

Colonial Intrigues and my Dismissal as Director of Antiquities:
A Memoir of Cyprus in the 1930s



ARCHAEOLOGICAL LIVES

COLONIAL INTRIGUES
AND MY DISMISSAL AS
DIRECTOR OF ANTIQUITIES:
A Memoir of Cyprus in the 1930s

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Edited by Nicholas Stanley-Price

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Cover image: John Hilton and Peggy Hilton, detail from poster promoting Famagusta tourism (© The Costas and Rita Severis Collection)

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Foreword

My father was always haunted by his memories of Cyprus. It was the place where he was at his happiest, on a beautiful island with an enthralling job and a wife pregnant with his first child. Cyprus was also the place from where he was evicted in what he felt was the first major failure of his life.

Many years later after his retirement from the Foreign Office, he compiled a memoir about Cyprus based largely on his and my mother's letters to friends and family. (He was always an entertaining and energetic letter-writer.) When he gave me – the Cyprus child – a copy of his memoir, he expected nothing but praise and was hurt and disappointed when I said it needed more exposition.

I am very grateful that Nicholas Stanley-Price has now produced this annotated and illustrated edition of the memoir and made it accessible to others. My father would have been delighted.

Jennifer Hilton, Baroness Hilton of Eggardon

Editor's Preface

John Hilton was a young English architect who in 1934 was appointed the first Director of Antiquities in Cyprus. The Governor of Cyprus dismissed him from this post within less than a year (in the end, he served for 17 months). This volume is an edited, annotated and illustrated version of an unpublished memoir that Hilton wrote about his experience. As a memoir composed many years later, it benefits from the author's mature reflections on the episode; but its raw material is a series of letters written at the time by him and his wife Peggy to their families in England. Like diaries, letters are self-censored up to a point but they have a freshness and authenticity that are often lacking in memoirs written much later. In this case, when writing their letters the Hiltons were aware of the prevailing regime of censorship that the colonial government had introduced. Reviving a selection of them many years later for his memoir, John Hilton was free to add commentary that while in Cyprus he might have hesitated to commit to paper.

When and why did Hilton compose this 'chronicle' as he called it? On re-reading later one of his letters, he made a pencilled annotation which corrected its date and which reads 'This must be 18 December 1935 (JRH 31/1/68)'. He retired from full-time employment the following year (1969); thus, the latest 1960s seem a likely period for when he started to prepare the typescript (in which he notes the deaths of Porphyrios Dikaios in 1971 and of David Talbot Rice, in 1972). He circulated it for comment to a few family members (see the Foreword by his daughter Jennifer) and friends but, whether or not he had ideas of publishing it, it remained in the family. After his death in 1994, Jennifer Hilton deposited it together with the family letters, photographs and other material with the archives of King's College London while retaining copyright.

As to why Hilton composed this memoir, as his own Preface implies, he had found his experience in Cyprus extraordinary and unforgettable. A popular article that he wrote for *The Listener* soon after returning to England revealed his fascination with that 'most lovely country'. His list of chapter headings here in the Contents prepares the reader for the author's style: it displays a love of words combined with an analytical precision (his initial degree subject at university was mathematics) that served him well in the government intelligence work that occupied the greater part of his career.

The title that I have attached here to his Preface, 'A camel-load of woad', was the one that Hilton gave his memoir as a whole (Figure 1)¹. The conceit is presumably a self-deprecating reference to his experience in the island colony, noting that the British had been dressed in woad (in fact, a blue dyestuff used also as body-paint) at the time of the birth in Cyprus of Zeno, the founder of the Stoic school of philosophy

¹ The Scottish artist Keith Henderson (1883-1982) spent a year in Cyprus in 1928-29, employed by the Empire Marketing Board which later issued the poster reproduced here in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Keith Henderson, Cyprus. Promotional poster issued by the Empire Marketing Board, c. 1929-30.

(the subject closest to Hilton’s heart). I have chosen a different and more explicit title for this edited version of his text – ‘intrigue’ was a term often applied to the manoeuvrings that led to his dismissal.

In his typescript, Hilton justified his extensive quotes from family letters:

It has been argued that the best fruits of the spirit are grounded in narcissism. I am not sure about this; and so have some doubt about my enjoyment of my own letters ... but the reader has cause to feel that he is being sold second-hand goods which were not even products of careful craftsmanship in the first place. As some extenuation of the indulgence, I offer the fact that the letters contain evidence of what was happening and when, free from the disturbances that memory might be prone to, under the influence of later events. And, although modes of experience of events and the resulting moods and attitudes are inevitably obscured by double refraction, through the temperaments of the sender and the addressee, something, I hope, comes through – including no doubt unquestioned assumptions, anomalies in the conceptual framework, faulty judgements. Letters are raw material, both in the sense of an unfudged, do-it-yourself kit and in the sense of crude, half-baked. The reader can make his own thing of them, seasoned to taste.

All the family letters were addressed by John and Peggy Hilton to their own parents or occasionally to their in-laws or, rarely, to their brothers and sisters. Since their letters were shared among all the family members to whom they were sent, Hilton noted, they tried not to repeat themselves when writing them. All were handwritten (see Figure 18) and were later transcribed and typed by the author when selecting from them to compose his memoir. The official letters that he included were already typewritten except for a few marked 'Personal' or 'Confidential'. All the family letters (except one from her mother) quoted here were written by John Hilton (JRH) or by his wife Peggy (MFH) and all were written from Nicosia unless otherwise indicated. Since their letters were shared and the specific addressee is not always clear, I have given only the author and date, in the interests of maintaining so far as possible a continuous text, as in Hilton's own longer version.

In editing his typescript, I have been more ruthless in deletions from the letters than Hilton himself admitted to. Omitting material about family matters, the renovation of their old house in Nicosia and the planting and flourishing of its garden has diminished the 'family' tone of the memoir. But this has been done in favour of concentrating on the personalities and the events leading to Hilton's dismissal from his post, while retaining his asides about the social dynamics of colonial Cyprus. Where relevant, I have sometimes added material from letters that Hilton himself had not selected. I have also re-inserted some people's names which he had removed in his typescript but which now, 90 years later, can be identified either from the original letters or from other sources. I have 'modernised' punctuation and added the explanatory footnotes and the illustrations, many of them Hilton's own photographs. The occasional reference to '(drawing)' indicates little sketches that Hilton inserted in his letters (see Figure 41 for an example). Edits in the text in round parentheses are Hilton's, in square brackets the editor's. Very occasionally I have added brief explanatory paragraphs, distinguished by being italicised.

Including extracts from letters written to different correspondents occasionally causes the overall forward chronology of the text to repeat itself. I have therefore provided here a summary 'Chronology of principal events'. The 'Dramatis personae' gives brief cameos of the principal characters in this story. The introductory essay entitled 'The Hiltons and colonial society in 1930s Cyprus' is a new synthesis of contemporary sources for this topic and serves as a background to Hilton's own account of his experiences.

Acknowledgments. I am indebted to Baroness Hilton for giving me a copy of her father's memoir and for allowing me to produce this edition of it; also to the staff at the King's College London: Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives for providing access to Hilton's papers and for copies of his photographs. My thanks are due to Pertev Basri, Lisa Colletta, Aspasia Georgiades, Ruth Keshishian, Danai Konstantinidou, Robert Merrillees, Andrea Pacor, Charlotte Roueché and Rita Severis for permission to use material, for help with illustrations and for encouraging me to pursue this idea.

A Chronology of Principal Events, 1932–36

1932

- 1 January. Porphyrios Dikaios starts officially as Curator of the Cyprus Museum.
- 15 April. Rupert Gunnis appointed Inspector of Antiquities by Storrs, to start in the autumn.
- 3 June. Foundation-stone laid for the new Government House.
- 9 June. Governor Storrs leaves Cyprus at the end of his term of office.
- 17 September-5 October. W.H. Buckler with V. Seymer (his son-in-law) visit Cyprus.
- 16 November. Buckler reports to the Archaeological Joint Committee in London.

1933

- 22 September. Letter to *The Times* re 'The Antiquities of Cyprus: Byzantine culture'.
- 5 December. First meeting of Viscount Mersey's Cyprus Committee.
- 21 December. Sir Richmond Palmer arrives in Cyprus as Governor.

1934

- 18 March-12 April. G. Hill, C. Peers, V. Seymer, C. Cave and W.H. Buckler visit Cyprus.
- Peers and Hill recommend creating an antiquities department under a Director of Antiquities.
- July. Mersey launches an Appeal for funds for the Cyprus Committee.
- 9 August. The Colonial Office appoints Hilton Director of Antiquities.
- 9 November. The Hiltons arrive in Cyprus via Rhodes.
- 29 November. Joseph Bowler, foreman, and his family arrive in Cyprus.

1935

- 1 January. Official start-date of the new Department of Antiquities.
- 15 January. Official secondment of Theophilus Mogabgab to the Department.
- January-February. Captain Alan Graham, member of the Cyprus Committee, visits.
- 28 February. W.D. Battershill arrives as Colonial Secretary (immediately Acting Governor).
- 3 April. Death of George Jeffery, former Curator of Ancient Monuments.
- April. Geoffrey Peto, member of the Cyprus Committee, visits.
- 9 June. Palmer departs from Cyprus on summer leave, as do Gunnis and Dikaios.
- 3 August. Battershill as Acting Governor summons Hilton to Troodos to dismiss him.
- 17 October. Palmer returns from leave.
- 6 December. The Colonial Office offers Hilton a three-month extension of contract.
- 31 December. New law on Antiquities published in the *Cyprus Gazette*.

1936

12 January. Birth of the Hiltons' daughter Jennifer in Nicosia.

6 February. Palmer in an internal Memorandum abolishes Gunnis's official position.

28 February. New Antiquities Advisory Boards set up.

6 April. The Hiltons leave Cyprus.

Dramatis Personae

The following characters had a direct impact on the episode of Hilton's directorship in Cyprus in 1934-36. Fuller biographical details for many of them can be found online, for example in the Dictionary of National Biography or the Dictionary of Art Historians. Minor characters are identified in the footnotes to the text (see the Index for page references).

Andoniou, Costas

Costas Andoniou was educated at the Fröbel School in Cyprus and then, for two years, at the prestigious English School in Nicosia. In November 1934 the Hiltons employed him as a live-in houseboy and cook at their house in the Old Town of Nicosia. He acted as their interpreter when need be. On their departure, he became briefly the houseboy to Hilton's successor, Peter Megaw and his wife Elektra, and then for a Mrs Thomson, while earnestly seeking a job in the Cyprus Museum. Deciding instead to try his luck in England, in 1938 he was invited by the Hiltons to stay in their house in Bristol while they sought work for him.

Battershill, William Denis

William Denis ('Dan' to his friends) Battershill (1896-1959) joined the civil service after serving in the First World War. An efficient administrator with scrupulous attention to detail, he also insisted on correct protocol and etiquette. In 1937, after two years as Colonial Secretary in Cyprus, he reluctantly moved to Palestine as Chief Secretary, only to return willingly to Cyprus in mid-August 1939 as Governor, just as the Second World War was breaking out. Again after two years and again out of a sense of duty, he agreed to transfer to London to become Assistant Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies. Finishing his career in 1949 as Governor of Tanganyika, he retired to Kyrenia where he lived until his death. In 1924 he had married Joan Gellibrand. Of their two daughters, Ann for health reasons did not accompany her parents for the first of her father's postings to Cyprus. Their other daughter Jane (D'Arcy) in 1993 donated her father's papers to the Bodleian Library in Oxford.

Beazley, J.D.

John David ('Jack') Beazley (1885-1970) was Lincoln Professor of Classical Archaeology and Art at Oxford University (1925-56) and renowned for his classification of Attic pottery based on artistic styles. While at Oxford, Hilton came to know well Beazley and his wife Marie Bloomfield. Beazley strongly supported Hilton in his application for the Cyprus post and later in the fallout from his 'resignation'. He, together with his former student Bernard Ashmole, Yates Professor of Classical Archaeology at University College, London, purchased at a Sotheby's auction in December 1933 vases from the collection of Rupert Gunnis that had previously been registered at the Cyprus Museum and then sold as duplicates.

Bowler, Joseph

Joseph Edward Bowler (1905-62), stonemason and foreman, was recruited in 1934 by the Hiltons to work in Cyprus while on secondment from his Office of Works position at Rievaulx Abbey in Yorkshire. Adapting easily to a quite new environment, he lived with his wife Nancy and their two young daughters, first in Famagusta and then in Nicosia, while repairing monuments and training Cypriot stonemasons in restoration ethics and techniques. In 1938 he declined a second renewal of his contract. The family returned to England before the outbreak of war, and he was re-employed by the Office of Works. For Hilton writing at the end of his career, Bowler was 'one of the best men I have ever known'.

Buckler, W.H.

William Hepburn Buckler (1867-1952), an American born in Paris and educated in England, worked first as a lawyer, then as a diplomat for the United States, while also joining the American archaeological project at Sardis in Turkey, specialising in epigraphy. Following his visit to Cyprus in 1932 with Vivian Seymer, his son-in-law, he raised concern in Britain about the state of the island's monuments. This led to the inspection visit in 1934 made by Sir Charles Peers and Sir George Hill, accompanied by Seymer, the photographer C.J.P. Cave and himself. He was a founder-member of Viscount Mersey's Cyprus Committee. It was Buckler who put Hilton in touch with Peers and Hill during the subsequent search for a Director of Antiquities. In 1938 on a return visit to the island with his wife, the Byzantinist Georgina Buckler, he saw the progress that had been made in monument preservation and in the Cyprus Museum.

Carøe, William D.

William Douglas Carøe (1857-1938), born in Lancashire of a Danish father, was an architect especially of churches, being named Architect to the Ecclesiastical Commission. From 1926, if not earlier, he spent the winters in Cyprus. Outspoken in his criticism, he fell out with George Jeffery, the Curator of Ancient Monuments (q.v. below) and undertook his own restoration work with the backing of the Governor but disregarding standard conservation principles. His new building projects in Cyprus included the Anglican Church at Troodos, Catsellis's Dome Hotel in Kyrenia and his own house ('Latomia') a little to the west of that town. Hilton managed to maintain friendly relations with both Jeffery and Carøe.

Crosthwaite, Moore

Ponsonby Moore Crosthwaite (1907-89) was a contemporary and close friend of Hilton at Corpus Christi College, Oxford. Of wide cultural interests, he made Hilton aware of the architecture of Le Corbusier which inspired Hilton after Oxford to spend time in Germany studying the Bauhaus movement. He joined the Diplomatic Service in 1932 and was serving at the British Embassy in Baghdad while the Hiltons were in Nicosia. He visited them there in May-June 1935 and provided moral support to Hilton when Gunnis was busy undermining his position. He ended his diplomatic career as Ambassador to Lebanon (1958-63) and then to Sweden (1963-66).

Dawe, Arthur

Arthur James Dawe (1898-1950) was a civil servant who served long-term on the Mediterranean and Pacific desk at the Colonial Office and who handled Cyprus matters. He visited Cyprus in 1926, guided around Salamis by Mogabgab (q.v.), and again in 1930 accompanying the visit of the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, Sir Drummond Shiels. He and Sir George Hill shared an interest in rare books about Cyprus. The CO internal records show him sympathising with Hilton's situation and at the lack of support he received in Cyprus after taking up his post there.

Dikaios, Porphyrios

Porphyrios Dikaios (1904-71) was Curator of the Cyprus Museum from 1931 until 1960 when he was appointed Chief Antiquities Officer (and later, briefly, Director of Antiquities). After studies abroad in Athens, Liverpool and Paris, on his return to Cyprus in 1929 he was made Assistant Curator under Menelaos Markides. His principal research interest at this stage was the Neolithic and Chalcolithic period, for which he travelled the island identifying new sites and excavated at Erimi and then at Khirokitia. He and Hilton worked well together, to the relief of Dikaios who had a strained relationship with Rupert Gunnis. His successful fundraising, mainly from the Carnegie Corporation, allowed him to enlarge the Museum and to reorganise its collections and displays in the mid-1930s.

Du Plat Taylor, Joan

Joan du Plat Taylor (1906-83) was the Honorary Assistant Keeper of the Cyprus Museum under Markides and then Dikaios. She lived with her mother and father, a retired Lieutenant-Colonel in the Indian army, at the house they had built, 'Komopetries' at Strovolos near Nicosia, while often spending the summer months in England. She started at the Museum as a volunteer helping to organise the collections and to sell duplicate antiquities in the sale-room. Acquiring excavation experience in the English summers with Mortimer and Tessa Wheeler and with Kathleen Kenyon, she assisted Dikaios in his work at Khirokitia and supervised rescue excavations and her own research project at Ayios Philon. Her mother's A short guide to Nicosia (c. 1933) was pioneering as a popular guide to the Old Town.

Graham, Alan

Captain Alan Crosland Graham (1896-1964) was a close friend of Rupert Gunnis, a frequent guest of Governor Palmer, and a member of Viscount Mersey's Cyprus Committee. He had been private secretary to the first Viscount Hailsham until elected to Parliament as a Conservative MP in November 1935. He was a frequent visitor to Cyprus, and in Britain gave public lectures and wrote articles for the press promoting its political and economic importance. For the Cyprus Committee he financed a project at the Royal Chapel in Pyrga, insisting on a fuller restoration of it than current thinking allowed. It was supposedly after his stay with Gunnis in January 1935, two months after Hilton had started work, that criticism of the latter's inadequacy for the role started to circulate.

Gunnis, Rupert

Rupert Forbes Gunnis (1899-1965) arrived in Cyprus in December 1926 as A.d.C. and Private Secretary to the new Governor, Sir Ronald Storrs. In recognition of his voluntary work as a member of the Cyprus Museum Committee, Storrs before his departure in 1932 gave Gunnis a salaried post as Inspector of Antiquities. Liaising with the police, he travelled widely in the island to control illicit excavation activity while also collecting information for his *Historic Cyprus* (1936), a comprehensive guide to the monuments and churches of Cyprus. The appointment of a Director of Antiquities (John Hilton), as recommended by Peers and Hill, challenged the freedom of action of Gunnis who, despite his role, was not listed officially as a member of the new Department of Antiquities. In response to criticism from the Colonial Office, Governor Palmer in February 1936 abolished the Inspector post. Since 1926 Gunnis had been purchasing antiquities for himself and illegally exporting them to England. This offence, well known to authorities in Cyprus and England, and other failures for which Hilton denounced him shortly before his departure in April 1936, led to Gunnis ceasing to have any official role with antiquities. He stayed on in Cyprus, living in a mansion that he had built in Nicosia, until he left the island hurriedly in 1939 to avoid facing criminal charges being prepared against him for homosexual behaviour.

Harding, Gilbert

Gilbert Charles Harding (1907-60) was a policeman in Bradford until he applied successfully, after an interview in London with J.R. Cullen, Director of Education, for a teaching position at the Greek Gymnasium in Limassol. After one year he moved to Nicosia to teach at the Turkish Lycée, living near the St. Sophia cathedral/mosque not far from the Hiltons. In 1935 he became the Cyprus correspondent for *The Times*. In 1936 he returned to England and a successful career with the BBC. Unlike Hilton, Harding frequented the English Clubs in Limassol and Nicosia and was a welcome guest at Government House but, unlike most of his compatriots, he also had many Cypriot friends.

Hill, Sir George

George Francis Hill (1867-1948) was Director and Principal Librarian of the British Museum, 1931-36. He was knighted in 1931. He was the founding Secretary in 1918 of the influential Archaeological Joint Committee that managed British interests in archaeology. Having joined the British Museum's Department of Coins and Medals in 1893, one of his early publications was a *Catalogue of the Greek coins of Cyprus* (1904) but his first visit to the island was for the mission with Sir Charles Peers in 1934. His interest in antiquities legislation informed his recommended revisions to the law in Cyprus (published in 1935). He was a founder-member of the Cyprus Committee. Hill was Hilton's primary supporter for the Director position and he was evidently disillusioned at its outcome, for which he partly blamed himself. Identifying them only by their initials, he dedicated the first volume (1940) of his four-volume *History of Cyprus* to his companions on his 1934 visit and on a second visit in 1938 made with his successor at the Museum, E.J. Forsdyke.

Hilton, John

John Robert Hilton (1908-94) switched from studying mathematics at Oxford University to the new degree in Politics, Philosophy and Economics (PPE), being awarded a First-Class Honours degree. After spending time in Germany studying Bauhaus architecture, he enrolled at the Bartlett School of Architecture in London, cramming the first two years' syllabus into two terms. After graduating he qualified as an Associate of the Royal Institute of British Architects (ARIBA). In 1934 he turned down the offer of a Lectureship in Philosophy at the University of Birmingham in favour of accepting the post in Cyprus. Returning to England, he worked as an architect in Bristol for a commercial packaging company, E.S. & A. Robinson. At the outbreak of war, he received a commission in the Royal Engineers but in 1943 he was recruited by the Foreign Office, spending most of the rest of his career in the Secret Intelligence Service (S.I.S.). The Foreign Office assigned him to Istanbul and then Athens (December 1945-June 1947) and later again to Istanbul (1956-60) from where with his family he re-visited Cyprus on holiday. Otherwise, he was based in London, retiring in 1969.

Hilton, Peggy

Margaret Frances ('Peggy') Hilton (née Stephens; 1909-97), after failing to pass Latin exams at Oxford University, attended the Slade School of Art in London where her mother and future mother-in-law and future brother-in-law (the abstract painter Roger Hilton) also studied. After the Slade, she studied painting in the Paris studio of the artist Roger Bissière. She and John Hilton, recently qualified as an architect, married on 3 September 1933 (the families had known each other for years). In Cyprus she painted when time permitted while teaching herself the rudiments of conservation in order to consolidate damaged frescoes on the monuments. In January 1936, she gave birth in Nicosia to the eldest of her four children, Jennifer (later Baroness Hilton of Eggardon).

Jeffery, George

George Henry Everett Jeffery (1855-1935) was an architect and Curator of Ancient Monuments in Cyprus from 1903 to 1915 (when the High Commissioner appointed him his Private Secretary) and from 1921 to 1935 when he retired. During this long tenure, never provided with adequate funding, he studied and conserved the historic buildings, one of whose outcomes was his *A description of the historic monuments of Cyprus. Studies in the archaeology and architecture of the island* (1918). His strict adherence to the conservation principles advocated by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) in Britain brought him into conflict with his fellow-architect William Caröe (q.v. above). The Hiltons, near-neighbours in the Old Town of Nicosia, befriended him in his final year – his wife Helen had died in 1926. The published diaries of Jeffery are an invaluable resource for the study of Cyprus and its colonial society in the period 1900-35.

Lloyd-Carson, Harold

Harold Lloyd-Carson (1899-1959) was from December 1933 the Aide-de-Camp (A.d.C.) and Private Secretary to the Governor, Sir Richmond Palmer. Both had previously been serving in The Gambia – Palmer presumably asked Lloyd-Carson to accompany him to Cyprus. He married in Nicosia the following April, 1934. Captain Lloyd-Carson had been serving in the army until losing a leg in a railway accident. Despite this, he rode and played regularly tennis and golf, only a slight limp betraying his artificial leg. As Acting Governor, Battershill, whose unpublished autobiography provides this information, found him always well-informed, knowing everyone but remaining discreet. When Battershill returned as Governor in 1939, he invited Lloyd-Carson back to Cyprus as his A.d.C. After one year in this role, he resumed Army service, seeing action in North Africa and during the landings in Italy. His record with the two very different Governors suggests a man of integrity and trust.

MacNeice, Louis

Frederick Louis MacNeice (1907-63) was an Irish poet and playwright. He and John Hilton were lifelong friends, starting at school (Marlborough; Anthony Blunt was the third of a trio of friends) and Oxford University. At Oxford their social circle included Professor J.D. Beazley (q.v. above). In 1930 MacNeice married Mariette Ezra, Beazley's stepdaughter from his wife's first marriage, and took up an assistant lectureship in Classics at the University of Birmingham. He failed to persuade Hilton to accept a lectureship in philosophy there rather than the post in Cyprus. Hilton's account of MacNeice at school and university, published in 1965, illustrates not only the making of a poet but also the wide intellectual interests of Hilton himself.

Mersey, Viscount

Charles Clive Bigham, 2nd Viscount Mersey (1872-1956), travelled widely in the Ottoman Empire, Russia and China, holding honorary attaché positions at British embassies. After World War I he held various Board memberships in the City. Prompted by the letter to *The Times* of 22 September 1933 about the poor state of monuments in Cyprus, he set up a committee to raise funds for their repair and visited the island in spring 1934. The Committee's funding, though less than the Governor hoped for, allowed Hilton to tackle those buildings most urgently in need. Mersey's tendency to communicate directly with Hilton, and Gunnis's friendship with committee members, worsened Hilton's standing with the Governor. The Cyprus Committee continued to provide financial support to the Department of Antiquities until being disbanded in 1954.

Mogabgab, Theophilus

Theophilus Amin Halil Mogabgab (1886-1965), born in Famagusta to parents of Syrian origin, studied surveying in Beirut and was employed in 1906 as a draughtsman by the Railways Department, transferring in 1912 to the Lands Survey and Registration Department as a Land Registry Clerk. His exceptional knowledge of and enthusiasm for the history of his native town impressed Sir George Hill (q.v.). On the latter's recommendation Hilton arranged his secondment to the new

Department of Antiquities. He admired Hilton as a manager and supported him fully in building up the Department, in conducting earth-clearance operations in and around monuments in Famagusta, and in developing tourism. However, an award to him from the French Government and his applications to study abroad were both blocked by Governor Palmer on the advice, Mogabgab was convinced, of Gunnis. In 1947 the British government recognised his work with the award of an MBE.

Münir Bey, Mehmet

Mehmet Münir Bey (1890-1957), a graduate of the English School in Nicosia and qualified as a barrister in London, became the de facto leader of the Turkish Cypriot community. He was strongly pro-British and conservative in his views, provoking resentment in the community at his accumulation of offices that he held. In 1931, Governor Storrs conferred on him the British government's award of an OBE. During Hilton's tenure, he was a member of the Executive and Advisory Councils, and also of the Cyprus Museum Committee. As the director and efficient administrator of the Evkaf, he provided essential support to Hilton for his work on the many Evkaf properties in Famagusta and Nicosia in need of restoration.

Ormsby-Gore, William

William Ormsby-Gore (1885-1964) served in the army before and during WW1, while also, from 1910, sitting as a Conservative Member of Parliament at Westminster. As First Commissioner of Works (1931-36), he headed the Office of Works which was responsible for Britain's ancient monuments and historic buildings. He was a founder-member of Viscount Mersey's Cyprus Committee, and helped Hilton identify one of the Office's employees (Joseph Bowler, q.v.) to work with him in Cyprus as a foreman. Appointed Secretary of State for the Colonies from May 1936 and familiar with the controversy over Hilton's dismissal, he gave firm instructions to Governor Palmer to actively support the new Director (A.H.S. Megaw) and to limit Gunnis's role regarding Cypriot antiquities.

Palmer, Sir Richmond

Herbert Richmond Palmer (1877-1958) studied Classics and then law, qualifying as a barrister in London. He entered the Colonial Service and was appointed to Northern Nigeria where he was to spend 26 years, rising to Lieutenant Governor in 1925. He made himself an authority on the Hausa and Fulani, travelling extensively and drawing on African and Arabic sources to publish scholarly articles and monographs. He was knighted in 1933, and in November was posted as Governor to Cyprus. In that position he became increasingly authoritarian in his rule, a style referred to by Cypriots as the Palmerocracy and often despised of by his superiors in the Colonial Office. He gradually sidelined his Colonial Secretary (Battershill, q.v.) in favour of devolving power to the district commissioners, a model similar to one he had adopted in the much larger Northern Nigeria. In the frequent absences of his wife and children (see below), his summer leaves were long and his social life limited beyond official obligations. He swore never to go to dinner with anyone in Cyprus, Battershill reported, the only exceptions being made for Gunnis and J.D. Montagu,

one of the District Commissioners. His friendship with Gunnis influenced adversely his opinion of Hilton. Only as he was leaving Cyprus in 1939 did he acknowledge and denounce Gunnis's true character.

Palmer, Lady

Margaret Isabel Palmer (née Abel Smith; 1886-1973) was born into the Abel Smith family of The Goldings Estate in Hertfordshire. When she married Richmond Palmer in 1924, her husband was 47 years old. Their two daughters were aged nine and three when Palmer took up the Cyprus governorship. Lady Palmer ('beautiful and frail' in John Hilton's description) rarely accompanied her husband in Cyprus: her presence there in the Hilton years is attested in March and November 1934, from late February to early May 1935, and in October until after Christmas in 1936, when she was accompanied by their daughters.

Peers, Sir Charles

Charles Reed Peers (1868-1952) was an architect and preservationist. He was Inspector (from 1910) and then the first Chief Inspector of Ancient Monuments in the Office of Works from 1913 to 1933 when he retired. From 1931, the year in which he was knighted, his superior was Ormsby-Gore (q.v.). Representing the Ancient Monuments Board and the Society of Antiquaries, of which he was President, he attended the November 1932 meeting of the Archaeological Joint Committee that resolved to establish a Department of Antiquities in Cyprus. The reports by Hill and himself after their visit to the island led in due course to their interviewing and recommending the appointment of Hilton as inaugural Director.

Steel, Anthony

Anthony Bedford Steel (1900-73) was a lecturer in history at Cambridge University who sought the Colonial Office's 'moral support' to spend seven months' leave of absence in Cyprus in 1935-36. He discussed his plans with both Peers and Hill. The latter commented to Dawe at the CO that Steel was 'not like the majority of decayed colonial or military men who offer themselves'. Funded by the Leverhulme Trustees, he studied mural painting in Cyprus, exploring the Troodos churches in particular. Hilton found him 'a most invigoratingly incisive person' and welcomed his moral support in the difficult months as his contract was ending. In 1936-37 Steel was an enthusiastic promoter of Cyprus, writing popular articles and guiding cruise-ship passengers, but he declined Palmer's invitation to write an 'unbiased' textbook on Cypriot history.

Stewart, J.R.B.

James Rivers Barrington ('Jim') Stewart (1913-62) and his wife Eleanor (née Neal; 1911-2002) visited Cyprus as young archaeologists at the end of 1935 and stayed with the Hiltons in Nicosia. Stewart was en route to Turkey to pursue his Ph.D research for Cambridge University but this visit, for which Hilton provided extensive help in the Cyprus Museum and in the field, led to his devoting most of his career to Cypriot archaeology. The Stewarts' visit overlapped with that of Steel and his family (q.v.

above) and, like Steel, they provided the Hiltons with good company and support following Hilton's premature dismissal and preparation to leave.

Unwin, A.H.

Arthur Harold 'George' Unwin (1878-1963) was Head of the Forestry Department for 15 years (1921-36). He was an unpopular figure for his autocratic manner in his work and at home and for his policies favouring trees at the cost of the livelihoods of Cypriots, enunciated in his now-classic publication *Goat-grazing and forestry in Cyprus* (1928). He survived Cypriot attempts in the 1920s to give another colony 'the opportunity to take advantage of Dr. Unwin's knowledge' (quoted by Georghallides). As their neighbours in the Old Town, the Hiltons befriended the Unwins despite their eccentricities. Unwin retired in 1936 and the couple remained resident in the island.

Wheeler, Noel

Noel Frederick Wheeler (1894-1977) was a former Lieutenant-Commander in the Royal Navy who became an archaeologist in Egypt. Dismissed in 1933 as Field Director of the Harvard-Boston Expedition there, he and his wife Anna moved to Cyprus where they built themselves a house near Kyrenia. He was on the short-list for the Director position that was given to Hilton. The Wheelers welcomed the Hiltons to Cyprus and remained good friends.

Wheeler failed to find regular archaeological work in Cyprus, with Gunnis informing him (untruthfully) that all such appointments were made in England. The Stewarts (q.v.) spent time with the Wheelers during their own visit, having met them previously in Egypt. Wheeler stayed in the island until his death.