

Grace Mary Crowfoot (1877-1957) by Elizabeth Crowfoot

My mother, Grace Mary Hood--Molly to her family and friends--was born in 1877, eldest child of Sinclair and Grace Hood, in Nettleham Hall, in Lincolnshire. Her father's family were originally Scottish, and claimed descent from a Colonel John Hood, who came south with General Monck's army in 1660, to restore Charles Stuart to the throne of England. They settled eventually near Thirsk in Yorkshire, intermarrying with the Frankland family; but every few generations they moved further south, finally making their home in 1828 in the village of Nettleham, three miles from Lincoln.

Molly came of a large and happy family, two girls followed by four boys. An athletic crowd of young people, strikingly handsome and tall—Molly at 5 ft. 9 ins. one of the shortest—they were devoted to tennis, cricket, and hunting. Molly's short sight, and her insistence on wearing spectacles, made ball-games dangerous, but from a child she was a tough and steady horsewoman. In her later years she attributed her dislike of strong spirits to the amount of brandy and rum that elderly friends poured down her throat, the only child always there at the end of a long day's hunt--though as she grew up her sympathies were more with the hunted. But the family interests were wider than usual in English 'county' society, three in particular—music, the Church, and archaeology.

The six children were equally divided into 'readers' – Molly, Edward and Martin – and 'players' – Dorothy (Dolly), Alban and Ivo – by whether they first learnt to read or to 'play their notes.' Her mother and Alban were fine organists, but even 'readers' were expected to play the piano and sing in tune. The Church meant the great cathedral at Lincoln, centre of the Anglo-Catholic movement, magnificently visible as a distant

presence, a few miles off across the park, and their own parish church, much restored and embellished by the family. For many years as a girl Molly cherished the idea of being a missionary. Archaeology in 18th and 19th century England owed much to the antiquarian enthusiasm of landowners and their clergymen; in the Hood family, however, it meant not Anglo-Saxon cemeteries and Roman forts, but Pharaonic Egypt.

The first Hood to become fascinated by 'Ancient Egypt' was Molly's grandfather, William Frankland Hood. Sent abroad for his health in 1851, he had amassed a large and varied collection of Egyptian 'antiquities' by the time of his death from tuberculosis in 1864. In his memory his father added to the house a great hall with a carved ceiling in the Gothic style to accommodate the collection. The walls were lined with cases of small antiques, and papyrus rolls were housed in a painted cabinet. Two grand pianos stood, on either side of the fireplace, and Molly's organ was located on a landing halfway up the wide polished staircase—a terror to later small descendants in the days before children's shoes had non-slip soles. The mass of fine no doubt helped the destruction of the house in 1939, when it was burned down by careless tenants. The Egyptian collection had fortunately been dispersed some years before, sold at Sotheby's in 1923 during financial difficulties but it had brought Molly her first contact with professional archaeologists. William Flinders Petrie, whose work was largely financed by groups of supporters around the country, had naturally come when lecturing in Lincoln to see the Hood collection, staying at the Hall for some weeks to catalogue it, and Molly and his wife Hilda became lifelong friends.

The four brothers were of course sent away to 'prep' (preparatory) schools, the three youngest on musical scholarships, singing in Llandaff Cathedral choir, and then to public schools; Molly and her sister Dolly's education was largely at home, until they went to finishing-school in Paris to acquire good French and further skill in music and drawing. The lack of a formal education probably accounted for her attitude to new subjects, and later advice to grandchildren: "If you are interested in anything, you've got

the equipment—go ahead and learn what you can,” she would say: “don’t expect someone to be there to tell you everything.” She was never satisfied with superficial knowledge, pursuing each new subject until she had mastered it, and found kindred spirits with whom to share it. Her father’s interests centered on the estate, his cricket-team and his friendship with Bishop King for whom he represented Lincoln in the House of Laity at Westminster. But his early death in 1897 left her mother very much in charge, and when Dame Elizabeth Wordsworth, a personal friend, asked her to send Molly as a student to her newly founded women’s college in Oxford, Lady Margaret Hall, she could not see the necessity - - boys of course went to University but not girls. After all, Molly would never have to earn her living! At a later period, like many women archaeological pioneers, she indeed found the possession of a small private income of her own was invaluable. But she often regretted her lack of the training in collecting and organizing information that she felt a university degree would have given her.

Her mother's health was always cause for concern, and it was decided that winters away from the cold and damp of Lincolnshire would be beneficial. A house, christened the Villa Lincolnia, was built on the Italian Riviera, quieter and a little less expensive than the French side of the border, but within reach of the excellent concerts and tennis events there. San Remo was then a rather small resort expatriate community, mainly English and Russian, an English church and tennis club; Grace Hood and members of the family wintered there each year. A particular to Molly was the local Field Club run by a great friend, Colonel Momber, of which she became the secretary. This opened up a different aspect of archaeology. Botanical expeditions in the foothills of the Ligurian Alps led to exploring the caves Badalucco, famous for their blind beetles and, in 1906, her first personal experience of excavation there in the cave of Tana Bertrand, a long pocket with a difficult entry under an overhanging cliff. The beetles were missing, but there were bone remains, confirmed as neolithic by professor Issel at Genoa, to whom she ventured to show them. Few of her fellow field-club members could stand the idea of

a second visit, but her persistence, over the winters of 1908 and 1909, with the help of a local boy Antonio Bianchi, uncovered more signs of the earlier occupation, enough bones to suggest a family burial place, with a few stones and bone objects and over 300 beads which she published many years later in 1926 (Bib. 7).

She had a great gift for friendship, a natural understanding that drew young and old, male and female, to her, which remained with her all her life. In a letter at this period to her future husband, John Crowfoot (June B, 1908, GMH to JWC, from Italy) she mentions that a woman friend confessed to being attracted to 'the eternal boy in her,' but reassures him "I'm sure I feel very like a woman inside, though I never did feel like a girl -- can't understand them a bit -- with exceptions." Her friendships were wide-ranging; in London, where the family rented a flat, she developed strong connections with a different world, the artistic and musical circle centered on the Strode family, whose advanced opinions were rather a cause of anxiety to her mother. The Strodes (Augusta, Louisa and their brother) encouraged her study of flowers, derived from early days when learning the names and families in the bunches she and Dolly collected in the park and fields at Nettleham. They found her strict attention to botanical detail sometimes clashed with their Pre-Raphaelite idea of beauty; but she fervently embraced their code of Christian Socialism and concern for women's rights. It was on a visit to more elderly friends, however, Miss Shaen and Miss Astley, living in western Scotland near Arisaig, that she first saw the Highland spinning of wool, still practiced in some cottages on the 'muckle wheel' the shoulder-high single wheel, worked by hand, as well as the more modern spinning wheel with foot treadle, and her interest in the most important subject of her future archaeological studies was born.

Long ago she had decided, after meeting him at a ball in Lincoln, that the only man she would ever want to marry was John Winter Crowfoot, son of the Chancellor of Lincoln Cathedral. However, he was not ready to commit himself; originally a classical scholar, but always hoping to make a career in archaeology, he found, after a senior

scholarship led to travelling in Greece and Asia Minor and further study in Heidelberg, that there was still no immediate prospect of making that a living, and the only professional alternative by which he could remain in the Mediterranean area was to go into the Egyptian service as an Inspector of Education. When the Anglo-Egyptian government of the Sudan was organized in Cairo, he was appointed Assistant Director of Education from 1903 to 1908 for the new dominion. Waiting, and sometimes despairing of him, Molly again turned her mind to the life of a missionary, but found herself increasingly drawn to the medical side. Her friend Christobel (Kit) Hoare, afterwards her sister-in-law, remembered the joyous greeting of the patients in the leprosy ward at San Remo, where they were regular visitors; in a later generation she would almost certainly have become a doctor. In England, in spite of her mother's disapproval, she succeeded in enrolling for the midwifery course at the Clapham Maternity Hospital, founded in 1889 by Dr. Annie McCall and Miss Marion Ritchie, where students and staff were trained entirely by women; in 1906 she applied to take the Certificate of the College of Midwives, and is entered in their 1908 register as a qualified midwife. With this training behind her, she was the moving spirit in organizing with her sister Dolly, a German doctor and his Swiss wife, a small relief party to Sicily, when news of the earthquake disaster there reached them in San Remo early in 1909. Her midwifery training proved invaluable when, settled later in Khartoum, she was able to send for two great friends who had trained with her, the sisters 'Bee' and 'Gee' Wolff, to start the first school of midwifery in the Sudan. They trained a generation of young nurses, devoted to the abandonment of the practice of pharaonic circumcision (female genital mutilation).

But all this was laid aside for a time when, realizing her interest in medicine was getting serious, John Crowfoot made up his mind and wrote asking her to marry him, and she accepted him (GMH to JWC, April 9, 1909). She admitted then that she had been planning to leave home for good, and go to the London school of Medicine for Women, founded in 1875; but she wrote later, in her next letter to him in Egypt (GMH to JWC

May 16, 1909): "I'm very glad I'm going to marry, Johnny, and not try to be any Sort of missionary -- the peculiar attractiveness of the medical kind to me was that they nurse and doctor women who otherwise wouldn't get looked after at all (e.g. Lady Dufferin's Medical Mission to the women of India, purdah women who mayn't be seen by men doctors), and do this in connection with pioneer Christian work without being expected to convert anybody by preaching."

But she was worried that her unconventionality might have a bad effect on John's career. Her disregard for her appearance was famous in the family. Kit describes her on an expedition,

both very properly dressed, to the Prince of Monaco's aquarium to collect some sea anemones. When their water got spilt on the bus home from Monte Carlo, Molly leapt into the waves at San Remo to fill the jar and save the creatures promised to Colonel Momber's crippled son, Rex, without a thought for her best dress. In an earlier letter (GMH to JWC, May 5, 1909) she had written to warn him:

"I'm hopeless in society. I hate and loathe it, and have all but given up going out in it here. I'm a privilege character in San Remo, and am allowed to dress and behave as I like (in fact they'd be disappointed if I didn't) -- but of course it is different going to new place, and I'll try to be circumspect when I first go out. [My sister] Dorothy will help me with clothes and turn me out so that I shan't shock your friends on arrival -- afterwards I warn you I shall lapse!"

Molly and John were married at Nettleham on the 20th July 1909 by the Bishop of Lincoln, and the next years in Cairo while John was Inspector at the Ministry of Education, saw the birth of three daughters, Dorothy Mary (1910), Joan (1912) and Elisabeth Grace (1914). The period also saw Molly's first publication. Rather bored by the restrictions of life in Cairo, she developed a new skill, learning photography, which proved of great use throughout her years in the Middle East: she was able to record men and women at work, spinning, weaving and pottery-making, at a time when progress was beginning to destroy the old way of life. Her booklet Some Desert Flowers (Bib. 1) , a photographic record, with an introduction on the particular characteristics of plants

adapted to desert life, was printed in Cairo at her own expense. In her preface she acknowledged the help of botanical and Arabic-speaking friends -- all through her life, she was always happy to collaborate with other scholars in any field in which she was interested.

In 1914 John had been officially appointed to the Sudan, but the anticipated start to this new life was shattered by the outbreak of the Great War. Like other English families, they had always returned home on leave for the three hottest summer months, and so were in England when war was declared. John had to leave them there and return to Cairo alone. Molly had with her, as the children's nurse a beautiful young girl, Kate Stevens, whom she had discovered by accident marooned in Cairo and befriended -- a fortunate meeting, since Nelly the nursemaid she had brought out from Nettleham for the birth of Dorothy, had decided to take up an enticing offer from a rich Egyptian family before Joan was born.

John's parents had retired from Lincoln to Worthing on the Sussex coast, and after Molly had found a small furnished house a few streets away from them, and seen Kate and the children settled in there, she returned in 1915 to her husband in Cairo. She found the city already overrun by a huge army hospital, receiving casualties from Gallipoli. Her sister Dolly had come to Cairo as a volunteer nurse (VAD). Her younger brother Ivo was also there: although happily married to Kit, and settled as a clergyman in her family parish in Norfolk, he had volunteered for service in the Dardanelles war and seemed to be the city's only chaplain, with "whole of Cairo and the hospital as his parish," as Dolly put it, writing to her mother (DAH to GEH, 1915). Ivo subsequently returned to France where he was killed.

In 1916 Molly and John at last moved to the Sudan, where he was to become Director of the Gordon College in Khartoum. He was engaged in wartime intelligence work on the Red Sea coast and on briefing trips to Cairo, while Molly, apart from one rush visit to England in the middle of the war years, was left in the city without her

children to occupy her. At once she became immersed in the life of the local women. Two short publications from this period, "The Handspinning of cotton in the Sudan" and "Spinning and weaving in the Sudan for Sudan Notes and Records (Bib. 2 &3) reflect these contacts. She became a proficient weaver herself, learning to weave cotton on their primitive looms. For the first time, she was able to understand and describe the Sudanese ground-loom, knowledge that became so important for later study of the paintings and models of weaving from Pharaonic tombs. After the birth of a fourth daughter, Diana, In 1918, they decided regretfully they would give up hoping for a boy, and completed their family (Sudanese friends would confide to her their admiration of a husband who, in such circumstances, did not take a second wife to provide him with a son and heir).

At the end of the war Molly and John returned with the new baby to England, and at last were able to collect the children together and set up as a family, staying at first in rented houses outside Worthing where the two older girls could go to local schools. Molly was able to visit the nearby hand-weaving communities, becoming friendly with Mrs. Ethel Mairet at Ditchling, to whom she later sent as student a young niece, Joyce Griffiths, became well-known as a weaver of beautiful wall-hangings. Under Mrs. Mairet's influence Molly learnt much about texture and dyeing; still careless about fashion, she enjoyed dressing herself and the children in 'magyar' -cut garments of handwoven vegetable-dyed wools and cottons.

When John returned to the Sudan she felt she had to stay on in England with the children for a little longer. She took them to Nettleham for most of a year, educating them there herself, with the addition of two young cousins from Lincoln: wonderful lessons -- botany, poetry and history, in which they made and illustrated their own books, and geography, building maps of mud and sand on the greenhouse floor. But when John was next back on leave they began to look for a house to use as a permanent English base. John's father had come from Beccles, a small market-town on the river border between Norfolk and Suffolk, and he had happy memories of the area, often staying there

with his grandfather. The house they chose locally known as the Old House, which from 1921 became their home when in England for the rest of their lives, was in a village, Geldeston, on the Norfolk side of the river.

The local 'Hall' was lent to a series of tenants. The brewing family who had for years ruled the village, and given it a school, was only represented by one very elderly lady; and the parish, with an ex-army rector, had been joined with another better-endowed; Molly, now a keen (and lifelong) member of the new Labour Party, very soon found herself involved with running the village, active on the Parochial Church Council and Women's Institute. With the children, she organized 'Brownies' and, as the family grew up, 'Guides' for the girls. Living close to a branch of the river, she insisted on teaching all the girls in the village whose mothers would allow them, to swim; before her time only the boys (who were furious at the intrusion) had ever gone into the water.

All her brothers were dead - - Edward, a colonel in the regular army, and Ivo, killed in France, and Martin, the youngest captain in the navy, dying in a hospital in England; the only survivor, Allan, wounded and gassed on the Somme, at home in London with his mother and sister, died later, soon after the move to Geldeston. With these losses and the horrors of war still ever present in their minds, she and her sister Dolly became enthusiastic members of the League of Nations Union, going to early meetings in Geneva. One of her first efforts in the village, still happily remembered by a few now elderly survivors, was to write and produce a pageant-play, involving all the local children, symbolic of the war and its ending, with 'Peace' bringing the nations -- the quarrelling children -- together at last in friendship.

In the manner of colonial wives, Molly often had to choose between her husband and her children. She stayed in England for another year, but when the two elder girls went to the very good grammar school in Beccles, they were able to lodge with friends or relatives in the town, gladly bicycling in from Geldeston when she and Joan came back for the summer. Late in 1923 Dorothy and Joan were allowed to visit the Sudan. They

were present when Molly first saw and admired a Sudanese camel-girth, in the tent of the religious leader, Sherif Yusuf. She at once presented her with it and when she asked how it was made, sent for the weaver from the village, Sitt Zeinab, who rode into Khartoum on her camel and set up her loom to teach Molly the patterned double weave that she published later (Bib. 43, 57). The two younger girls went to boarding school and family reunions were mainly with Molly coming for short visits to Geldeston at Christmas, and sometimes all together for summer leaves, often driving up to Nettleham. Motor cars were not her favourite transport -- she no longer rode horses, though her management of a runaway camel had been admired by Sudanese friends (Babikr Bedri, 1980, 207-8), but somehow she managed to learn to drive a car when it clearly became an unloved necessity.

There does not seem to be any record of when Molly first met Henry Ling Roth, honorary curator of the Bankfield Museum at Halifax, Yorkshire. It is possible that she first saw the museum on her honeymoon, when she and John stayed peacefully in a family friend's shooting lodge, not far off on the moors at Agden. This small museum contains a very valuable collection of ethnic material connected with textiles from all over the world, which Ling Roth was describing and publishing in a series of studies of 'Primitive Looms'. Molly's next two publications were written with his collaboration. It was natural that she should offer their paper 'Models of Egyptian Looms' (Bib. 4) to Petrie for his journal for the Egypt Exploration Society, Ancient Egypt. In this article the paintings of weaving scenes from Ancient Egyptian tombs were examined with the aid of a model of a weaving-room recently discovered by Winlock and Burrton, and the smaller model previously found by Garstang. Molly's practical knowledge of the Sudanese ground-loom helped to establish that the looms in the tomb drawings, instead of being the upright constructions previously imagined, had all clearly been similar in structure to the ground-loom found in the Sudan and among the Beduin in Egypt, and the implements shown with them in the models were identical with those still in use.

The second joint paper with Ling Roth, published in the Liverpool Annals of Archaeology and Anthropology, two years later (Bib. 5) was her first to discuss tablet-weaving, a craft on which she did so much later work. This technique (Brettchenweberei, tissage a cartons) used for production of decorative braids, was first studied and fully described by Margrethe Lehmann-Filhes (Ueber Brettchenweberei, Berlin, 1901) though it had been known for many centuries in parts of Europe and is still widely employed in the Middle East. Enthusiasts for it became convinced that it must also have been known to the Ancient Egyptians, and many attempts had been made to reproduce one of the most famous woven pieces, the Girdle of Rameses III (now at Liverpool) by this means. In their paper Molly and Ling Roth disproved this (Bib. 5) giving the correct weave analysis and exposing mistakes in other attempts to reproduce the Girdle; a reproduction of part of the pattern area, woven by Molly using the primitive Egyptian loom with rod heddles, is preserved in the Bankfield Museum. Recent examination of the girdle at Liverpool by Potor Collingwood has confirmed the correctness of this reproduction, and the incorrectness of the numerous table-woven attempts (Collingwood, Techniques of Tablet-weaving, 1982, 406-411). But in proving the girdle not to be tablet-woven, Molly became fascinated by the craft, and over succeeding years identified and reproduced many different archeological finds, including a band she examined for Petrie from Qau-el-Kebir (Bib. 6), and many later European fragments, ranging from Anglo-Saxon and mediaeval remains on brooches and buckles from graves (Bib. 44, 47, 48, 52), to the tiny gold decorated braids used as edgings on the relics of St. Cuthbert in Durham Cathedral (Bib. 29, 58). In latter years, when owing to rheumatism she found sitting at a loom tiring, the small light frame needed for tablet-weaving, and the tiny weight of the final pieces made it a craft that she could still use with pleasure.

To the end, assisted by practicing on the piano, she preserved her extreme manual dexterity and ability to master difficult techniques, making correct reproductions, by which she could see at once if the suggested methods of production could be right. If she

found a technique being poorly used, she could sometimes work out why the illogical method was preferred to the logical; if the explanation was only 'that's how my grandmother did it,' she could put herself into the grandmother's mind, and often discover why perhaps the older generation had preferred to use a method that to the modern mind was clearly not the best. Her technical ability was phenomenal, and her archaeological studies had often the advantage of being reinforced by and contrasted with her anthropological observations. In what is probably her most consulted paper, the booklet written for Ling Roth's Bankfield Museum Notes, Methods of hand-spinning in Egypt and the Sudan (Bib. 9, 1931, since reprinted) she points out, speaking of evolution, "The new does not always slay the old, and some most primitive method of making thread may survive for some special. use, surrounded by methods of superior culture."

Throughout the Sudan years her interest in botany continued, but she realized that photography could never safely replace the accuracy of line drawing. Assisted by enthusiastic Sudanese friends she collected and drew every flower they could find, producing her most important work, the illustrations to the Sudan Flora, Flowering Plants of the Northern and Central Sudan (Bib. 8). When she realized that the text for which these fine botanical drawings were made might unfortunately never be written by the botanist commissioned, she had the volume published at her own expense in England in 1928, so that the drawings at least would be available for reference, and was able to give copies to some interested museums and universities (The original drawings and dried collections were given to the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew near London).

John's time for excavation in the Sudan had been limited, but on his retirement in 1926 the immediate offer of the Directorship of the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem brought a welcome return to archaeology, and the move to Palestine again opened up another field. During the years of his appointment in Jerusalem he was in charge of a series of important excavations – at Samaria-Sebaste, from 1931-3 and again

in 1935; on Ophel (Crowfoot, PEFQS, 1927, 1928, 1929) and on early Christian churches in Gerasa (Jerash) in TransJordan, on which he gave the 1937 Schweich Lectures for the British Academy (Crowfoot, 1941). All his excavations, including Samaria and representatives from the Palestine Exploration Fund, the British Academy, the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem, Harvard and Yale Universities, and he was admired by all who worked with him for his tact and skill in handling a team of archaeologists with very diverse trainings and qualifications. The organization of the domestic side of the excavations fell on Molly, as wife of the Director, and is best described by Kathleen Kenyon, who joined the team at the beginning of the first season at Samaria: "When I arrived, the camp was set up and all the organization in being. It was typical of Mrs. Crowfoot that it was not till long afterwards I realized what this all implied; domestic arrangements all running so smoothly that one took them for granted, everything in order for the recording and examination of finds, a warm welcome for all newcomers, and all with a minimum of fuss. She was the ideal coadjutor for a Director of Excavations. Not only did she undertake most of the routine organization at the dig headquarters, both archeological and domestic, but she was a first-class archaeologist herself." The combination of her eye for form, and her mastery of the technical details of production were brought to bear on every section of the finds, including those for which no recognized specialist could be included on the staff-- lamps, glassware, late Roman and Arab poetry and, naturally, any spinning tools, whorls and loom weights. "Whereas her husband was concerned with the broad interpretation of history and structures," Kathleen Kenyon wrote, "Molly was prepared to devote endless time and trouble to the minutiae. As a colleague, she was exacting. She had an absolutely amazing memory for details. If one attempted to argue a point without all the facts at one's finger-tips, one was immediately flattened. But one could not feel any resentment, for she was almost always right, and when one could produce an effective answer, she always accepted it. Above all, her enthusiasm was infectious. Years of labour on meticulously exacting and minute

studies never dimmed her interest, which she could pass on to all working with her,” (Obituary, PEQ, 1957, 54).

Three of her daughters were able to get to Palestine and assist on excavations. Dorothy, reading chemistry at Somerville College, Oxford (later a Professor, awarded the Nobel Prize for Chemistry in 1964), drew mosaics at Jerash; Joan, originally following the Crowfoot medical tradition, but invalidated out of medical school with eye trouble, found the beginning of her true archaeological career at Samaria, later in the Egyptian Department at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford; and Diana, afterwards involved in the very distant Canadian arctic as wife of the archaeologist Graham W. Rowley, visited her parents on site while on holiday from school.

The first volume on Samaria appeared before John's retirement from Palestine (Samaria-Sebaste II: Earl Ivories, 1938, Bib 26). This was John and Molly's joint report on the ivory carvings, fragments of decoration from furniture, surviving perhaps from the 'ivory house that Ahab built' (I Kings 12:39). Publication of subsequent volumes was spread over some years after John retired from the Directorship in 1938 and they returned to live in England. Samaria Sebaste I: The Buildings by J.W. Crowfoot with K.M. Kenyon and E.L. Sukenik, was delayed by the outbreak of war, but came out in 1942; publication of vol III, The Objects (Bib. 59) was a collaboration with K.M. Kenyon which was further delayed by financial difficulties, and Dr. Kenyon's other commitments. It did not appear till after Molly's death in 1957, with some assistance from a Memorial Fund in her memory.

During the early Palestine years a new and important friendship had again involved her in botanical and folklore studies. The Baldensperger family came to Palestine as missionaries in 1848 from Alsace, France, and settled outside Jerusalem in the village of Artas, traditionally the site of Solomon's garden; their daughter Louise and

her brothers still lived there, working as travelling beekeepers and collecting wild plants for schools and herbaria. Molly was introduced to Louise and immediately recognized a kindred spirit. Together they planned “to gather up all we could of the plant folklore and write it down”; after two short papers (Bib. 10, 11) on special plants, the result was their book From Cedar to Hyssop (Bib. 13), a selection of drawings of Palestine flowers (Bib. 16) published by Molly, followed in later years by two collections of “Folk Tales of Artas” (Bib. 45, 46) in the Palestine Exploration Quarterly.

During the breaks whenever they had been in England, Molly had found herself in demand by the editors of archaeological magazines. Naturally, Petrie’s Ancient Egypt had a claim, and in 1933 she wrote two pieces there—about one of the few textile pieces brought back by her grandfather, an interesting possibly Pharaonic fragment that she gave to the Victoria and Albert Museum (Bib. 15), and on a famous painting of a mat-weaver in the tomb of Khety (Bib. 18), which could be related to methods of mat-making still in use in Egypt. She had already been involved in short papers for the Palestine Exploration Fund, on special types of pottery and glass vessels (Bib. 12, 14, 22, 30) and a description of the mat-weavers on Lake Huleh (Bib. 19). AN important paper produced with Professor Llewellyn Griffiths in the Journal of Egyptian Archaeology (Bib. 20) drew attention to the ancient production of cotton in the kingdom of Meroe in the Sudan (so well-confirmed by excavations during the Nile Valley rescue expeditions of the 1970s and 1980s, on which her daughter Elisabeth was in charge of textile finds). A study of Coptic reversible pattern weaves, written with her niece Joyce Griffiths appeared later in the same journal (Bib. 28). Visits to mission schools near Jerusalem, where efforts were being made to preserve the wealth of embroidery techniques used in the Arab villages, had led to studies of the embroidery of Ramallah (Bib. 21) and Bethlehem (Bib. 23) with Phyllis Sutton of the Embroiderers’ Guild in their magazine Embroidery, followed many years later by a study of the Northern Sudanese embroidery (Bib. 40). A paper in the

Liverpool Annals drew attention to the value of impressions on pot bases, sometimes before ignored, from which practice used in the Chalcolithic period at Jericho could be identified by anyone with a knowledge of present Palestinian village basketry and matting techniques (Bib. 27).

War again intervened, but now in the English countryside -- with John in charge of Air-Raid Wardens. Molly at first received and distributed a flood of children evacuated from London to homes in the village until someone in authority noticed that Geldeston came within the ten-mile coastal belt and most of them were hastily, and often unwillingly, removed to greater safety inland. Later she had to sort out the problems of 'land-girls,' young women trained to replace enlisted farm-workers, who frequently clashed with the farmer's wives. The textile finds from the Sutton Hoo Ship burial, which she was about to visit the week war was declared, were boxed and hastily packed away.

But all the time her mind took refuge in earlier archaeological problems, hoping for the chance of post-war publication of material she had collected of life in the Middle East. Realizing how often progress could be the excuse for destroying earlier techniques, on every opportunity she had noted, drawn and photographed. Even before peace was finally established she was returning to a much earlier unfinished problem. When the burial of Tutankhamun was discovered she had seen some of the textiles, brought from the tomb to the museum in Cairo in the 1920s. They were in poor condition, already put under glass. Nothing had been published apart from notes made by Rudolf Pfister in 1937, and he had not been allowed to open the glass cases. In 1940 Mrs. Guy Brunton was asked to examine one of the tunics (textile 642, found in Box 367). Her drawings of the embroidered panels were sent to Molly and these, together with Molly's original observations and Howard Carter's notes, were at last published in a joint paper with N. de G. Daves in the Journal of Egyptian Archaeology (Bib. 32).

Now the short papers on Palestine and Sudan crafts (Bib 31 34-36, 43) could be prepared and sent for publication, though once her presence in the area became

known requests for help with local material began to arrive, and these were soon interspersed with reports on the flow of fragments, again tablet-weaves from rescue sites and museums in England and Scotland (Bib 33, 37-9, 55, 61). Though beginning to be troubled with increasing tiredness and difficulty in breathing, she was unable to resist the request to write the chapter on 'Textiles and Basketry' in Charles Singer's new History of Technology for ICI (Bib. 53).

Contact with the Middle East was once more unexpectedly established, when the discovery of the 'Dead sea Scrolls' took the world by surprise. Gerald Lankester Harding, an old friend and colleague, now Director of Antiquities in Jordan, arrived at Geldeston, bringing with him the familiar smell of Egyptian tombs from a box full of textile fragments, his clearing up of the Qumran cave after the scrolls had been stolen and sold. On these she produced a preliminary report in the Palestine Quarterly (Bib. 42), though the full report (Bib. 54) did not appear before her death. It had been finally diagnosed that her tiredness was not only due to age. Tuberculosis, complicated by leukaemia, was identified; in spite of treatment which seemed to have eradicated the tuberculosis, she died from the leukaemia in 1957, just short of her 80th birthday. During her illness she was able to see and comment on textiles brought back from other cave findings at Wadi Muraba'at in Jordan, but that report, and full examination of the delayed Sutton Hoo material, had to be completed after she was gone.

Archaeological study in the textile field has developed widely since her death, and particularly in ways of which she would have approved. The rise, during her last years, of a generation of seriously trained women textile archaeologists was a great joy; her encouragement of Audrey Henshall in Scotland, and her admiration for the superb work of German and Scandinavian scholars, particularly Margrethe Hald in Denmark and Agnes Geijer in Sweden, both of whom she was able to know personally before her final illness, gave her reassurance that the study was going to continue and expand. She welcomed each new scientific advance, only regretting that such assistance had not been

available earlier -- the development of techniques of dye analysis, which she had eagerly watched and encouraged in the pioneering work of her admired friend Rudolf Pfister; and the new methods available in the study of fibres, of particular interest to such a skilled spinner and weaver. She was allowed one final excitement when, in her last months, she was able to include the result of an early archaeological use of radiocarbon testing, on the textile fragments from the Qumran Cave (Bib. 54). At the same time, she had not lost interest in the Sudan and its women and was dismayed, though not surprised, at contemporary reports that female genital mutilation was being reintroduced there.

Some of Molly's unique quality is perhaps conveyed in the final paragraph of the obituary by Kathleen Kenyon:

“I have two last memories. One is of the last lecture I heard her give. It was to the Palestine Exploration Fund on the textiles from Qumran. The subject was technical in the extreme, and one on which her audience had no expert knowledge. But her enthusiasm was such that she held us for every minute of the lecture. The second memory is of the last time I saw her. Already a very sick woman, she still was able to discuss the final details of the third Samaria volume with all her old flair and energy, and still with an absolutely clear recollection of all the material even when she had handled it for years. She was a very great woman, but the note on which I would prefer to end is that of the affection she inspired.”

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