

Winifred Needler 1904 -1987

By Sally L. D. Katary

Winifred Ellen Needler was born on June 14, 1904, in Weimar, Germany, the middle child and second daughter of Professor George Henry Needler of the German Department of the University of Toronto and his wife Mary Winifred (née Chisholm). Her father was at that time pursuing research in Germany on a leave of absence from the University. She became the younger sister of three year-old Mary Craig Needler and, in two years' time, the older sister of Alfred W.H. Needler, who was born in Huntsville, Ontario after the family's return from Germany. Winifred Needler's chance birth in Germany, where the family spent the winter before her birth and one more year, would prove a factor in the course her life would take in Canadian Egyptology more than thirty years later.

The roots of the Needler family go back far in Ontario history. The Needler family immigrated to Canada from Great Britain and were of Scottish and English ancestry. In the early nineteenth century, Needler and Stewart ancestors settled south of Peterborough, Ontario where Winifred Needler's great grandfather built a mill. Later on, a second mill was built under the family's direction at a new site, and this second Needler mill gave the community of Millbrook its name. This mill would remain under the family's direction into the next generation as Millbrook grew in size and prosperity. The Chisholm family settled in the area of Port Hope and later Kitchener (formerly Berlin) where Winifred's maternal grandfather Duncan Chisholm practiced law and became a judge, eventually returning to Port Hope.

In 1885 George Henry Needler was a corporal in the University's Company of the Queen's Own Rifles during the Riel North-West Rebellion. Although he did not himself see much fighting, Needler wrote an account in verse of the regiment's trip out west to Battleford, Saskatchewan to assist government troops that had been attacked by Poundmaker's Crees. The defeat of Louis Riel and his Métis and Native supporters came shortly thereafter in the battle of Batoche. Needler passed on his lifelong fascination with the 1885 North-West Rebellion to his children. Daughter Winifred was especially proud of her father's poem and his involvement in these historic events. Elspeth Chisholm, a first cousin of Winifred, used Professor Needler's recollections of his experiences in the North-West Rebellion as material for a radio documentary when Needler was a very old man.

George Henry Needler began his academic career in 1891 as a professor in the German Department of the University of Toronto. He eventually became Chair of the Department before his retirement in 1936. In 1899, when he was well-established at the University, he married Mary Winifred Chisholm.

Mary Chisholm Needler was a very capable, determined woman who trained in Boston as a nurse under her uncle's sponsorship because her father strongly disapproved of her desire for a career in nursing. After her marriage, she supported her husband's academic career by assisting him in his work however she could. Together, the Needlers traveled in Europe, taking their children with them rather than leaving them in the care of relatives as most families of the day would have done. Thus it was that in 1903, the Needlers traveled to Germany with three year-old Mary in tow. Midway through Professor Needler's stay in Weimar, daughter Winifred Ellen, "Friedel" to the family, came into the world.

At home in Toronto, the Needler family occupied half of a comfortable duplex at 103 Bedford Road in the fashionable Annex area of Toronto. There the Needlers regularly entertained students and faculty on Sunday afternoons. These pleasant afternoon gatherings attracted a full complement of sociable University professors and earnest students and brought Winifred Needler into contact with the academic world from an early age. Her sister Mary Needler Hinde recalls preparing sandwiches for the afternoon gatherings with her mother, a chore from which young Winifred was excused. While mother and Mary passed the sandwiches, Winifred put in her appearances when she felt so inclined. Thus, although Winifred was exposed to a stimulating intellectual environment as a child, it was not forced upon her. She was free to develop her own interests. She was in many ways a typical middle child: independent, strong-willed, and determined with a strong desire to find her own way. She was also a winsome child whose sociability won her friends easily and comeliness caused people remember her well.

Professor Needler and his wife decided to educate their elder daughter Mary at home. Needler made certain that Mary received the traditional classical education of the turn of the century. Greek and Latin classics such as Euripides' plays, Caesar and Tacitus' histories, and the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle were everyday fare. This home study under her parents' guidance proved decisive for Mary's future, since she went on to receive her B.A. and M.A. in Classics at the University of Toronto and her Ph.D. in Classics at the University of Chicago. Mary Needler then went on to a university teaching career in Classics until World War II when she left the University to serve as a cryptographer in the WRENS. Mary Needler Hinde, today a widow, recalls her childhood as "very rich".

Younger brother Alfred had very different interests. Even as a child he showed strong aptitudes for the natural sciences. As a result, his parents provided him with a prep school education that was the first step toward his Ph.D. in biology at the University of Toronto. These studies led him to a highly successful career as a marine biologist and Deputy Minister of Fisheries (and Forestry), Canada which earned him many honors, including an O.B.E., the Order of Canada (CM), and two honorary doctorates.

Young Winifred followed a different path. Unlike her sister Mary, Winifred was sent to private schools in large part because her interests were not the kind that could be satisfied at home with her parents as tutors. Thus, Winifred was enrolled at St. Margaret's College in Toronto until it closed. She was then sent to Oakwood Collegiate Institute where, her sister recalls, an English teacher inspired in her a love of literature. Upon graduation, she pursued a B.A. degree at University College in the University of Toronto where she majored in modern languages and philosophy, obtaining First Class Honors in the first three years and Second Class Honors in the fourth year. She graduated with a facility with German, French, and Italian, languages that would benefit her greatly in the field of Egyptian art and archaeology.

Upon graduation in 1926, Winifred Needler spent a year studying at the Ontario College of Art where she honed the artistic talent she had displayed from her early childhood years. A year at the Ontario College of Art was followed by a year in which she worked as a librarian with the

responsibility of translating and writing medical abstracts in the Department of Pathology at the University of Toronto.

In 1928 Needler began two years of study at the School of Fine Arts and Crafts in Boston, Massachusetts. Boston offered rich cultural fare for a student of art and was home to the great Boston Museum of Fine Arts with its splendid Egyptian collection. At this time, Mary Needler was teaching Classics at nearby Wellesley College. While a student at the School of Fine Arts and Crafts, Winifred Needler won prizes in several categories, including life drawing, pen and ink, and "historic ornament".

Completion of the program in Boston led to five years of working as a freelance commercial artist, interspersed with some teaching and travel. The economic conditions of the Depression did not, however, make it possible for her to make a living as a commercial artist. It was necessary to find other, steadier, employment. Fortunately for Canadian Egyptology, an opportunity presented itself at the Royal Ontario Museum of Archaeology.

In 1935 Winifred Needler was hired as a draftsman and cataloguer for the Royal Ontario Museum of Archaeology by Charles Trick Currelly, the first director of the Museum. There she joined Katharine B. Maw (later Brett) and Dorothy Macdonald (later Burnham), both of whom in time became keepers of the textile collection at the Museum. Mary Needler was instrumental in obtaining this position for her sister through Museum lecturer and guide Ruth Home. Needler's artistic abilities and passion for order and organization made her an ideal candidate to draw specimens for Museum file cards. Thus, at the age of thirty-one she had finally embarked on the first stage of a long and fruitful career at Canada's premier museum of art and archaeology.

Over the next three years Needler convinced Currelly of her special interest in Egypt and was permitted to concentrate on the Egyptian collection and to guide gallery tours. Her work involved getting to know the Egyptian collection, including both items on display and items retained in storage. The Egyptian collection was and would continue to be for many years the largest and arguably the most popular of the Near Eastern collections.

The core of the permanent collection of Egyptian antiquities at the Royal Ontario Museum was in large part collected by Currelly in the years 1902-08 in collaboration with the British Egypt Exploration Society (EES). Over these years such well-known archaeologists as Howard Carter, Bernard Grenfell, John Garstang, George Wainwright, and Guy Brunton were involved with EES excavations that brought them into contact with William Matthew Flinders Petrie, the pre-eminent British Egyptologist of his day. It was Petrie's custom to surround himself with bright young archaeology students whom he personally trained as his assistants and gave experience to on his expeditions. When Currelly met Petrie as a result of a trip to the British Museum to have some Roman coins examined, the Egyptologist recognized qualities in Currelly that would make him an outstanding associate. Petrie's special interest in the young Canadian led to his participation in three of Petrie's expeditions to Egypt, on behalf of Victoria College, Toronto of which Currelly was a graduate. Years later Needler gave Petrie credit for stimulating Currelly's "shrewd attitude toward

the infant science of archaeology, his deep interest in the technical aspects of everyday objects, and his genius for collecting..." (The Canadian Forum, June 1953, p. 62).

On Petrie's expeditions to Abydos in 1902-03, Ehnasya in 1903-04, and Sinai in 1904-05, Currelly collected a large number of artifacts which eventually made their way into the Royal Ontario Museum. When the Museum came into being in 1906, Currelly was named "Collector for the University of Toronto Museum" in recognition of his seminal role in determining the character of the Museum. The erstwhile theology student then began to officially acquire Egyptian antiquities on behalf of the University of Toronto.

Over the years 1905-07, Currelly worked at Deir el-Bahri on the West bank across from ancient Thebes in excavations of the Egypt Exploration Fund under the direction of Édouard Naville and H.R. Hall. Over these years he acquired many fine reliefs from the Eleventh Dynasty temple of Nebhepetre Mentuhotpe. While at Deir el-Bahri, Currelly demonstrated extraordinary abilities as a museum fund-raiser when he obtained donations from two wealthy patrons to make casts of the Journey to Punt scene from Hatshepsut's temple at Deir el-Bahri. Currelly would also be instrumental in obtaining financial support for the Museum from the generous English chemist, Sir Robert Mond. From 1907-09, Currelly actively pursued the enlargement of the Egyptian collection through purchase on a large scale in both Cairo and Luxor. Then, in 1909, as the result of Currelly's involvement with other collections of the Museum, the Egyptian collection remained dormant for many years. It would not increase sizeably until large scale purchasing began again in 1949 under Needler's direction.

During the six years Currelly spent excavating in Egypt, so many artifacts were acquired for the new Museum that the staff could not keep up with the acquisitions. The end result was the accumulation of a wide variety of items, most of which lacked documentation. When Needler was hired by Currelly to record the collection, it was a Herculean task to which she dedicated herself with characteristic enthusiasm and unflagging diligence. In later years Needler would serve as an eloquent spokesperson for the Egyptian collection acquired by Currelly, pointing out that "...it shows the early beginnings of industries, fashions and daily activities which are still current in Western civilization." (Connoisseur, Oct. 1967, p. 95) She paid particular tribute to Currelly as the guiding spirit behind the Egyptian collection and indeed the Museum itself when she wrote that, "Both owe their existence in large measure to the knowledge, vision and persuasive powers of a great museum man, Dr. C.T. Currelly." (Ibid., p. 95)

There is no doubt that at this early stage in her career, Needler was inspired both by the antiquities to which she was irresistibly drawn and the extraordinary personality who played such a crucial role in the creation of the Royal Ontario Museum. That Currelly lacked professional training in the museum field did not in any way diminish Needler's respect and admiration for the towering figure whose brilliant mind, charm, and zeal impressed both scholars and benefactors alike.

In 1938, Needler's dedication to the Egyptian Collection was recognized with the award of a Carnegie Fellowship that permitted her to study at Yale University. There she spent one year doing graduate work in art and archaeology on a leave of absence from the Royal Ontario Museum. At

Yale Needler completed a standard first year course in Middle Egyptian hieroglyphic under Professor Ludlow Bull of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York; a museum methodology course under Professor Theodore Sizer of the Yale Department of Fine Arts; a seminar on world prehistory under Professor Cornelius Osgood of the Yale Department of Anthropology; and a course in Hellenistic civilization with the renowned Classicist M.I. Rostovtzeff. Needler later wrote of her great enjoyment of her year's study at Yale despite the anti-German sentiment she encountered which affected her directly because of her birth in Germany.

When Needler was unable to remain at Yale for the second year of residence required for the M.A. degree, Rostovtzeff expressed willingness and enthusiasm to have the paper she wrote for him on the Ptolemaic sculpture in the Yale Gallery accepted as a thesis for the degree. A letter from Rostovtzeff, dated October 13, 1939, praising her work, which he found of great interest and worthy of publication, makes explicit mention of the acceptability of the paper as a Yale Master's thesis. Rostovtzeff thought so highly of Needler's scholarship that he mentioned the paper in his Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World (1941). Rostovtzeff's recognition of Needler's potential early on in her museum career certainly contributed to her own conviction that she had at last found an appropriate niche for herself at the Royal Ontario Museum.

Had Needler been able to remain in New Haven and complete a M.A. degree at Yale, it is conceivable that she might have gone on to complete a Ph.D. there. This, in turn, might have led her to undertake a career as a museum curator in the United States where there were more opportunities for advancement at well-funded museums than at home in Canada. In 1939, however, it was still possible for a person with ability to learn the museum field through hands-on experience. One or more advanced degrees would have been a definite asset but not yet a necessary qualification for curatorial work. A decade or so later when curatorial positions around the world began to attract increasing numbers of Ph.D.s more interested in research than university teaching, Needler was able to hold her own without the degree. Although she maintained that advanced degrees were not essential in her job, she was certainly conscious of the pressures brought to bear upon museum administrators to hire curators with such qualifications. Had Needler been hired as a draftsman/cataloguer after the end of World War II, however, her museum career might have been very different.

Needler was fortunate in having been hired as an assistant to a museum director who had come to his own position in a roundabout way. Currelly was a man who possessed the genius to recognize genuine ability in others and provide those individuals with career opportunities despite a lack of formal training. Not only did Currelly hire Needler in the first place; he also recommended her for the Carnegie Fellowship and gave her the necessary leave of absence to pursue advanced study. Needler's career was also shaped by outside forces beyond her control.

In anticipation of Canada's involvement in World War II, the provincial government in Toronto found it necessary in 1939 to reduce the subsidy it provided the Royal Ontario Museum of Archaeology. The cuts to the Museum budget led to the resignations of some staff members. Still others left the Museum to join the armed forces. These staff reductions caused Currelly to postpone the retirement he had contemplated taking in 1939. Fortunately, Currelly was able to cope with

these problems because he could rely on women such as Dorothy Macdonald and Winifred Needler who had begun as draftspersons and cataloguers during the 1930s. By 1936 Dorothy Macdonald had become chief cataloguer with special interest in the textile collection. Winifred Needler had less experience, but had spent three years working under Currelly's guidance prior to the commencement of her graduate work at Yale. Upon her return to Toronto in 1939, Needler resumed her museum duties. She set about systematically organizing, identifying, and classifying the impressive Near Eastern antiquities, largely collected by Currelly, with the assistance of a five thousand dollar grant.

The Museum's massive but disorganized and unstudied Egyptian collection occupied a great deal of Needler's time. She did not waste any time transforming this collection into a well-documented, carefully arranged exhibit that provides an excellent introduction to the civilization of ancient Egypt. Even in these early days, Needler shunned publicity that took valuable time and energy away from the research component of museum work and refrained from involvement in museum politics as much as possible. The collections in her charge, whether Egyptian or Palestinian, Iranian or Islamic, were her primary focus.

Needler also undertook the instruction of occasional groups, including secondary school students, university students, and adults, both in the gallery and in the classroom. These teaching activities came under the auspices of the Education Department of the Museum and provided her first teaching experience. It would not be until 1953 that she would receive a cross-appointment to the University of Toronto as a Special Lecturer in the Department of Fine Art. She would hold this position she held until 1965 when she became an Associate Professor in the Department of Near Eastern Studies until her retirement in 1970.

During the summers of 1941 and 1942, Needler worked with the Museum's field expedition on the excavation of the fortified mission of Ste. Marie, Ontario, under the direction of Kenneth E. Kidd, then Deputy Keeper of Ethnology. There she worked with Margaret Thomson, assistant to Professors Homer A. Thompson (Keeper of the Greek and Roman collections at the Royal Ontario Museum of Archaeology and Professor in the University of Toronto Department of Fine Art) and T.F. McIlwraith (Keeper of the ethnological collections at the Royal Ontario Museum of Archaeology and Associate Director of the Museum). It was Margaret Thomson who identified the famous Indian site of Cahigue in Huronia where Samuel de Champlain passed the winter of 1615. The Ste. Marie excavation provided a pleasant respite from the War effort, and it boded well for the future that Margaret Thomson in 1941 met and eventually married the future director of archaeology for the Museum, A. Douglas Tushingham, a native of nearby Midland, Ontario. This was the beginning of a long and fruitful friendship and professional relationship between Winifred Needler and the Tushinghams.

Over the year 1943-44, Needler undertook the design and execution of a painted mural for the Museum's Second Egyptian Gallery. The Egyptian mural is testimony to the merit of having as curator a scholar with accomplishments in fine art. Needler eagerly embraced the challenge of creating a frieze 42 inches in width and 82 feet long to run around three sides of the Second Egyptian Gallery directly above the wall cases. She designed the main panel to illustrate ancient Egyptian arts and crafts with some sixty figures of men as well as animals adapted from ancient

tomb paintings. The intention was to capture the natural colors and style of Middle Kingdom and Eighteenth Dynasty (New Kingdom) originals without either slavishly copying originals or engaging in "undue freedom of interpretation." (University of Toronto Monthly, February 1945, p. 125)

Above the main panel, a narrow upper panel provides a continuous band of elaborate ornamental hieroglyphic headings which describe the scenes in the main panel. A lower panel provides corresponding English captions for the hieroglyphic headings in plain block letters and includes thirty-nine different Egyptian ornamental motifs as the top and border decoration for this panel. While the hieroglyphic panel illustrates an important element in Egyptian mural art, it was also intended to benefit art students and to familiarize the public with Egyptian characters, many of which are pictorial. Needler rationalized the project in a letter to Ludlow Bull (11 February 1944) on the grounds that the Egyptian collection "is often fragmentary...has wide gaps historically, and is weak in sculpture (and also, of course, in architecture)." She explained that despite these shortcomings, the collection "contains much fascinating material, which needs illustration to supplement it and make it attractive and comprehensible to the public, and give it continuity."

Before undertaking the ambitious project, Needler wrote to Ludlow Bull, at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, for his assistance in rendering the thirty-nine English captions into Egyptian hieroglyphic. This appeal for expert assistance was in keeping with her scrupulous attention to detail. Insecure about her ability to do justice to the captions on the basis of only one year's study of Egyptian language, she did not hesitate to ask someone who could render the assistance she needed. It would have been unthinkable for Needler to claim expertise she did not possess. Needler sent her attempts to translate the captions to Professor Bull with apologies for the inadequacies of her efforts.

The following summer, Bull wrote to Needler that he had seen photographs of the murals and that they represent a "splendid job...wonderfully true to the originals and very interesting for visitors to your museum." (3 August 1945) He could not compliment his former student enough for planning and carrying out the project herself, including the finely executed painting. The mural is a good example of the kind of credible display that Needler believed enhances the objects displayed. Although the mural is not at present on display in the Museum, it has been retained in storage.

The wall mural project furnishes an early example of a character trait which was to characterize Needler's entire museum career: a tendency toward self-depreciation beyond what is dictated by simple modesty. Needler was ever apologetic for shortcomings real or imaginary. Despite her accomplishments in organizing and meticulously documenting the Egyptian collection, she remained perhaps excessively deferential to her colleagues, at home and at other institutions, most of whom were men. Needler was well aware that Egyptology was still very much a man's profession and that museums, as a rule, preferred men to head departments. Even when she had reached the position of curator, the tendency to belittle her own abilities and the quality of her work remained very much an integral part of her character to the frustration of colleagues and friends. This character trait was wedded to an equally strong firmness of resolve and perfectionism that enabled her to cope well in a field largely dominated by supremely confident men.

There is no doubt that Needler was fortunate in beginning her museum career at an institution like the Royal Ontario Museum with its history of hiring and advancing highly capable women curators from its early days. At a time when relatively few women held curatorial positions in North American museums, the Royal Ontario Museum had already made its mark as an institution receptive to and supportive of the aspirations of women scholars such as Winifred Needler.

About the same time that Needler was embarking on her Egyptian mural, she began a lifelong friendship with Mrs. Elizabeth T. Riefstahl (1889-1986) who was at that time the Librarian of the Wilbour Library of Egyptology at The Brooklyn Museum in Brooklyn, New York. Early on Mrs. Riefstahl was indefatigable in her attention to Needler's numerous enquiries about books as she worked to fill gaps in the Museum library. Soon, however, the two women were corresponding regularly about more technical Egyptological matters, a reflection of Riefstahl's growing expertise in Egyptology that would lead to her appointment as Associate Curator by 1956 when she retired.

In company with many younger Egyptologists, Needler found Riefstahl not only an authority on Egyptological literature and an able facilitator of research, but also a warm and kindly person in whom she could confide. In September 1945, Needler had the opportunity at long last to continue her study of the Egyptian language with the University of Chicago trained philologist Ronald J. Williams. Williams had returned to his native Toronto in 1944 as Lecturer in Oriental Languages in three colleges of the University of Toronto. Having spent only one year studying Egyptian with Dr. Bull seven years earlier, Needler was anxious about continuing her studies with Williams, in part because she did not feel she had much chance of getting very far with the language, and in part because the younger Williams already had acquired a reputation as a brilliant philologist in both Hebrew and Egyptian.

In a letter to Riefstahl (24 September 1945), Needler confessed her anxiety about her upcoming Egyptian lessons. Riefstahl attempted to encourage Needler, replying that she envied Needler's having the energy to study Egyptian, and confessing that "I should be doing it, but I have never had the courage." (26 September 1945) In the end, Needler completed her lessons with Williams, learning enough to allow her to handle straightforward inscriptions. Since she never considered herself highly skilled in philological matters, she always consulted colleagues with greater facility for the language when she felt out of her depth.

As the years passed, Needler and Riefstahl remained good friends who gave each other moral support and rendered each other assistance in the male dominated museum field where relatively few women up to that time had achieved distinction. Although they followed very different paths to their museum posts, the women shared common bonds. Riefstahl first married and raised a family; Needler, on the other hand, remained single and, save for the care of her elderly widowed father, without domestic distractions. Both women were driven by a strong passion for art and archaeology and were dedicated to making Egyptology accessible both to scholars and the general public.

Early on in Needler's career she realized that the best way to achieve her goal of making the Near Eastern collections accessible and comprehensible to the widest possible audience was by focusing on the basic research necessary for all work with objects in the collections. She emphasized the

systematic recording of relevant information about the collections and their cultural backgrounds made available to the different publics the Museum serves through three types of publications: popular but authoritative articles, guidebooks, and special exhibition catalogues; detailed scholarly works that contribute to the advancement of Near Eastern scholarship; and systematic catalogues of different classes of material (*catalogues raisonnés*). As her publications in all these areas over her thirty-five year museum career strongly attest, Needler not only believed in but acted upon her conviction that "sound research leading to authoritative displays and authoritative publications is the cornerstone of the Museum's future reputation and welfare..." (Near Eastern Department Official Memorandum, 17 October 1959, p. 5) In her publications, therefore, she was meticulous in documenting everything she wrote, backing herself up solidly so that no one could fault the Royal Ontario Museum for slipshod scholarship.

The end of World War II brought changes to the Royal Ontario Museum of Archaeology. After staying on as the Director of the Royal Ontario Museum through the war years, C.T. Currelly decided to retire in 1946. With Currelly's retirement, there was need for both a new director for the Museum and a new curator for the Near Eastern collections to be appointed. Although Winifred Needler had already spent eight years working intensively with the Near Eastern collections directly under Currelly and was therefore his most natural successor, a candidate was chosen from the University of Toronto faculty who was shortly to complete his Ph.D. in Egyptology at the University of Chicago. Thus it came to be that in 1947 Ronald J. Williams was given the official title Keeper of the Near Eastern Collections of the Royal Ontario Museum of Archaeology, a position he held until 1951 when Winifred Needler was promoted to this position from the position of Deputy Keeper she held during Williams' tenure.

The appointment of Ronald J. Williams to the curator's position occurred at a time when the Museum was undergoing reorganization, and the relationship between the University and the Museum was strained. Under these trying circumstances, Williams managed to maintain amicable relations between the two institutions even though his lack of experience as an archaeologist or a specialist in Egyptian art made his position somewhat awkward. His appointment to the top curatorial position was in keeping with the University's desire to fill the senior curatorial posts with scholars who held advanced graduate degrees. Since Needler at that time had not yet completed her M.A. degree and had no immediate plans to do so, Williams better fit the academic profile the Museum had in mind despite his complete lack of museum experience. Since Williams never even maintained an office in the Museum, Needler was in fact, if not in title, the head of the Near Eastern collections.

Four years later in 1951, Needler was finally named Keeper of the Near Eastern Collections after Williams assumed the title of Honorary Curator, a position he held for the next three years. Whatever discomfort may have resulted initially from Williams' official appointment in 1947 as Keeper of the Near Eastern Collections, he and Needler were gradually able to establish a relationship of mutual understanding and co-operation that provided a model for relationships between University faculty and Museum staff in future years.

As Williams prepared to offer the first course in Egyptian language in 1948 and was laying plans for the first undergraduate honours program in Egyptology, Needler had her first opportunity for field work in Egypt. In 1947 Needler obtained a ten-month leave of absence from the Museum to work with Amice M. Calverley (1896-1959) of the Egypt Exploration Society and Professor H.W. Fairman of the University of Liverpool at the temple of Seti I at Abydos. Thus Needler came to participate in the joint recording expedition of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago and the Egypt Exploration Society. Needler's participation in the expedition came under the auspices of the Oriental Institute. Ten months in Egypt copying temple inscriptions and wall paintings as Amice Calverley's assistant was the beginning of a warm friendship between two unmarried women. They recognized in each other kindred souls, perfectly happy to devote their lives completely and tirelessly to the study of Egyptian antiquities and the ancient Egyptian civilization for which they both had such a passion.

Like Winifred Needler, Amice Calverley was a Canadian of English ancestry. An accomplished musician and photographer, Calverley was largely self-taught in her drawing for archaeology. She became interested in Egypt after a stay at Oxford in 1926 when she took up drawing for archaeology on the encouragement of Sir Leonard Woolley. She became associated with the Egypt Exploration Society at this time, and this led to her first trip to Abydos.

Calverley was recruited by A.M. Blackman to undertake a publication in line-drawing of the magnificent reliefs of the great temple of Seti I at Abydos, based upon photographs taken by Herbert Felton. Calverley's extraordinary talents in art and photography readily convinced Alan H. Gardiner and F. Ll. Griffith, the Director and Editor respectively of the Egypt Exploration Society Archaeological Survey, that given Calverley's talents, a more ambitious publication was possible. To this end, James Henry Breasted of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago succeeded in interesting the American financier John D. Rockefeller, Jr. in the Abydos project on a visit there in the winter of 1928-29. With the support of Rockefeller's generous grant, Calverley was able to continue her work at Abydos. She was joined in 1930 by Myrtle Broome, a skilled artist. Calverley spent many years in productive and harmonious collaboration with Myrtle Broome in the Abydos house constructed in 1907 for John Garstang's Liverpool expedition to Abydos. The well-matched team of Calverley and Broome proceeded to turn the Abydos house that had served as field headquarters for the Egypt Exploration Society in the 1920s and 30s into a warm and hospitable home base for students and colleagues who came by to work at Abydos.

World War II interrupted the work at Abydos when Calverley joined the war effort, eventually enlisting in the Air Force and serving as a civilian relief worker with UNRRA in the Mediterranean. From 1947-49 she continued her work on the Abydos inscriptions with Myrtle Broome joined by Winifred Needler as her assistant and British philologist H.W. Fairman.

Ill health and a disagreement with the Egyptian government over a film she took that was allegedly derogatory to Egypt took their toll on Calverley. She found herself with no choice but to prematurely terminate her field work in Egypt. Calverley nevertheless managed to produce four magnificent folio volumes recording the paintings and reliefs of the Abydos temple with funding provided by John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Calverley's The Temples of King Sethos I at Abydos, one of the most

magnificent Egyptological publications of all time, still stands as one of the most remarkable achievements in Egyptology. Volume five of the series was incomplete at her death.

Winifred Needler came to know her brilliant but eccentric compatriot at the peak of Calverley's career when she was immersed in the preparation of her Abydos volumes, happily ensconced in the Abydos house where she also tended her garden. Since Needler's stay at Abydos preceded the misunderstanding with Egyptian authorities, she was able to experience fully Calverley's unique style of work as well as the enthusiasm and joy she brought to the most pedestrian of tasks. Thus, early on in her museum career Needler was exposed to the philosophy and methods of one of the most remarkable figures in Egyptian art and archaeology. In years to come, she counted Amice Calverley as one of her most important mentors. Following her return to Toronto from Egypt in 1948, Needler wrote to John A. Wilson at the University of Chicago, "My year in Egypt was at all times wonderful but I can't imagine a more stimulating and pleasant way to see the country than to live and work with Miss Calverley at Abydos." There are those who remember both women today who have commented on how similar they were in some respects. That they were both strong individualists unafraid to follow their own Muse served to strengthen the bond of friendship between them.

It is not surprising, therefore, that Calverley turned to Needler in 1956 when she needed assistance with some inscriptions at the Abydos temple in order to complete volume four of her Abydos publication. When Calverley needed someone to see to the transport from Egypt of a box containing rolls of tracings and rubbings concerning which she had been extremely anxious, she could count on Needler to attend to the matter for her. That the task was troublesome and inconvenient never fazed Needler who was always quick to render assistance to a colleague in need.

The bond between the two women lasted a lifetime until Calverley's death in 1959 at the age of 64. After Calverley's death, Needler rendered assistance to Captain Hugh Calverley, who was obliged to spend considerable time in Oakville, Ontario sorting out his sister's estate. Needler had hoped to obtain on behalf of the Royal Ontario Museum Calverley's colour transparencies of Egyptian hieroglyphs from the Seti temple as well as some from the temple of Ramesses II for purposes of teaching and research. A letter to the Museum from Captain Calverley after his sister's death communicated his desire that the Museum benefit by receiving items from Amice Calverley's estate since, "We were very fortunate to have been brought up in a world of supremely beautiful things. We owe it to other people, to pass on our good fortune." (19 October 1959)

Despite the strong bond of friendship between Winifred Needler and Amice Calverley which contributed to the close relationship between the Calverley family and the Royal Ontario Museum, the Museum never received the Egyptian transparencies after Calverley's death. In 1962, H.W. Fairman wrote to Needler concerning Calverley's Egyptian transparencies which he understood were in the possession of the Royal Ontario Museum. Needler had to explain that the photographs had never been given to the Museum. They had, in fact, remained with Calverley's niece, Mrs. Sybil Rampen of Oakville, Ontario. When Fairman proposed to publish these photographs as a fitting memorial and tribute to Calverley on behalf of the Egypt Exploration Society, and Mrs. Rampen agreed, Needler welcomed this development. It meant that finally the exquisite photographs would

be available for study to scholars all over the world. Needler had realized that nothing would be gained by disputing rights to the photographs. It was far more important that the photographs be made available in a suitable publication such as Fairman could provide from his experience editing volume 5 of the Abydos temple series left incomplete at Calverley's death.

Winifred Needler's appointment as Keeper of the Near Eastern Collections in 1951 after four years as Deputy Keeper formalized the role she had played even before Currelly's formal retirement in 1946 when he was busy with other work. In the position of curator she had responsibility not only for the Egyptian collection, but also the collections from Western Asia (Iran, Mesopotamia, Syria, and Palestine) and the Islamic world. By 1951, however, the Royal Ontario Museum was experiencing difficult times which directly affected the work of the curatorial staff.

When the Museum was first established in 1912 by an act of the Ontario Legislature, it consisted of five departments each of which was empowered to use the designation Royal Ontario Museum of [name of discipline]. Thus, in addition to the Royal Ontario Museum of Archaeology, which housed the Near Eastern collections under the direction of C.T. Currelly, there were the Royal Ontario museums of Geology, of Mineralogy, of Palaeontology, and Natural History (subsequently changed to Zoology). At this time, representatives from both the University of Toronto and the Province of Ontario shared responsibilities on the board of governors.

Under the Royal Ontario Museum Act of 1947, a new Museum board came under the authority of the University of Toronto board of governors. University representatives, however, showed little interest in Museum affairs. After two years, in light of declining attendance and a low public profile, it became evident that the funding of the Museum was not a top priority for the University. Financial stress compounded with a low morale among ill-paid staff contributed to the deterioration of relations between the Museum and the University of Toronto. Then, late in 1952, when Museum director Gerard Brett found himself increasingly handicapped by multiple sclerosis, the Museum initiated a search for a new director on the advice of Homer Thompson. In the grip of uncertainty about the future and faced with a lack of necessary dynamic leadership, the Royal Ontario Museum was in need of a "makeover".

In October 1953, the president and the board of directors of the Museum called upon their accountants for an analysis of the financial and administrative problems facing the Museum and requested recommendations for their amelioration. The result was the Glassco Report, a document which was in part a historical survey of the origins and development of the Museum and in part a plan for the complete restructuring of the Museum.

The Glassco Report presented to the president of the University of Toronto 29 July 1954 called for the amalgamation of the Royal Ontario Museum of Archaeology, the Royal Ontario Museum of Geology and Mineralogy, and the Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology and Palaeontology into a single institution under the authority of a director responsible for new divisions of Art and Archaeology; Geology and Mineralogy (later Earth Sciences); and Zoology and Palaeontology (later Life Sciences) with Education as a fourth division. The Glassco Report maintained that since the Royal Ontario Museum was and should continue to function as a public museum, the Ontario

government should provide annual operating grants in place of the grants provided by the University. The Museum should, moreover, be governed by a board of directors most of whose members should be appointed by the Ontario government rather than the University. The intention was to ensure a board dedicated to the best interests of the Museum which could not be accused of bias in favour of the University.

The Glassco Report was welcomed by Needler who submitted her own evaluation of its ramifications for the Near Eastern collections. In a "Memorandum Concerning the Near Eastern Collections of the Royal Ontario Museum in Reference to the Glassco Report" (14 January 1955), Needler expressed the opinion that reorganization of the Museum should take the form of

an integrated museum of natural science, in which the Royal Ontario Museum of Archaeology would take its logical place as a large division dealing with the cultural and technological history of man, thus being classed as anthropology in the widest sense of the term. Near Eastern art and archaeology clearly would be essential in such an organization... (p. 1)

She went on to add that the Near Eastern collections, particularly the Egyptian, are especially well-suited to presentation from the anthropological viewpoint since "they offer an excellent illustration of the social and industrial development of mankind from the stone ages to the earliest civilizations, and this potentiality of the material has already been exploited to an unusual degree." (p. 1)

Needler argued against any kind of amalgamation or formal association of the Near Eastern collections with the East Asiatic collections on the grounds that these collections are not logically related and further that specialists in these areas have entirely different training and interests. She further argued that the Near Eastern Department should be administered separately from Old World Archaeology since "(an amalgamation) would undoubtedly diminish its usefulness to the public and interfere with the proper development of its collections." (p. 2) Should financial constraints make it necessary to reduce the number of departments, she continued, she believed the Near Eastern Department would be best combined with European prehistory, on the one hand, and the Greek and Roman collections, on the other hand. This would permit the formation of a new department of Old World Archaeology comparable in size to the East Asiatic Department and the Ethnology Department and independent of the East Asiatic Department. Her carefully reasoned memorandum on the reorganization is typical of the many detailed memoranda Needler labored over in her career in the firm belief that written documentation could not be ignored and might actually have some positive effect.

The Glassco Report's recommendation for the amalgamation of the three Museums into a "supermuseum" with three main divisions under the authority of a single director had ramifications for the appointment of A.D. Tushingham, former director of the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem and a distinguished Middle Eastern archaeologist, to the top position at the Royal Ontario Museum of Archaeology. While the reorganization effectively eliminated this position, it created another position subordinate to the newly created position of overall director of

the Royal Ontario Museum to which Theodore A. Heinrich, the associate curator of paintings at the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art, had been appointed.

In the end, A.D. Tushingham agreed to become the head of the Art and Archaeology Division of the reorganized Royal Ontario Museum with responsibility for most of the Museum departments as of 1 July 1955. Tushingham's appointment was a good omen for Needler's career at the Museum since he was sensitive to her concerns for the welfare of the Near Eastern collections to which he also had a scholarly as well as administrative commitment. Tushingham accepted the appointment conditional on being allowed to continue his own field work and to expand the Museum's field program.

In 1956, one of Tushingham's first acts as director of Art and Archaeology was to involve the Royal Ontario Museum in archaeological work in the Near East in collaboration with the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem. With the financial sponsorship of the Toronto Globe and Mail, the Royal Ontario Museum became the first museum in Canada to participate in excavations abroad.

The British School of Archaeology was at this time working at Jericho under the direction of Kathleen M. Kenyon. These were excavations with which Tushingham had been involved since 1952. This was the beginning of a fruitful collaboration which led to a joint project excavating Jerusalem in co-operation with both French and the British teams from 1961 to 1967. The Museum continued the project despite the outbreak of the Arab-Israeli War in June 1967. When Tushingham planned the Museum's involvement in the Jericho excavation with Kenyon's team, he did not hesitate to invite Needler to participate and to accompany him on Museum business on a tour of Near Eastern museums.

Thus, in January 1956, Winifred Needler took a four-month leave of absence from her position as curator of the Near Eastern Department to travel and study in the Middle East. It was planned for Needler to spend six weeks participating in Kathleen Kenyon's excavation at Jericho, where she would join Tushingham, and then go on to Egypt where she would spend another six weeks. As a result of the volatile political situation in the Middle East in the wake of the Suez Crisis, Needler's visit to the Middle East took unexpected turns.

Upon arriving in Damascus where she had planned to spend the night before traveling on to Jericho, Needler learned that rioting in Jordan had resulted in the closing of the border between Jordan and Syria. For twelve days she was detained in Damascus with a dozen members of the Jericho expedition who had traveled by sea to Beirut. The delay in Damascus enabled Needler to visit not only the ancient mosques and the museum of Damascus with its unrivalled collections of Syrian antiquities, but also to visit such sights as the great Roman ruins at Baalbek and the ancient desert city of Palmyra.

After the twelve day delay, the Jericho contingent in Damascus joined other members of the Jericho expedition at the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem where Needler spent time working at the Palestine Museum and preparing for the work at Jericho. Within a few days, however, it looked less and less likely that Needler would be able to commence her work at Jericho

as planned. Thus, it was decided that Needler would fly to Cairo and spend some weeks there, profitably visiting archaeological sites and museums.

Needler's sojourn in Cairo gave her the opportunity to see for the first time the maze of blue faience tiled subterranean galleries at the Sakkara Step Pyramid complex of the Third Dynasty pharaoh Djoser. She also visited many of the Fifth and Sixth Dynasty mastabas, the Fourth Dynasty Giza complex, the Valley Temple of Sneferu's Bent Pyramid as well as both of Sneferu's Dahshur pyramids. She was especially fortunate to be present at Walter B. Emery's Sakkara excavation of the Early Dynastic tomb of Queen Herneith where jewellery, various toilet articles, and furniture were brought to light. Needler was also pleased to be on hand to view the funeral boat of Khufu, excavated from a pit beside his pyramid at Giza, which was at that time undergoing conservation. Ever willing to try new experiences, Needler seized the opportunity to take in the area from Giza to Sakkara and back by donkey, viewing the pyramids behind green fields and dusty villages the way, she reflected, they were intended to be seen by their ancient architects.

These weeks in the Cairo area, viewing the monuments of Early Dynastic and Old Kingdom Egypt, were instrumental in strengthening Needler's interest in the material culture of the early Egypt. Later in life she would reflect back upon these happy days as the experience that led her to hope that one day she might have the time and opportunity to produce a major study of Early Dynastic, Old Kingdom, or possibly pre-dynastic Egyptian artifacts.

From Cairo Needler travelled to Upper Egypt where she spent ten days, mostly in Luxor, enjoying the friendly atmosphere of Chicago House. A visit to the mortuary temples of Hatshepsut and Nebhepetre Montuhotpe at Deir el-Bahri was particularly useful to her because the Royal Ontario Museum possessed a number of painted reliefs from the Eleventh Dynasty temple as well as casts of reliefs from Hatshepsut's Eighteenth Dynasty temple. After visits to some private tombs on the West bank, Needler traveled by train to Abydos with two students staying at Chicago House.

With the Chicago students, Needler made a nostalgic tour of the familiar site. A visit to Amice Calverley's house, where she and Calverley had worked together on the paintings and reliefs from the Seti temple, revealed that the house which had been such a welcome beacon of hospitality to so many Egyptologists in Calverley's day was deserted and in ruins. Needler was reminded that it was Calverley's warm hospitality that brought Elizabeth Riefstahl to the Abydos house in 1948 when Calverley was away in Cairo. It was this visit, facilitated by the ever-congenial Calverley, that cemented their close friendship. A subsequent visit to Aswan ended Needler's stay in Upper Egypt, enabling her to visit the rock-cut tombs of the Old Kingdom, the ancient granite quarries, and recent excavations on the island of Elephantine.

After a one day return visit to Abydos to do some more work at the temple of Seti I, Needler traveled to Jericho where she spent one month on the Jericho excavation. She was extremely fortunate that her month-long stay at Jericho coincided with the excavation of the spectacular pre-pottery Neolithic A stone tower with its internal staircase of dressed stone. It is not surprising that Kenyon put Needler to work doing what she did best: recording objects as they were newly excavated and making drawings of small finds, including scarabs. When she was not busy with this

work, Needler had the good fortune to accompany Kenyon and Sir Mortimer Wheeler on a visit to New Testament Jericho and to the early Islamic palace of Khirbet el-Mafjar, well-known for its splendid mosaics. Needler also was able to visit Qumran where the Dead Sea scrolls were discovered and Jerash, one of the Decapolis cities of the Roman period.

Instead of staying at Jericho for the six weeks as planned, Tushingham took Needler on a month-long tour of Syria and Iraq to look for suitable purchases for the Museum and negotiate exchanges with antiquities officials. A roundabout trip to Baghdad provided opportunity to visit the Amman Museum and meet with museum personnel. Upon finally reaching Baghdad, visits to the mound of Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon and to the sixth century A.D. Sassanian vaulted brick palace at Ctesiphon were arranged which gave Needler the opportunity to contrast the fertile plain of the Tigris-Euphrates river valleys with the more familiar Nile Valley. She would later reflect on what she observed in her letters to Elizabeth Riefstahl. From there, Needler and Tushingham travelled by rail to Erbil near the Kurdish hills and on to Mosul by taxi, taking the opportunity to see the ruins of Nineveh. From Mosul, Needler and Tushingham visited Nimrud where Sir Max Mallowan of the University of London was the director of the excavations. There they were the guests of Professor Mallowan and his novelist wife Agatha Christie. The Taurus Express then carried the pair westward to Aleppo where they spent time at the museum that houses the Phoenician ivory carvings from Arslan Tash.

From Aleppo, Needler and Tushingham traveled to Damascus, then on to Amman and Jerusalem, where they stayed at the American School. There, arrangements were made to purchase items from the Palestine Archaeological Museum and the Amman Museum despite the worsening political situation which threatened the completion of these negotiations. Crossing to the Israeli side of Jerusalem, Needler visited the Israeli Department of Antiquities and the Museum under the direction of Sh. Yeivin. A rapid tour of the Israeli countryside with its many ancient sites ended in Lydda where Needler caught a flight to Europe. Needler used her time in Europe profitably, visiting Basel on museum business and stopping also in Vienna, Paris, Brussels, and London to visit the great museums of those cities to view their Near Eastern collections.

Although such a whirlwind tour can provide at best superficial impressions, there is no doubt that Needler benefited enormously from the experience as her correspondence with Elizabeth Riefstahl clearly indicates. Her brief experience at Jericho working with the legendary Kathleen Kenyon was, in fact, every bit as valuable as her museum research in Cairo and visits to ancient Egyptian sites. Observing Kenyon's excavation techniques at first hand, her organization of the field work, and her lucid explanations of her findings, Needler learned the basics of excavation at a stratified site such as are rare in Egypt. It is not surprising therefore that Needler considered her month at Jericho one of the most memorable experiences of her life as she observed in a letter to "K" twelve years later when invited to a Jericho reunion. In a letter to Riefstahl, where she shared her impressions from the trip, Needler expressed the hope that Kenyon's work at Jericho "might stimulate efforts to find comparably exciting, if unrelated, stratified remains in Egypt, where the resources of modern archaeological and industrial techniques could be marshaled to explore beneath the surface of the cultivation." (31 December 1956)

In 1961 Winifred Needler completed the Master of Arts degree in the Department of Fine Art, the University of Toronto, under Professor Ronald J. Williams. The completion of the M.A. degree gave Needler at long last the formal credential that had become increasingly necessary in curatorial work. At the same time, she was hard at work researching a large Roman-Egyptian funerary bed acquired by Currelly in Egypt sometime prior to 1909. Needler took on the publication of this bed not because she had a particular interest in Roman-Egypt or in beds as funerary furnishings. She devoted herself to the task simply because the bed had value as an item of daily life in which the museum-going publics have a natural interest. Like other curators whose primary concern must be the documentation and exhibition of their collections, Needler was accustomed to subordinating her particular interests as an Egyptologist to the needs of the collections as a whole and the various publics that make use of them.

Although the Museum records provided no provenance for the bed, Currelly told Needler some thirty years later that he believed that the bed came from Luxor. It may have been obtained when Currelly spent two seasons (1905-07) as a member of Édouard Naville's expedition at Deir el-Bahri and collected a great many pieces in the area of Thebes, both from local dealers and itinerant merchants peddling antiquities. The bed arrived in Toronto dismantled, but fortunately virtually complete. It was not re-assembled, however, until 1914 when the first wing of the Museum was officially opened to the public under Currelly's direction. The bed remained undocumented until Needler decided to give it the attention it deserved as an important and possibly unique example of Roman period funerary painting and hieroglyphic script.

The challenge was to obtain some understanding of the bed's form and probable function in the history of Egyptian funerary furniture as well as to date the bed as closely as evidence warrants. This was accomplished by tracing the history of the Egyptian lion-bed; considering the inscriptions with attention to personal names; studying the pictorial decoration; addressing problems in dating the bed; detailing iconographic and stylistic considerations; and examining two related types of Late Roman burials at Thebes which Needler believed to be relevant to the Toronto bed. Needler's conclusion that a date to the Late Roman period is warranted follows a scrupulously thorough and exhaustive investigation of all points of interest.

In 1962-63, Needler took a six month leave of absence on a Canada Council Research Fellowship in order to work with Professor Walter B(ryan) Emery and his team for the Egypt Exploration Society at Buhen in Sudanese Nubia and at Kasr Ibrim in Egyptian Nubia. Epigraphical work at the New Kingdom temples of Buhen and the rock-shrines at Kasr Ibrim; the removal of the temple of Hatshepsut at Buhen to safety at Khartoum; and the excavation of the fortress and cemeteries of Kasr Ibrim were among the projects undertaken by the Egypt Exploration Society as part of the archaeological salvage program sponsored by UNESCO. The salvage effort was necessitated by the construction of the Aswan High Dam under Soviet direction. These excavations followed the 1957 excavation of the mudbrick fortress of Buhen undertaken by the Egypt Exploration Society under Emery as field director. They afforded the opportunity to study for the last and, in some instances, first time the art, architecture, inscriptions, and topography of the large area to be flooded by the new dam.

Participation in such an effort not only brought the Royal Ontario Museum recognition for sharing in a high profile international project, it also provided Needler with an opportunity to make her own personal contribution to the salvage effort in reparation for the Canadian government's failure to contribute significant funding. This was a disappointment she felt keenly as she confided to William Stevenson Smith of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. Also representing Canada in the Nubian salvage operations was Ronald J. Williams who worked at Serra West and Semna South in 1961-62 and again in 1966. Anthony J. Mills, who would join the Egyptian Department at the Royal Ontario Museum after Needler's retirement, was also involved in the UNESCO operations at this time.

At Buhen Needler put her skills as an artist to work, drawing and describing artifacts from the excavations at the Twelfth Dynasty fortress at Buhen, one of several Middle Kingdom fortresses built at strategic points along the Nubian Nile. She also became involved with the dismantling of the temple built by the Eighteenth Dynasty queen Hatshepsut within the Buhen fort in preparation for sending the temple, block by block, by boat and rail to Khartoum for reassembly in the garden of a new museum. This operation, directed by Emery, utilized technology known in ancient times and was completed in a period of four months.

Needler's team also excavated a small cemetery, dating to the fifth or sixth century A.D., situated not far from the house where they were lodged. This was Needler's first experience excavating a cemetery and she relished the job with the same enthusiasm with which she embraced every undertaking. She commented to a journalist from the Toronto Telegram upon her return to Toronto that, "There is no better way to go back 4000 years than to walk along Twelfth Dynasty ramparts as I did at least twice a day when going back and forth from the (rest) house to Hatshepsut's Temple." An unexpected bonus of the season was her discovery of a hitherto undiscovered rock-drawing on the top of a sandstone hillock at Gebel Sheikh Suliman near Wadi Halfa. She described this rock-drawing in a paper given at Ann Arbor in September 1967 at the XXVIIth Congress of Orientalists and, at Emery's encouragement, she later published the paper.

While in Egypt and the Sudan on the salvage mission, Needler took the opportunity to visit sites in the lower Nile Valley and to carry out research at museums and institutes in Cairo. These visits gave Needler the opportunity to gain further background knowledge for the interpretation of the Egyptian collection at the Royal Ontario Museum. She wrote to Bryan Emery in June 1963, "How lucky I was to have a season in Buhen! I don't know how to tell you how valuable it was for this museum man (sic), even though it was towards the end of her working career."

In February-March 1965, Needler led a tour group of about thirty people to Egypt for about two weeks with visits to Paris, London, and Zurich. Although she found the idea of leading a tour "horrifying", she took it on because the tour provided an opportunity to visit again the Egypt she so loved and see colleagues such as Emery at his Sakkara excavation, Labib Habachi and Mrs. Elizabeth Riefstahl with whom she also spent time at Sakkara. The following Spring, Needler went to Israel for the opening of the Israel Museum in Jerusalem as the representative of the Royal Ontario Museum.

In 1966, the decision was made to divide the Near Eastern Department of the Royal Ontario Museum into two separate departments. An Egyptian Department was created with Needler as curator. A West Asian Department, concentrating on the Near and Middle East, was also created with Dr. T. Cuyler Young, Jr. as curator. Drs. Louis D. Levine and E.J. Keall also joined the staff of the West Asian Department. Since the West Asian Department was given Old World prehistory, Babylonian, Assyrian, and Syrio-Palestinian civilizations as its mandate, as well as the broad spectrum of Islamic civilization, Needler was free to devote the last years of her active career exclusively to the Egyptian collection.

The division of the old Near Eastern Department into two separate departments made it possible for Needler and Young to administer their departments according to their own priorities and so avoid the conflicts that can occur when a curator in the prime of his or her career is subordinate to an older curator whose active career is winding down. Needler was at the point in her career where she wanted to devote herself primarily to the research necessary for the detailed documentation of her collection. Young, on the other hand, was interested primarily in excavation and building up the collection. It was as a result of Young's research interests that the Museum had begun excavations at Godin Tepe in western Iran in 1965. Since the excavations proved extraordinarily fruitful, yielding structures and other remains from the period 3000 to 500 B.C., Young preferred to devote as much time as possible to this and other expeditions in the field. Making the Egyptian collection into a separate department under Needler proved the optimal solution to a difference in both priorities and personalities with decided benefits for both curators and the Museum as a whole.

In December 1969, Bernard V. Bothmer, Curator of Ancient Art at The Brooklyn Museum in Brooklyn, New York, invited Winifred Needler to become a Wilbour Fellow at The Brooklyn Museum where she would pursue research on a suitable topic of her choice for publication in the Wilbour Monographs. Since 1916, the estate of the American Egyptologist Charles Edwin Wilbour (1833-1896) had provided a large endowment which made possible the creation of the magnificent Wilbour Library of Egyptology. Using funds from the Wilbour estate, Bothmer instituted the Wilbour Fellowships to be awarded to scholars of note in Egyptian art and archaeology in order to research and publish objects in the care of the Department of Egyptian and Classical Art. Bothmer also instituted the Wilbour Monographs, a series designed to publish the work of Wilbour Fellows. Duly honoured and delighted to be selected as a Wilbour Fellow, Needler accepted the invitation straightaway. It only remained for a suitable topic to be agreed upon and a timetable for her research at The Brooklyn Museum to be determined.

Needler's acquaintance with Bernard V. Bothmer can be traced back to 1948 when Bothmer, then Assistant in the Egyptian Department of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, wrote to Gerard Brett, then Director of the Royal Ontario Museum of Archaeology, concerning an Egyptian pottery statuette of a hippopotamus which the Boston Museum had recently acquired. Since Needler was at the time in Egypt working at Abydos with Amice Calverley, Brett rendered what assistance he could until Needler's return. Immediately upon her return to the Museum, Needler took up Bothmer's enquiry. The German-born curator was suitably impressed with Needler's willingness to go the extra mile to assist a colleague. She was thorough and efficient and had a keen eye for art, qualities Bothmer valued highly. Since both Needler and Bothmer were students more of Egyptian

art than field archaeology, they shared the instincts and perspective of the art connoisseur. Similar drives led Bothmer to develop his distinctive method of photographing Egyptian art and Needler to draw upon her own artistic talents to invent more effective ways of displaying it. This was the beginning of a long and productive professional relationship between the two curators that survived Bothmer's move to the position of Cairo Director of the American Research Center in Egypt and his subsequent move to The Brooklyn Museum in 1956 where he eventually became the Curator and later Chairman of what is now the Department of Egyptian, Classical, and Ancient Middle Eastern Art until his retirement in 1982.

Throughout their careers, Needler and Bothmer kept up a regular correspondence, assisting each other in all aspects of museum work. They developed a comfortable personal and professional relationship, based upon mutual respect and admiration, that Needler valued as one of the most rewarding in her life. Bothmer provided Needler with invaluable advice concerning Museum purchases, exhibitions, and the documentation of items in the Egyptian collection. She sought his advice whenever she needed a second opinion in order to make a more informed decision and always seriously considered any advice he had to offer, even when she could not see her way to agreeing with it. From the very beginning of their acquaintance, Needler recognized in Bothmer the epitome of the successful museum man: shrewd, visionary, confident, accessible, urbane and charming, and uncompromisingly honest. Bothmer was arguably the greatest influence in Needler's professional life and a staunch supporter of the Museum to which she dedicated her entire life.

When approached by Bothmer, Needler suggested several research projects which she thought suitable, any of which she was willing to pursue. Since art of the predynastic and archaic periods was a particular interest of hers, this topic was first on her list. Bothmer readily agreed that the choice of the predynastic and archaic material would probably be the best choice both for Needler and The Brooklyn Museum. Work on the publication was scheduled to begin in the fall of 1970 following her retirement from the Museum.

The collection of Egyptian antiquities in The Brooklyn Museum is one of the finest in North America. It is comprised of a wide variety of items from daily life dating from the early predynastic period to the Second Dynasty and provides a continuous view of cultural development over the period prior to, during, and immediately after the unification of Upper and Lower Egypt under rulers of the First Dynasty. Most of the objects derive from the excavations of the French prehistorian Henri de Morgan (1854-1909) during the 1906-07 and 1907-08 seasons at Upper Egyptian sites between Esneh and Edfu, sponsored and financed by The Brooklyn Museum. The remaining objects were obtained from a variety of sources, including gift and purchase. Although some of the Brooklyn predynastic and archaic material had been published individually, the collection as a whole had never been published when Winifred Needler proposed to complete a study of it for the tenure of her Wilbour Fellowship.

Preliminary to the publication of this exceptional collection was the documentation of the objects acquired by de Morgan. The de Morgan excavations had never been completely or systematically published as a result in part of de Morgan's sudden death in 1909. The detailed publication of these excavations could not be completed at that time because of the lack of qualified museum staff. Also

problematic was the division of the objects excavated by de Morgan among The Brooklyn Museum, the Musée des Antiquités Nationales in Saint-Germain-en-Laye in Paris, and the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. A further complication was the division of papers relevant to the de Morgan excavations between Brooklyn and Saint-Germain-en-Laye. Despite these problems, the Austrian Egyptologist Walter Federn was commissioned in 1942 to undertake a preliminary cataloguing of the more than 800 de Morgan objects at The Brooklyn Museum by John D. Cooney, then Curator of the Brooklyn Department of Ancient Art. Cooney had already himself contributed to the documentation of these artifacts with data from Brooklyn records.

Winifred Needler's proposal to complete a detailed cataloguing of the de Morgan objects, as well as other predynastic and archaic objects in The Brooklyn Museum, thus served a long-existing need. Such a study served both to increase the value of the Brooklyn collection as a whole and to contribute to general knowledge in Egyptian archaeology. Needler also proposed to produce an account of the de Morgan excavations, utilizing de Morgan objects in Brooklyn, Saint-Germain-en-Laye, and Cairo that would make this material as useful as possible given the inadequacies of the records and the methods of excavation employed in de Morgan's day. Thus, Needler proposed to publish de Morgan's short unpublished report on the 1907-08 expedition, Walter Federn's report on his preliminary cataloguing of the objects over the years 1942-45, as well as C.S. Churcher's detailed zoological study of the Brooklyn ivory Knife Handle from Abu Zaidan.

Needler's publication of the Brooklyn material was also important because there was at that time no synthesis in the English language of the work of Werner Kaiser, Barry J. Kemp, F. Wendorf, and other specialists of the predynastic and archaic periods. Comprehensive works such as Elise Baumgartel's chapter on the predynastic period in the Cambridge Ancient History (third edition) also required revision. Old excavations required re-examination in light of the results of more recent excavations. The publication of the Brooklyn predynastic and archaic material afforded an excellent opportunity to provide such a synthesis, combining research at the Cairo Museum and at the French and German Archaeological Institutes with a search for specific objects from the de Morgan excavations in the Cairo Museum. To complete the documentation, Needler proposed further research at the museums of the former East and West Germany, at the Musée de Saint-Germain-en-Laye in Paris, in London at the Petrie Collection in the University of London and the British Museum, at the Ashmolean in Oxford, and at the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge.

The study of the Brooklyn predynastic and archaic objects began with the initial selection of objects on the basis of form, function, material, method of manufacture, provenance, condition, and photogenic quality. In the end, a total of 309 Brooklyn objects, including all of the de Morgan objects with an established site provenance, were included in Needler's finished catalogue. The de Morgan objects in Cairo and Saint-Germain-en-Laye were listed in accompanying appendices. A 1973 Canada Council Research Grant for Travel and Technical Assistance enabled Needler to carry out research in Paris, Cairo, London, Oxford, and Berlin; funded two additional months of work in Brooklyn; and paid for additional time for the services of drafting maps and incidental drawings. The grant made it possible to include in the work sections relating to de Morgan's excavations and to expand the Historical Introduction to reflect this enlarged scope. C.S. Churcher's invaluable zoological study on the Brooklyn knife handle was also added to Needler's catalogue thanks to the

Canada Council grant. The inclusion of Churcher's study was particularly gratifying to Needler since Churcher had long been associated with both the Royal Ontario Museum and the University of Toronto.

After five years of work and a wait of another three years, it became evident by May 1979 that The Brooklyn Museum would likely be unable to publish the manuscript in the near future for financial reasons. As Needler understood the situation, an expanded contents and the costly format required to illustrate them to good effect far exceeded the original estimates at a time when the Wilbour Fund was rapidly reaching exhaustion. In response to Bothmer's pessimistic assessment of the monograph's chances for publication in the Wilbour series in the near future, Needler decided to remove her manuscript from The Brooklyn Museum. The same funding problems led Needler to inform Bothmer that she was withdrawing her paper, "Henri de Morgan's Connections with Brooklyn and with Saint-Germain-en-Laye", from publication in the projected volume III of The Brooklyn Museum Miscellanea Wilbouriana. At age seventy-five, Needler had despaired of the article ever seeing the light of day, especially after her experience with the Brooklyn book.

Bothmer did not take kindly to Needler's withdrawal of the de Morgan paper, insisting that he had not given her permission to publish any of the papers or letters of Henri de Morgan which belong to The Brooklyn Museum. Needler gently but firmly disputed Bothmer's claim that he never gave her the right to publish the papers. The misunderstanding over the de Morgan paper might have been easily resolved had Needler not removed her Wilbour manuscript from Brooklyn several months earlier on a day when Bothmer was not present to give his official approval. Bothmer interpreted Needler's removal of her manuscript as both a direct affront to his authority and a denial of the rights of The Brooklyn Museum to the publication of research it had funded on its own collection. Quite simply, Needler's actions offended Bothmer's sense of propriety, and Bothmer was not the kind of man to brook any real or imagined violation of what he considered to be proper professional conduct. Needler, for her part, could not see how Bothmer could have misinterpreted her actions so completely when he himself had told her that the publication process had reached an impasse.

Despite Bothmer's censure of her actions, Needler remained firm in her conviction that Bothmer had himself authorized the removal of the manuscript and asserted that she would return to Brooklyn all necessary material, "if and when I receive written assurance that Brooklyn will publish my manuscript within a reasonable period." (20 December 1979) She took great satisfaction in the fact that the editing of the manuscript by Mrs. Emma S. Hall had commenced and that this was certain evidence that despite the funding problems, "Mr. Bothmer has not entirely given up hope that the administration will change its present attitude, or that some other miracle may produce the necessary funds. I understand that he has not officially abandoned my monograph, and I know that he would never do so willingly." (5 May 1979 letter to Mrs. Hall)

Funding for the publication of Needler's manuscript was eventually secured with a grant in 1982 from the U.S. National Endowment for the Arts, supplemented by a grant-in-aid from the Canadian Federation for the Humanities, and the volume was subsequently published as planned by The Brooklyn Museum as a Wilbour monograph. Nevertheless, the misunderstanding permanently damaged the relationship between the two curators, old friends and colleagues of long standing who

had shared common interests and greatly admired each other's work. In these trying circumstances, Needler remained characteristically firm but unfailingly courteous, writing to Bothmer even when he did not personally respond. Bothmer did not deal with Needler directly in the later stages of the preparation of the manuscript. Too proud to admit that she might have misunderstood her obligation to the Museum to leave the publication in their hands, however long it would take, Needler was ineffective in regaining Bothmer's trust. Bothmer's inability or unwillingness to see the situation from Needler's perspective prevented him from taking steps to heal the rift in their relationship.

Once funding was assured and publication of the manuscript could proceed as originally planned, Needler kept her promise to Bothmer by returning the manuscript to Brooklyn. It was very much in character for Needler to honour her promises and therefore her catalogue *raisonné* of the Brooklyn Egyptian predynastic and archaic collection in the end remained with The Brooklyn Museum where both she and Bothmer agreed that it rightly belonged.

Needler's Predynastic and Archaic Egypt in The Brooklyn Museum has been acknowledged in the Egyptological community as an outstanding achievement that makes The Brooklyn Museum's hitherto mostly unpublished collection of predynastic and archaic objects readily accessible for the first time to scholars and students of ancient Egypt, in keeping with the objectives of the Wilbour gift. The catalogue adds significant unpublished objects, both provenienced and unprovenienced, to general knowledge and makes the fragmentary records of de Morgan's poorly documented excavations available at long last to students of predynastic and archaic Egypt. The extended introduction Needler provides to predynastic and archaic Egypt not only serves as an excellent overview, but also makes the work accessible to the serious lay reader. This monograph is an outstanding original contribution to Egyptian art and archaeology that will long remain a valuable reference work for the predynastic and archaic periods.

When the monograph was published in 1984, Needler, then eighty years old, feared she might not live long enough to know the opinion of reviewers. Therefore, it pleased her very much that Homer Thompson, to whom she had given a copy of her book, wholeheartedly endorsed it, commenting that "you have done full justice to the individual objects while in your Historical Introduction you have given us a most valuable synthesis. I'm sure the volume will be regarded as a very important handbook on its period." (8 May 1985) Needler valued Thompson's opinion not only because of Thompson's reputation as one of the finest classical archaeologists of the century, but also because she counted him as one of her mentors: "To you I mainly owe the pleasure of organizing archaeological material and of responding somewhat to its challenge." (14 July 1985)

Needler began to think seriously about her successor as curator long before she was scheduled to retire even though it was not at all her responsibility. In the late 1960s, there were many more Egyptology students specializing in philology than there were in art and archaeology. The dearth of qualified curatorial candidates was decried by Needler and other museum curators with whom she corresponded on the subject of her successor. Not only did the Royal Ontario Museum need a new curator for the Egyptian Department, so too The Brooklyn Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, and the Boston Museum of Fine Arts were also looking for new curatorial staff. In a letter (18 April 1969) to Henry G. Fischer of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Needler

expressed her understanding that the Museum expected to replace her with a man. She did not express any gender preference of her own, but that she raised this point at all indicates that she believed that gender was an issue in the hiring. She clearly had misgivings even though the Royal Ontario Museum had a long history of hiring women for curatorial positions. It was important to her that whoever succeeded her as curator share her view that "...preserving material and tying it up with its original environment in time and space is the basic job of a museum." (interview with David Spurgeon, Toronto Globe and Mail, June 29, 1970) By the Spring of 1969, Nicholas B. Millet's name was bruited as the best choice for a successor. Millet would succeed Needler in July 1970.

When Needler retired in 1970, she was appointed Curator Emeritus of the Egyptian Department for Life in recognition for her lifelong scholarly contributions to Egyptology at the Royal Ontario Museum effective 1 July 1970. When Nicholas B. Millet took over as curator, he gave Needler keys to the Egyptian Department to facilitate her access to the collection and supporting library that was her life's work for thirty-five years. Needler handed over the Egyptian collection to Millet looking forward to the beginning of a new chapter in her life.

Retirement made it possible for Needler to spend more time in the countryside she so loved as a lifelong committed environmentalist. Long before her retirement, she had purchased a square-timbered log farmhouse, built before 1820, in Palgrave, Ontario, far enough outside Toronto to qualify as "country". For about five years before her retirement, Needler had shared a Toronto apartment with the mother of then Greek and Roman Department curator Neda Leipen. Such an arrangement was necessary because commuting to Palgrave on a daily basis was unfeasible for a person who, on principle, eschewed the automobile as a means of transportation. Thus, for years, she had been able to spend only weekends and holidays at Palgrave. With her retirement, Needler no longer was obliged to retain a residence in the city.

The Palgrave location was ideal because it allowed her to have a flower garden, go for the long walks she loved, and "dress down" from the formality required of a museum curator. She had the house beautifully renovated by Napier Simpson and furnished it with her share of the Victorian furniture from the Needler family home. Here at last she had room for her Egyptological library. Palgrave also gave her a setting for the entertaining which she enjoyed, inviting colleagues and students out to see her treasured retreat from the big city for afternoon tea or a simple meal while enjoying the garden.

In addition to providing time and opportunity for such research as the documentation of the Brooklyn collection, retirement brought Needler an adjunct appointment in 1976 to the University of Guelph to teach Egyptian art and architecture as a sabbatical replacement. For the first time, Needler was able to devote her full attention to the demands of teaching without the pressure of juggling time-consuming Museum responsibilities. With her Brooklyn monograph well in hand for publication by The Brooklyn Museum, it is not surprising that in 1982, Bishop's University in Lennoxville, Québec awarded Winifred Needler the degree Doctor of Civil Law, *honoris causa*, in recognition of her many years of service to the Royal Ontario Museum and her contributions to the field of Egyptology.

A review of Needler's publications, both scholarly and popular, including articles, monographs, guidebooks, and reviews, over the course of her thirty-five year museum career is testimony to her expertise in writing knowledgeably and lucidly about the artifacts in her care, the excavations that enlarged the Near Eastern collections, and the popular and scholarly literature relevant to her work at the Royal Ontario Museum. From her Palestine, Ancient and Modern, a guide to the Palestinian collection, to her monograph on the Roman-Egyptian funerary bed and her catalogue *raisonné* of the Brooklyn predynastic and archaic Egyptian collection, she demonstrates a remarkable versatility more typical of scholars of the early twentieth century than the increasingly specialized scholars of today. That many of her publications fall into the category of eminently readable popular articles and guides shows that in pursuing scholarly research, she did not neglect her responsibilities to the general public. It was precisely because Needler instinctively understood the multifarious demands of the museum field that she never scorned the more tedious everyday tasks essential to a museum's successful operation. Her name as an Egyptologist rests comfortably upon her fine work in organizing and carefully expanding Currelly's core collection, meticulously documenting the artifacts, and mounting creative exhibits from which both the general public and the scholarly community could derive benefit.

Winifred Needler's struggle with cancer was mercifully a brief one. When she knew that time was short, she arranged to visit with family members as a kind of leave-taking. Her niece, Professor Mary N. Arai, recalls how she and her husband took her aunt to Lake Louise in Banff National Park, a place she had particularly loved. Needler wanted to walk along the shore even though it took great effort, for she had warm memories of this beautiful place, nestled in the Rocky Mountains, and there is no doubt she was saying farewell. She said her farewells as she did everything: with quiet dignity and with style. When she succumbed to her illness September 5, 1987 at the age of 84, Winifred Needler left behind family, friends, and colleagues who would miss her genuine warmth, her indomitable spirit, her sense of humour, and her passionate dedication to the things that meant most to her. In Egyptology and the museum field, Winifred Needler will be long remembered for her transformation of the amorphous undocumented collection Charles Trick Currelly pioneered into a premier introduction to ancient Egyptian civilization in all its facets. There is no doubt that Currelly would have taken great pride in the accomplishments of the woman he had wisely chosen to direct his Near Eastern collections.