcock. Gerald and Clara had met in the Toronto/Hamilton area of Ontario, in the early 1870's, married in England in 1874, and settled on a farm outside Dundas. They had seven children, four girls and three boys, of whom Stratton was the third child and second son. He studied dairy farming at Ontario Agricultural College in Guelph and then went in 1903 with his older brother to Saskatoon to take up a homestead. There they found a quarter section twenty miles southwest of Saskatoon, near Vanscoy, where the railroad was soon to go through, and they settled there in May 1904. In the summer of 1904, farming with horses, they harvested 100 acres of wheat, and built a sod house.

Betty's mother, Fanny Coningsby Kempster (Connie), was born in Llanssaintfraid, Wales, in December 1882. Her parents, Fanny Coningsby and George Kempster, lived on the bank of the Verniew River where George Kempster owned a grist mill. Fanny was George Kempster's second wife; they had three children of whom Connie was eldest. There were four sisters and two brothers in the first family. Fanny died when Connie was seven, and the younger family was raised by the oldest half-sister. Connie, clearly a remarkable young woman, who graduated from Liverpool University in 1903, with honors in English. At Liverpool she became friends with Stratton Gwyn's sister, who was visiting a cousin, the Dean of Women at the University. In 1905, Connie, inspired to become a pioneer, went to stay with the Gwyn family in Dundas, where she worked for friends of the Gwyns until fall, then found a job teaching in South Saskatchewan. There she taught until January in 1906 when Regina Normal School opened, and she was able to study there for a teaching certificate.

The district in which Stratton Gwyn lived had now enough children for a one-room school, and Stratton wrote offering her the job of teacher, which she accepted. (School was held generally during the warmer months only, May to October). Connie and Stratton were married in October 1906. Connie continued to teach till 1910 when Betty was born, and perhaps briefly afterwards. They lived probably in the sod house

until Gerald the second child was born, when Stratton built a "proper" house for the growing family.

Life on the Saskatchewan prairies was hard, but after 1900 the west attracted thousands of settlers, once the old myth of the unproductive prairie had been disproven. The population of Saskatchewan in 1903, when Stratton arrived, was 140,500; it rose to 675,000 by 1913 (J.H. Archer, Saskatchewan: A History, Western Producer Prairie Books, 1980, 164). The homesteader had to promise to break thirty acres, build a house, and live on the homestead for three years at least half of each year (Gerald Friesen, The Canadian Prairies, University of Nebraska Press, 1984, 306). But nonetheless four out of ten homesteaders did not succeed in "proving" their claims (ibid. 309).

Stratton and Connie Gwyn had four children: Betty, the eldest; Gerald, who became an engineer in Vancouver; Alan, a chemical researcher in Montreal; Agnes (Mrs. J. H. Radcliffe), a biologist, in Vancouver. Betty was born in the hospital in Saskatoon, the first grandchild of the senior Gwyns. The younger children were born on the farm, Agnes during a terrible snowstorm. As they were growing up, there were always many visits to and from the family in Dundas. Both parents, with Betty, spent the winter months from December 1911 to March 1912 in Dundas. Betty was again in Dundas probably from 1916-1918, to attend elementary school. The whole family with the four children remained in Dundas for the winter of 1917/1918, a time when Betty knitted socks for the soldiers. She was a tall, lively girl and had grown to her full 5'8" when she graduated in June 1921 from Wentworth Elementary School, grade 8, in Dundas. Most of her elementary education, in fact, was in Dundas, as school did not continue during the winter at home. Her mother Connie did teach her own children at home, however, from time to time. They had many books at home "hundreds" according to Agnes, and Connie would sometimes lend them to neighbors, carefully recording the names of the borrowers.

In 1920, mother Connie and her younger son Alan went to England, while Betty and Agnes stayed in Dundas with their grandparents. Father Stratton and the older son Gerald stayed on the farm till April 1921; then Stratton went to England to visit and left Gerald with cousins in Guelph, Ont. The whole family went back to Saskatchewan at the end of July 1921; Betty was at home during that cold winter. "We would wake in the morning with little frost trees on the air holes in the eiderdown, and frost on the windows at least half an inch thick which we loved to scrape off with spoons to eat..." Agnes recalls.

In 1922 Betty went on to high school at Battleford Collegiate Institute, in Battleford near the border of Alberta. She boarded a year or two, and then lived at the home of a friend. She played basketball, and engaged in many activities including debate. Agnes remembers when Betty had her hair cut ("her beautiful long honey gold hair")- asking for but not waiting for permission - and when she asked to cut the bottom flounce off her party dress, this perhaps when the fashion was for shorter skirts. She was of course an excellent student, and on graduation received the Governor General's Medal for Saskatchewan.

During the year 1926-1927, Betty stayed at home, since her mother thought her too young to go away to a college. She took piano lessons in Vanscoy, three miles away, which she reached by sleigh in winter, a fast adventurous ride. In the summers there were picnics at the Saskatoon River and at a nearby lake, picking berries and choke cherries for jelly, occasional rides in the old Briscoe car, which they used very little, mainly for trips to Saskatoon. Their farming was chiefly with horses, although there was a tractor for threshing.

In 1927 Betty went with her parents alone on a camping trip to Vancouver Island, to investigate a possible move to the far west. The family did move out to Duncan, B.C., in 1928, to a "small fruit and chicken farm", after the exceptionally bad winter of 1927, but Betty did not go with them. She went east to Dundas and Hamilton, to attend Hamilton Central Collegiate in order to prepare for university. She graduated from Hamilton in 1928 with first honors in English Literature, History, Algebra and Geometry, Latin, French and Greek, and won the J.M. Buchan Gold Medal, and three scholarships, which included four years' tuition at the University of Toronto.

Trinity College, University of Toronto, which Betty attended, was an independent Anglican college, federated with the University in 1904, but was always run with its own staff, buildings, administration, and students. The Honors program in Classics was rigorous, and "the best undergraduate training in Classics in America" (Prof. Wallace McLeod, Victoria College). Entering students had four years of Latin and three of Greek behind them, and the entire course of study was in Classics except for two hours a week. There were not many students, so that they sometimes shared classes at the other colleges. The program listed for Betty's first year in 1928 consisted of three books of the Iliad, Euripides' Medea, Plato's Apology, selections from Thucydides, Virgil's Georgics I and IV, selected odes of Horace and Catullus, three orations of Cicero, as well as sight translation, prose composition, and history. Study of the major authors was continued for the entire four years. The Classics staff was a formidable group. The professor of Greek at Trinity was George Grube, and Betty no doubt studied Plato with him. Other professors at Trinity included S. M. Adams in Greek, and W. A. Kirkwood and N. Woodcock in Latin. Betty perhaps read Sophocles with Prof. Adams, Homer with Prof. Eric Trevor Owen,Thucydides with Prof. Charles Norris Cochrane of University College, Greek drama perhaps with Prof. Gilbert Norwood of University College.

After four years, in 1932, Betty graduated in honors in classics from Trinity College at the top of her class. She had traveled out to Duncan every other summer to be with her family, but when she stayed in the east during college she held jobs, as a fruit-picker or a nanny.

Betty went on to take an M.A. at Toronto in 1933, and then proceeded to the University of Cincinnati with a Taft teaching fellowship to begin work on a doctorate. The courses in which she was enrolled included Greek history with Prof. Allen West, Greek prose composition and Lucretius with Prof. Roy Hack, elegy and epigram with Prof. Rodney Robinson, other courses in Greek Civilization, the Monuments of Athens, and Plato, and in 1935-1936 a course in pre-classical Greece with Prof. Carl Blegen. In

the department at Cincinnati Betty met John Langdon Caskey, a fellow graduate student and a graduate of Yale University, whose father was curator of the classical collection of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. Betty, Jack Caskey, Malcolm McGregor, and others became good friends in that very close and congenial department, which included Professors Hack, Blegen, Robinson, and William Semple. There was always tea in the department between seminars in the afternoon, and an opportunity to converse with fellow students and professors. The Semples held open house nearly every Saturday afternoon. There was tennis and swimming, pingpong, chess; and tea and conversation. Prof. Hack's daughter Apphiah ("Muff") Hensley became another good friend of Betty's and found her "a very loving, understanding, and patient woman", never too busy to help a teenager, and a dear friend in later years.

Betty and Jack were married August 4, 1936, in New York City. None of Betty's family could attend, but Jack's father was present. Jack was soon off to ancient Troy for the excavations with professors Blegen and West, where he had gone every summer since the beginning of the work in 1932, and Betty went to join him for a few weeks in 1938, at the end of the final season. As a neophyte she was entrusted with lesser jobs, helping with the packing of the small objects. It was her first taste of field archaeology.

Betty and Jack both taught in the classics department as Taft Teaching Fellows during their student years (Emmett Bennett of the University of Wisconsin remembers as an undergraduate studying Euripides under Betty in the late 1930's.) She and Jack both took their Ph.D.'s in June of 1939. Her dissertation topic was "Democritus and Plato."

During the Second World War, Betty continued to teach in the classics department when many of the men were away, first as a substitute until 1942, than as an instructor from 1942-1946, while Jack did army service in the intelligence branch. During her Cincinnati years she taught beginning Greek, intermediate Latin, undergraduate courses in Plato, the tragedians, Livy, Horace, Tacitus, Latin comedy, and graduate courses in Sophocles, Cicero, and Tacitus, as well as introductory ancient history. For a few months Muff Hensley stayed with Betty while both their husbands were abroad; Mrs. Hensley remembers Betty as "cheerful on the outside," not expressing her worry over Jack's possibly dangerous situation. Jack returned to teach in 1945 after the war. Prof. Bennett remembers, as a novice teacher, taking Betty's place on one occasion at about that time, in a beginning Latin class, when Betty was again classified as a lowly substitute, according to the usual male-dominated mores of the day. She enjoyed teaching, however, and "made a comfortable, beautifully appointed, beautifully kept home for Jack. She was a meticulous housekeeper, and a superb, imaginative cook" (Hensley).

In 1948, Jack and Betty settled in Greece. Jack became assistant Director for a year at the American School of Classical Studies at Athens, then Director until 1959, while Betty held the position of Librarian at the School from 1948 to 1958. The School, one of several foreign research centers in Athens, is a long established institution which serves as a center for visiting American and Canadian scholars in classics and archaeology, a base for archaeologists conducting School-sponsored excavations in

Greece, and a teaching center for graduate students. It is supported financially by most of the American universities with interest in Greek studies. Its library in archaeology and classics is extensive and much used by scholars of all nationalities, and it is affiliated with the nearby Gennadeion Library. The School's position in Athens is analogous to that of the American Embassy, so that the Director and spouse have many duties, social, scholarly, and administrative.

Betty "managed the School well" according to a close friend, and certainly according to the memories of those of us who were graduate students during those years. She was a gracious hostess to everyone from newly wed students to the King and Queen, and a friendly and calm influence in every imaginable situation. From time to time she taught numismatics and ancient pottery to the graduate students who came for their year of study in archaeology and Greek topography; for the class sessions she made use of material from the School's excavations in the Athenian Agora. On the annual fall trips around Greece for the graduate students, conducted by Jack Caskey alternately with the professor of archaeology, Eugene Vanderpool, Betty was the one who coped with the day-to-day problems of commissariat in that impoverished post-war countryside, the myriad small annoyances of weather (it always rained), hotels, health, personalities — and she did it quietly with kindness and humor. While we worried over the individual ruins on which we were to deliver reports, she saw to it that we also took time to observe the flora and fauna, and the details of village life.

In the summer of 1952, under the auspices of the School, Betty and Jack Caskey began excavation at Lerna, a largely pre-Mycenaean site in the Peloponnesos, south of Argos on the road to Tripolis. The aim was to investigate the poorly understood Middle and Early Bronze Age periods, as well as the Neolithic; and the excavation provided a wealth of the expected information. In the first short season, with a staff that included only the Caskeys, with the local representative of the Archaeological Service, epimelete S. Charitonides, and assistant Aliki Halepa (Bikaki), and in the longer season of the next year with the addition of an architect, O. L. A. Spaeth, and assistants Gloria Livermore (Duclos) and C. W. J. Eliot, the staff lived in Nauplia nearly half an hour away, and commuted to the site. Betty Caskey's assignment on the dig was to supervise the work in the expanding Area A and later in the adjoining Area G, which encompassed the eastern end of the Early Bronze Age House of the Tiles and the enclosure walls of the same period. In subsequent seasons, Lloyd E. Cotsen served as architect, and later E. Protonotariou as epimeletria, with other regular staff members H. Vasiliou (Buck; 1954), M. C. Heath (Wiencke; 1954, 1957), E. L. Courtney (Banks; 1955, 1956), G. F. Bass (1956), Wallace and Elizabeth McLeod (1958) and others for shorter periods of time (J. L. Angel, H. Besi, A. H. Bikaki, J. Cotsen, W. Donovan, C.W. J. Eliot, A. Frantz, D. Phylaktopoulou, O. M. Unwin). The foreman E. Lekkas and a number of experienced workmen were borrowed from Old Corinth, while others were hired locally, a total of about twenty-five.

The staff was housed, in each summer season from 1954 until 1957, in the village of Myloi beside the site. (In the short season of 1958, quarters were again found in Nauplia). Two small houses at the end of the village were hired, one to serve as living,

dining and kitchen quarters, as well as accommodation for the Caskeys, and the other for the staff. The village had no electricity or running water at that time, and a donkey and driver were hired at workman's wages to fetch water all day from the abundant spring beside the site. Bathing was chiefly by daily swims in the nearby bay, but much water was also needed at the site for the washing of sherds. It was Betty's responsibility, as it was in later excavations, to supervise all the living arrangements, the house staff consisting of the Caskey's cook, A. Totsikas, and the girls who served meals and kept the quarters clean, the commissariat, the Sunday supply of hot water and the purifying of the drinking water, the laundry, meals for the frequent guests, and all the many details of life under uncomfortable and fast-moving circumstances. All this in addition to the supervision of a major area of the site, a job which those on the staff with similar excavation responsibilities found to be more than full-time alone.

Betty later commented, for the Lynchburg (Va.) News (1968), "Those taking part in an excavation for antiquities live an almost hand-to-mouth existence at times and the going often becomes tedious and discouraging...Ideally a planned dig should permit intervals of leisure. Generally, a period of nine intensive weeks of work is as long a time as participants can work together effectively and harmoniously." Excavation at Lerna began at 6:00 A.M., with a small breakfast of bread, cheese, and tea at 5:30, and a break at 8:30 for a full breakfast, followed by work from 9:00 till noon, then lunch and a short siesta during the most intense heat of the day, then more digging from 2:00 to 5:00, tea, and further work examining sherds laid out to dry at the site. A swim late in the day would be followed by dinner in the evening and an early bedtime. On Saturdays there was no digging in the afternoon, but an expedition into Nauplia and dinner at a restaurant there, to give everyone a change. On Sundays there was time for more sherd sorting and the accumulated paper work and report writing.

Lloyd Cotsen remembers Betty at Lerna: "We all enjoyed her warm friendliness. She was the quartermaster of the dig...while making it look easy. She was the supplier of S.S. Pierce peanut butter (by the gallon cans and jars!) She was the one who insisted we get out for a dinner at Nauplia at least once a week, on a Saturday. And she led the fashion swing on those evenings...shifting from culottes to a dress. So we followed, from shorts to pants...everyone on the dig loved her warmth, her low key, and her going out of her way to make others comfortable. She sort of was the glue for all of us 'chips'." At one point, Cotsen remembers, she was giving a patient lesson in fly swatting to one of the household help. Wallace McLeod recalls, "We were newly-weds...and Betty was like a mother to us. She was so low-key that it took a while to realize just how much she knew, and just how much she did." I remember myself that one of many things Betty did to make the living quarters more pleasant was to bring a collection of reading material, including, I recollect, the complete works of Jane Austen.

During the winters, the Lerna finds were stored at the Corinth Museum, by courtesy of the American School's Corinth excavations and the Archaeological Service, and members of the staff spent many days and weeks at Old Corinth, writing up the sherds in pottery notebooks, compiling the inventory of the finds, and living in the excavation quarters, Oakley House. The Caskeys came frequently to work, when they

could get away from their duties in Athens. We spent many pleasant evenings by lamplight around the fireplace in Oakley House - there was no heat nor electricity at that time, nor was there heat in the museum workrooms, in Corinth or later in Argos when the finds were removed to their permanent home there in the archaeological museum. But we enjoyed the brief warmth of the winter sunshine, after lunch, outside Oakley House, and companiable conversation while we watched the antics of the excavation cat Theodore.

In September of 1958, after the Lerna excavations had ended and a permanent shelter had been built over the House of the Tiles, Betty and Jack undertook a brief excavation on the site of Eutresis in Boeotia, with the encouragement of the original excavator, Hetty Goldman. The aim was to test the deeper levels of the site in hopes of clarifying the sequence of deposits, particularly the Early Helladic levels, in order to acquire better comparisons with discoveries in southern Greece. Betty was responsible for all the field notes. The work proved successful and was promptly published under both Betty's and Jack's names in Hesperia (29, 1960, 126-167) after they had spent a research term for the purposes of writing, at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton.

In 1959 Betty and Jack had returned to live in Cincinnati, where Jack became chairman of the Classics Department. In the summer of 1960 they began a new excavation, this time under the auspices of the Cincinnati Classics Department, which wished to sponsor a dig where its own students could be trained. The site selected was Agia Irini on the island of Kea (ancient Keos), lying just off the coast of Attica. The archaeology of the Cyclades was not so well known at that time, nor had the post-war boom in tourism engulfed the islands. It was hoped that discoveries on Kea, a stepping stone between the Greek mainland and the more distant scattered Cycladic islands, would help to explain the connections between the relatively well-known palace civilization of Crete and that of the great Mycenaean centers; and, in the light of the finds which the Caskeys had made at Lerna, might illuminate further the developments which took place in the centuries before the Late Bronze Age.

Agia Irini is a small peninsula, named for the tiny church on the site, lying north of the chief port town Koressia, on the Vourkari bay on the northwest side of the island. The Michalinos Company of Piraeus owned much of the land and had operated a coaling station there, from which there remained some unoccupied buildings. These served as storage and working space, as well as living quarters for the excavators. The first season in 1960, conducted by the Caskeys alone, with a few workmen, was exploratory and consisted of test trenches. In 1961 Betty and Jack spent two months at the site, accompanied by seven other staff members: Mr and Mrs. William Kittredge, A. Bikaki, Elizabeth Milburn, P. H. Auerbach, and E. G. Carlson. Lloyd Cotsen served as architect. The foreman Demetrios Papaioannou and the vase mender Soterios Maras came from Old Corinth, and there were about twenty-five workmen, as well as a carpenter and a boatman. Ten days were spent in digging, and the rest of the season in study.

As at Lerna, Betty was responsible not only for the considerable sector of the excavation under her direct supervision, Area A, but also for the living arrangements for the staff, for supplies, for provision of meals for herself and Jack, and for some of those for the staff, as well as for hospitality and accommodations for the many visitors to the site. Living arrangements were fairly primitive, meals at the one restaurant in Vourkari limited, and transportation always a problem, both to Koressia and to the capital Chora up on the mountain, where the museum of the island was later to shelter the finds. Frequent ships come to Koressia from Laurion or Rafina on the mainland, but rough seas often altered the schedules or made travel impossible. Nevertheless, Agia Irini was a pleasant place to be in the summer, cooler and quieter than the city and convenient for daily swims in the bay.

Excavation resumed in 1963 and 1964. E. T. Blackburn, J. C. Overbeck, and T. W. Jacobson joined the staff as supervisors in 1963, John Coleman and Alfred Osborne in 1964, with Roger Holzen and C. K. Williams as architects. Coleman recalls that it was Betty rather than Jack who welcomed the newcomers, helped them to settle in, introduced them to the system of excavation. At the same time she continued her supervision of Area A, which ultimately revealed the largest building on the site, House A, thirty-seven meters from west to east, consisting chiefly of more than thirty basement rooms belonging in the earliest stages to the first part of the Late Bronze Age. Deep soundings showed that there had been yet earlier occupation on the spot in the Early and Middle Bronze Ages. Fallen painted plaster came from the formally decorated rooms of the upper floors. There were many fine pots, and also a graffito in the Linear A script. Narrow streets outside House A had stone-built drains for rain water.

The final publication of House A, by W. Willson Cummer and Elizabeth Schofield (Keos, volume III, Ayia Irini: House A, Von Zabern), appeared in 1984 and is dedicated to Betty Caskey "who excavated most of House A and made preliminary studies of much of the pottery" (p. xix).

In 1965 the staff held a study season devoted largely to the recording of the masses of pottery, much of it of course from the Late Bronze Age, but a great deal of earlier material and some of later. Betty had the pleasure of a visit from her niece Lynne Radcliffe from Vancouver, who assisted with the recording of the animal bones. Others worked on the fragments of fresco, on the human skeletal material, and the terracotta statues from the "Temple" which lay beside House A.

Excavation, and study, continued at the site in later years, and publication was begun. Betty did not return after 1965. Her marriage to Jack had ended, and, with her characteristic and quiet strength, and the support of a wide network of family and friends, she began to build herself an entirely new life. She returned to Cincinnati alone, and for a single term she taught there again, this time as an acting instructor, then at Western College for Women in Oxford, Ohio as a part-time assistant professor in 1967-1968.

She returned to Greece briefly in the summer of 1968 as a member of the staff of a rescue expedition from the American School and the University of Colorado, at the

classical town of Pylos in Elis (J.E. Coleman, Excavations at Pylos in Elis, Hesperia Supplement XXI, 1986, American School of Classical Studies, Princeton, NJ). Excavation had to be done rapidly before the completion of a large dam in the area, and took place between June 12 and August 17 of 1968, with brief additional work in 1970. A full-time staff of seven, with occasional other members, supervised twenty-eight workmen, foremen and pot-mender until August 3, with a reduced workforce thereafter. The staff lived in tents near the site. The finds included some evidence for Middle Helladic occupation, wells of the late Geometric and Archaic periods, house foundations of the fifth to the fourth century B.C., house walls and graves of the later Roman period, and some Byzantine occupation. John Coleman, as field director, writes of Betty, "She was a marvelous presence...She and Jerry Sperling, who was also there, set a thoroughly professional tone for the operation and made us feel as if we were somehow in the same tradition as the great digs of the past at Troy and Lerna."

In the fall of 1968 Betty, or as she preferred to be called now, Elizabeth, took up a regular position as associate professor at Randolph-Macon Woman's College, in Lynchburg, Virginia, where she was promoted to full professor in 1977. She now devoted herself primarily to her original fields of study, classical literature and philosophy, and inspired many appreciative students in her Greek, ancient history, art and archaeology classes, while carrying on extensive duties on college committees and remaining active in the Archaeological Institute of America both locally (where she revived the Lynchburg chapter) and nationally, as well as a national committee member for the American School of Classical Studies. She represented Randolph-Macon in the Faculty Senate of Virginia, and was active in the Lynchburg AAUW, the League of Women Voters, and First Unitarian Church, besides keeping up an active interest in environmental concerns, in bird-watching, in concert-going, and in her many friendships.

She began also to publish scholarly articles under her own name, most notably a consideration of the seventh letter of Plato ("Again--Plato's Seventh Letter," Classical Philology LXIX, 1974, 220-227), in which she took the minority position in opposition to Plato's authorship. She based her argument on a thorough knowledge of Plato's work, including a rereading of the Laws, and wrote (226), "In fact, it is hard to believe that, at any age or under any pressure, if he had undertaken to write a defense of himself or an associate, Plato would not have produced a more connected, succinct, and effective libellus." She wrote a characteristically generous and lucid review of Olympia: The Sculptures of the Temple of Zeus, by B. Ashmole and N. Yalouris (Photographs by Alison Frantz, New York Graphic Society 1967; in Classical Journal, 1968, 371), with high praise for the authors, and gentle but perceptive criticisms: "The authors' debate on the date of the repairs...warns us of dangers that still threaten dogmatic statements about Greek sculpture" and "one may perhaps view with caution the ascription of position to a figure largely on the basis of where it was found..." She made time, too, to write reviews of archaeological books for the general reader, published in the Richmond Times-Dispatch. She continued to travel from time to time, before and after her final retirement in 1981, when she became emeritus professor. She was present at the colloquium honoring Jack Caskey's retirement in 1979; and she continued to attend archaeological meetings and to keep up her many interests and contacts with friends and former

students. Her retirement years until her death were spent, except for travel, in Lynchburg, where she had made her new life.

Her colleague in the department of classics, Robert B. Lloyd, wrote of Betty at the time of her retirement, "It is into teaching, however, that most of her considerable energies have gone. Here, too, she has registered a singular success. Her students love her and she has been particularly inspiring to those who have gone on to professional work in the Classics" (RMWC Alumnae Bulletin, summer 1981). One of her students wrote, "Mrs. Caskey's brilliance is not the kind that seeks to impress or dazzle, but rather is a gentle radiance that kindles an answering glow in her students. Her dedication to her chosen field, her interest in each student as an individual, her excellent down-to-earth, practical common sense, her willingness to encourage but refusal to bestow false praise--all place her in the top rank of scholarly teachers" (Catherine Gibbes '72, ibid.). Betty herself remarked, "I am always excited...by what I'm currently working on, whether it be archaeology, history, or literature. Plato and Homer never cease to give me the greatest pleasure...Of course a mastery of these languages requires discipline and consistent work. But I want students to read it, say it." (RMWC Alumnae Bulletin, fall 1978, 12).

After Betty's death in January 1994, it was said of her in a Randolph-Macon faculty meeting, "She learned early not just to cope but to take in stride the vicissitudes of a life that was not always kind. Her toughness, however, was one of spirit and not of manner, for she was every inch a lady of charm and grace without a mean, jealous or resentful bone in her body." President emeritus William F. Quillian said at her memorial service, "There are few who combine so well as she did the qualities of meticulous scholarship, devotion to teaching and skill in inspiring her students to a study of and appreciation for the Classics, an interest in and involvement in social and political issues, and with it all a winsomeness and cheery outlook on life." Her colleague professor David Anthony, on the same occasion, observed, "She came to us bearing the heavy burden of tragic disappointment, but you would have never known it. She was a splendidly gifted scholar and teacher, a cherished friend and a gallant lady. We were blessed to have known her."

Elizabeth Gwyn Caskey's name does not appear as author on any archaeological publications with the exception of the article on the single season of work at Eutresis. Her total contributions to the excavations at Lerna and Kea, however, two of the most significant for Greek prehistory in the twentieth century, were probably greater than those of anyone else, unrecognized though those contributions have been. It is hard to imagine how the work at those sites could have been accomplished without her scholarship, steady diligence, and personal grace. The conventions of the day required that she take second place to her husband and support his work, to free him for more visible accomplishments. This she did. Her own achievement in the same work was scarcely noticed, and her brilliance as a classical scholar and teacher was not recognized until the latter and independent part of her career.

She lived a life, however, which surmounted its circumscriptions and proved to be extraordinarily rich, productive, and widely beneficial. Her influence as an archaeologist

has been indirect but enormously significant; and as scholar, teacher and neighbor she touched the lives of an uncounted number of fortunate colleagues, students and friends.

Martha Heath Wiencke

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