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METALS CONSERVATION AT THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM

BEING A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED FOR

THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF THE CANBERRA

COLLEGE OF ADVANCED EDUCATION

BY

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Preface

It would be impossible and I believe unprofitable to detail all the activities I engaged in at the WA Conservation Laboratories. The usual housekeeping tasks are not recorded nor is each and every calibration curve preceding a daily analysis. Time spent in publicity activities such as being the subject for a "Simon and Townsend Wonderworld" segment or a picture for a WA newspaper, taking part in consultations with members of the public or other sections, days spent weighing and measuring numerous bronze bars and pins - all these occurred but are not discussed. They were not central to my purpose which was to record the unique and different aspects of the activities of the host institution as I experienced them and to assist my understanding of the basic processes of corrosion and its treatment. Some of the most important benefits of an internship cannot be recorded directly. They are the sum of conversations with professional conservators on topics unrelated to the main theme of studies undertaken; observed attitudes and stratagems used for solving problems that arose. This style depends greatly on the personalities present at the time and I am delighted to have had such stimulating and informed company.

The staff at the WA Museum conservation section have between them an impressive range of talents and it is regretted that there was not enough time to spend several months working with each of them.

However, I consider myself fortunate to have had Dr. MacLeod as a supervisor and thank him for his unfailing patience and guidance.

Sincere thanks are also due to Dr. Neil North who kindly accepted me into his domain and obtained the monies to finance an internship.

Jennifer Edwards

July, 1982

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