ODE TO MARGARET ON HER RETIREMENT

by Jeremy A. Sabloff

To an uncountable number of scholars and students, MARGARET CURRIER and the Peabody Museum Library are synonymous. They will be greatly saddened to hear that Margaret has retired. Who will write them the long, caring, and carefully researched answers to their bibliographic queries? Who will personally guide them to the most distant nooks and crannies of the basement stacks? Who will send notes saying that while reading some obscure journal, “I came across an article which might interest you?” Who will gladden the despairing heart of a student, who has spent hours searching for an apparently missing book, by uncannily discovering the crucial tome stacked under AM. ARC. instead of N.A. ARC.

Fortunately, the leadership of the library in its new home will fall into the capable hands of ANTONIO RODRIGUEZ-BUCKINGHAM. However, it is clear that with Margaret Currier’s retirement a significant era in the history of the Peabody Museum has passed.

Margaret first came to the Peabody in 1945 as a Cataloguer and it was here she stayed. She previously had worked at the Yale University Library for seven years and at Widener Library for six. After a year as Peabody Museum Library Cataloguer, she became Acting Librarian in 1946 and Librarian in 1948. For nearly three decades, Margaret has devoted her immense energies to the effort of maintaining the Peabody Museum as one of the world’s leading anthropological libraries. The tremendous sales of the G.K. Hall multi-volume copy of the Peabody Museum Library’s catalogue is a tribute to her success in making the catalogue an indispensable research tool for numerous anthropologists and anthropology students.

What has impressed me the most in the ten years I have been at the Peabody is how much Margaret cared for the library and for all the people who availed themselves of its resources. No 'nine to five' was Margaret. One often would see her hard at work on weekends or well after closing hours. However, no matter how pressed in her own duties she was, she always had time to talk with students and staff alike and try to solve their varied bibliographic problems.

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In late summer we are coming to the close of a long gestation period for the Tozzer Library. Beginning with groundbreaking in May of '73, the entire project has gone (so I am told) remarkably smoothly, but like any expectant father, one tends to see as quite significant the minor problems along the way. It is true, however, that we have kept remarkably close to the original time schedule, and in a time of frightening inflation, we have still remained under budget. The latter accomplishment is, of course, mainly due to fixed cost of the construction contract bid upon eighteen months ago.

All was going almost too well until a pleasant summer evening was shattered with the sound of rushing water from a parted chilled water line, which proceeded to flood the lower level of the new building to a depth of 4 inches and "wipe out" a handsome and just-installed wool carpet. We have been picking up the pieces of that mini-disaster during the past month and are still looking toward opening for business in September, with the lower level to be finally occupied by the first of October when new carpet can be installed.

It is important to stand back from any project and get an overall perspective; a personal and surely biased opinion does suggest that the building suits the courtyard very well in the way the bricks and form blend with the adjacent buildings, and it is with more than a little pride that I feel the courtyard has been enhanced by the landscaping which has been accomplished there, and which I feel salves some of the fears of our neighbors, who quite rightfully mourned the loss of several large trees when construction began.

So, it has indeed been an eventful time with the old and new blending, with strong tones of nostalgia rising from the event of Margaret Currier's retirement this summer. Surely few institutions have had such devoted service from such a selfless person, whose enthusiasm and cheerful demeanor have brightened one corner of this institution for so many decades. Librarians tend to be voracious budgetary beasts, but there was little question when I came into the Directorship that Margaret's pride and joy needed a lot of immediate help, not only in pure dollars but also in staffing, since she had managed to carry alone such an onerous load for so many years with little complaint; her only thought was that of serving the institution and the profession. No one leaves a commitment of such magnitude and length of service without some hesitance or even feelings of personal loss, but I am sure we all hope that Margaret will take some well-earned vacation months and yet return at times to help us on a consulting basis.

To honor Margaret, we have established the Margaret Currier Student Aid Fund. Contributions are tax-deductible and should be sent to William O’Neil, Business Manager of the Museum.

Our own sense of deprivation is only partially relieved by the happy expectation of a new library building and a new library administration headed by the energetic Antonio Rodriguez-Buckingham. Tony has been with the museum for six years and in the Harvard Library system since 1966. He has just returned from a year of graduate training in library science at the University of Michigan, where he completed the course requirements for his Ph.D. in this specialized library program. We wish him well in the task of writing his dissertation when the shake-down period of Tozzer is completed.

Another very bright spot in the summer scene has been a visit with Hugh Hencken at his Marion home, where he is making a splendid recovery from his illness of the late spring. We look forward with pleasant anticipation to his return to his office in mid-October.

An almost annual note for these summer Newsletters has been my amazement of the level of activity that continues at the Museum despite the summer exodus of much of the staff. This summer has certainly been no different, with the added fillip of the Tozzer completion close at hand. Lots of good things have been done thanks to an energetic crew of some six students who have taken up the slack during the vacation weeks of our regular staff and have helped with everything from furniture refinishing to fielding a pick-up softball team.

Well, Fall approaches, and with it the formal dedication of our new library and the beginning of another academic year. I'll be on sabbatical leave from my departmental duties during the fall, but museum administration does not fall into that same category. Thus I am looking forward to a busy museum schedule with a little more breathing room than usual.

STEPHEN WILLIAMS

FALL SCHEDULE

Margaret Currier Reception Sept. 25
Symposium: “The Maya and Their Neighbors: 1974” Oct. 21
Tozzer Library Dedication Oct. 21
Fall Film Series Dates to be Announced
THOUGHTS OF A NEW LIBRARIAN

For a librarian who has worked for five years at the Peabody Museum Library, the Tozzer Library will require a number of adjustments. It may take a while, for example, to become adapted to spacious and comfortable surroundings in which it will be possible to achieve a balance between the information available and its users. To see our rare books housed in a handsome, humidity controlled room with full fire security, will put our minds at ease. To have our maps and atlases available for direct consultation will enhance our reference service. To have our serials (L.SOC. and MUS.) together in one area, with the proper light to read our endless call numbers, will make our unique issues more accessible. No longer will our stack assistant have to climb up and down the stairs with an armful of books for a visiting scholar, nor our cataloguer have to come down from Room 22 to confirm an elusive bibliographic entry.

To become accustomed to these luxuries may indeed require time, while the hope of every librarian of bringing information and users together will be greatly facilitated by a building that holds the unusual combination of function and aesthetics.

ANTONIO RODRIGUEZ-BUCKINGHAM
Librarian

Frank Montooth, Construction Superintendent

THE MEN WHO BUILT THE LIBRARY

Vincent Degnim, Pat Rossetti

* * *

Excerpt from the ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS, May 1974 article by Anthony Grey, Anthropology Up To Date.

"The RAI (Royal Anthropological Institute) has a unique and valuable library built up over 130 years which includes nearly everything of significance published about anthropology and its related fields. The 50,000 books and 10,000 pamphlets, periodicals, field notes and illustrations include original Richard Burton manuscripts, 2,000 annotated books from his Trieste library and a copy of The Origin of Species presented by Darwin. The only collections anywhere in the world to rival it are at the Peabody Museum, Harvard, and the Musée de l'Homme in Paris."
A LIBRARIAN’S

NOSTALGIA FOR THE NINETEEN-FORTIES

As preparations are made for the big move into the Tozzer Library, I find myself looking back to the fall of 1945 and my own move from the Widener Library to the Peabody Museum when:

Divinity Avenue, flanked by the Germanic Museum (now called Busch-Reisinger) and the Harvard Printing Office, led to willow trees and yellow houses.

MR. SCOTT, gentlemanly scholar and Director of the Museum, worried about full measure of work for each hour’s pay — yet encouraged the staff to go outdoors to enjoy the midmorning sunshine on the wooden plank placed between the iron railings near the shipping-room door.

PROFESSORS COON, MOVUIS, OLIVER and TOZZER were returning from World War II missions in North Africa, Europe or the Pacific. The students who came back from any branch of the Service occasionally found it difficult to adjust to librarian’s ways, such as charging fines for reserve books which were a few minutes late in the morning.

CARLETON S. COON packed lecture rooms for Anthropology 1a, held at 9 A.M. in the Semitic Museum across the street, but audited by me at 10 in Longfellow Hall because enough women students had registered to necessitate a separate Radcliffe section. (Dr. Coon obligingly transported me and a few students in his car.)

DR. TOZZER was Professor-Librarian, and hurried in daily to approve the books selected for purchase, whispering occasionally that we might bill him for a few minutes late in the morning.

As in 1945 DR. HOOTON was lecturing on “Up from the Ape” and did pioneer work in the Statistics Lab on the fifth floor, but went home every afternoon in time to hold open house with Mrs. Hooton, where tea and talk were provided for any students who cared to drop in.

DR. KLUCKHOHN was the anthropology faculty member in that new Social Relations Department, while continuing his in-depth studies of the Navahos, Zunis, Mormons, Spanish-Americans, and Texans in Ramah, New Mexico.

DR. BREW was the Assistant to the Director (later to become Director of the Museum) and was pursuing his researches on archaeology of the Southwest.

MR. LAURISTON WARD, who brightened all our days with his geniality, dispensed wisdom on Asiatic archaeology, and later founded the Council for Old World Archaeology, which operated out of his fifth floor office.

DR. KIDDER presided over the Carnegie Institution’s Department of Archaeology almost next door on Frisbie Place, where among others DR. POLLOCK, TANIA PROSKOURIAKOFF and the SMITH brothers carried on their research and produced numerous publications.

Anyone entering the Library was greeted by the following notice:

SUSPENDERS AND VESTS WITHOUT COATS TABOO — by order of the Director of the Museum.

What was the Library like in those days?

At first I was book cataloguer, periodical indexer, and apprentice to MISS CONSTANCE ASHENDEN, the Assistant Librarian, who was due to retire in a year. She was a devoted little lady who had applied her library school training to keeping the Library going in an orderly fashion for over 40 years, under the aegis of Professors Dixon and Tozzer.

The volume count was 50,000—less than half the present number, but foreign publications held during the War years were beginning to pour in.

Half a dozen desks, and their occupants, filled the work space most recently devoted to the Circulation Desk and Librarian’s office. Later, Room 16 was taken over as an annex for the cataloguer and typist, although at first with the portrait of George Peabody, not yet restored to his place of honor in the front hall. A Duplicate Room in the basement was the scene of a continual secondhand book sale. The Reading Room, reserve books, rare books in locked cases, and the card catalogues occupied the area most recently taken up by the first-floor book stacks. Everything and everybody were very close at hand!

The Circulation Assistant, usually a young girl, charged out all books (making a duplicate of each card to file under the borrower’s name). In spare moments she ordered books, paid bills and wrote letters for the Librarian. A high school boy came for two hours each afternoon and was able to shelve all books, wrap interlibrary loan packages for mailing (no Jiffy bags in those days), file cards and run errands.

Somehow we managed to keep all operations going, entertain visitors, receive, sort and catalogue special gifts, provide reserve books for required reading and give assistance as needed by the students, most of whom we knew at least by name.

The life of a librarian who enjoys the space, beauty and comfort of the new Tozzer Library should be much pleasanter, but of course it will never be the same.

MARGARET CURRIER
MOVING DAY AT THE PEABODY

Paracas Textile:
An elaborately decorated Paracas-style burial mantle is guided to the upper level of the Tozzer Library. The textile, probably excavated from the Paracas Necropolis on Peru’s south coast, was created by artists more than 2000 years ago to provide grave furnishings. Hundreds of mummified remains have been found wrapped in such mantles. Characteristically for this style, one figure is repeatedly depicted; here it is a hook-beaked, large-eyed bird with spreading wings and tail feathers.

The textile is a gift of Mrs. Alfred M. Tozzer.

Quirigua Stela:
Workmen tackle the touchy task of getting the 8th century Stela D from the third floor exhibition hall of the Museum into the foyer of the Tozzer Library. Dating from 766 A.D., the 22-foot, one-ton sculpture cast from Quirigua, Guatemala, is typical of classic Maya civilization.
STAFF APPOINTMENTS

ANTONIO MANUEL RODRIGUEZ-BUCKINGHAM has assumed the position of Librarian of the Peabody Museum, formerly held by MISS MARGARET CURRIER whose retirement became effective August 31, 1974.

MRS. KAREN PETERSEN SHAW has replaced MRS. CORNELIA SKIFF as Peabody Museum Association Secretary.

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BANK FEATURES MUSEUM ARTIFACTS

Peabody Museum, at the request of Watertown's Northeast Federal Savings Bank, has placed five different mini-exhibits in the bank's display windows in recent months.

Registrar FRAN SILVERMAN, in charge of the project, selected artifacts from various of the Museum's collections. They have included material on the Eskimo, Southwest American Indians, the Javanese, and ancient Peruvian pottery.

The program was jointly initiated by the Museum and bank officials to heighten community awareness of the area's cultural institutions. Peabody benefits by bringing attention to the varied ethnographic collections housed within the Museum, and by increasing interest of the Boston Metropolitan residents in visiting the Museum.

A DIG AT CASTLE ISLAND

The Peabody Museum staff visited DR. WILLIAM TURNBAUGH’s archaeological dig at South Boston’s Fort Independence on Castle Island early in June. The group enjoyed prowling through the somewhat dank and dark chambers as well as viewing the harbor and city from atop the parapet walls. A number of staff members participated in the excavation of the old barracks and found many artifacts.

Dr. Turnbaugh had previously excavated two structures which date to 1800-1830 and served as quarters for officers and men. These buildings pertained to an earlier fort which stood on the site of the present Fort Independence, dating to about 1840. The existing fort is a large pentagon of granite containing interior rooms and gunneries within the walls.

The excavations conducted by Dr. Turnbaugh, Peabody Research Assistant, from late March through June, produced new information about one of the earliest fortified areas in the United States. The original fort at Castle Island was built by John Winthrop in 1634, and a fort has occupied that ground ever since. In all, seven forts have stood on the site. The present structure was erected in 1842 by General Sylvanus Thayer and was expanded and renovated over the next 130 years.

The work of Dr. Turnbaugh was sponsored by the Metropolitan District Commission of Massachusetts with the cooperation of the Peabody Museum. Artifacts will be kept in the Peabody Museum until proper facilities are available for their display at Fort Independence now under restoration by the MDC. The artifacts collected reflect the daily life of the soldiers stationed at the fort and comprise hardware, dishes, bottles, eating utensils, food bones, personal items, military buttons, cannonballs and a few coins from the 18th and 19 centuries.
BARBARA WESTMAN, designer-draftsman at the Peabody Museum, is a native of Boston. She studied art history at Goucher College and spent three years in Munich, Germany, studying drawing. On return to this country she received a scholarship to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. She was recipient of its Ruth Sturdivant Traveling Scholarship for European Travel. Miss Westman has taught painting, drawing and design to both children and adults. She has participated in an exhibition at the Museum of Fine Arts and has had a one-man show at the Boston Public Library. Her two previous books on Boston and Cambridge are THE BEAN AND THE SCENE: Drawings of Boston and Cambridge (1969) and THE BEARD AND THE BRAID: Drawings of Cambridge (1970).

PEABODY MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS

The number of Peabody volunteers who work within the Museum totals 28 students and teachers this year.

In recent months the volunteers have been involved in a variety of activities. These have included the cataloguing of an extensive Bushmen collection, South African Bantu beadwork, Mexican and Peruvian textiles, Ethiopian and historical archaeological collections, and a Hemenway collection of Southwestern archaeology uncatalogued for more than 75 years.

They have helped prepare and maintain exhibits, cleaned and repaired specimens, and readied artifacts to be loaned such as baskets, textiles, ceramics and totem poles.

An assortment of other duties has been concerned with library research, working with the storage of the spear collection, and making inventories of collections in storage.

Most of the volunteers give a full day of their time to the Museum each week and provide invaluable project assistance to members of the Peabody staff.

The Museum is indebted to these dedicated workers and would like to thank the following volunteers:

MARILYN BINDER
JOANNE BRANDFORD
SUSAN BUTLER
LORELIE H. CORCORAN
ELAINE EFF
TERESA ERICKSON
ANITA FISK
MARCIA FLOOR
SHAKUNTALA GOKALE
ELAYNE GROSSBARD
ROBIN G. HINCKLEY
MARTHA HOLMER
MICHÉLE C. KINSMAN
ANGELA LAWRENCE
LAURIE LEVIN
CAROL A. MARINE
KEVIN R. McNAMARA
CECI OGDEN
MILBRY POLK
VIRGINIA S. POPPER
LAURA ROBERTS
LINDA SIMPSON
CHARYL SOLOMON
STEVEN R. TALLEY
MARTA TUROK
ANNE UMPHREY
CAROL WALSH
JUDITH WOLFSUN

NEW BOOK BY MUSEUM ARTIST

BARBARA WESTMAN and HERBERT A. KENNY, artist and author of A BOSTON PICTURE BOOK, published by Houghton Mifflin Company this summer ($6.95).

The bigger and better-than-ever Peabody Museum Association Christmas Bazaar will open at the Museum shortly after Thanksgiving and will be continued until Christmas. The Bazaar's treasures from around the world will insure your success as Santa!

DEPARTMENT NEWS

In 1973–74, a total of 81 graduate students were in residence, while 25 were undertaking fieldwork for the dissertation. The Department also recorded the largest undergraduate concentration figures to date. Of the 45 Seniors, 29 were graduated with Honors. Three Seniors, DANIEL CRAIG, WILLIAM FREEMAN, and RICHARD HUFF were graduated summa cum laude. Three students were graduated magna cum laude with highest honors in Anthropology; 20 students were graduated magna cum laude. In addition three students received cum laude degrees. This year eight degrees were granted at mid-year, including two degrees magna cum laude with highest honors in Anthropology.

It was also a record year for the number of applicants to the Ph.D. program in Anthropology; 222 applications were reviewed to choose the incoming 1974–75 class of 11 graduate students.
DEPARTMENT NEWS

During the past year the Department of Anthropology granted 20 Ph.D. degrees — nine were awarded to Social Anthropologists, nine to Archaeologists, and two to Biological Anthropologists. They are:

Abrams, Ira Rance, Cash Crop Farming and Social and Economic Change in Yucatec Maya Community in Northern Honduras

Arno, Andrew R., Conflict Management in a Fijian Village

Baknoff, Herman Arthur, The End of the Middle Bronze Age in the Banat, Yugoslavia

Brenneis, Donald Lawrence, Conflict and Communication in an Indian Community in Fiji

Conrad, Geoffrey Wentworth, Burial Platforms and Related Structures on the North Coast of Peru: Some Social and Political Implications

Day, Kent Collins, Architecture of Ciudadela Rivero, Chan Chan, Peru

Endicott, Kirk Michael, Batek Negrito and Social Organization

Edynak, Gloria Jean, Palaeodemographic Change and Population Continuity in Central Yugoslavia from Prehistoric through Medieval Times

Gilman, Antonio, The Later Prehistory of Tangier, Morocco

Ikawa-Smith, Fumiko, Early Palaeolithic Cultures of Japan: An Appraisal

Johnston, Judith Cowan, The Social Ecology of East Indian Infant Stature in South Trinidad

Krech, Shepard III, Changing Trapping Patterns in Fort McPherson, NWT, Canada

Lein, Laura, Speech and Setting: American Migrant Children at School and at Home

Marcus, Joyce Paula, An Epigraphic Approach to the Territorial Organization of the Lowland Classic Maya


Rodman, Peter Stephens, Synecology of Bornean Primates with Special Reference to the Behavior and Ecology of Orang-utans

Turnbaugh, William Arthur, Cultural Prehistory and Demographic Patterns in North-Central Pennsylvania

Wright, Jerome Wendell, Conflict Resolution on Mayaguana Island, Bahamas

Wylie, Jonathan, I'm a Stranger Too

Yellen, John Edward, The Kung Settlement Pattern: an Archaeological Perspective

ODE TO MARGARET: (continued from p. 1)

She religiously and voraciously read most of what the anthropological staff and students wrote, regardless of topic. Thus, her knowledge of anthropology clearly was far more than superficial. She usually made sure to pull staff members or graduate students returning from the field into her office in order to get a first-hand account of their recent studies and adventures. Moreover, former students who visited the Peabody would be certain to receive a warm welcome and reception by Margaret and would be 'quizzed' about their ongoing anthropological activities.

Margaret not only was conscious of augmenting and strengthening the Peabody Museum Library, but always tried to help the staff and graduate students build their personal libraries, as well. The warm surprise of a graduate student being called into her office and told the library had just happened to have come across a duplicate copy of a hard-to-find or out-of-print monograph of which she correctly assumed the student coveted ownership and which she sold for a ridiculously low price was repeated again and again.

The Peabody Museum has been incredibly fortunate that in an era when the discipline of anthropology has seen an unprecedented explosion of growth and development, it had a skilled librarian such as Margaret who was able to cope with this growth and keep the Peabody Museum Library apace with it.

Margaret will be deeply missed by everyone at the Peabody and at William James Hall, as well as by the thousands of anthropologists all over the world who have met and known her. We hope that she will pay us frequent visits in the years to come and that she will enjoy a stimulating and happy retirement.

CURRENT MUSEUM PUBLICATIONS

THE WILLIAMS SITE: A Frontier Mogollon Village in West-Central New Mexico, by Watson Smith. Peabody Museum Papers, vol. 39, no. 2. ($4.50.)


GROTON PLANTATION: Archaeological Study of a South Carolina Locality, by James B. Stoltman. Peabody Museum Monographs, Number 1. ($7.50.)

THE MAYA: An Introduction. Peabody Museum Catalogue. ($1.00.)

Published at The Peabody Museum, 11 Divinity Ave., Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138