

Professor Henry David Jocelyn

The degree of Doctor of Letters (honoris causa) was conferred upon Henry David Jocelyn at the Arts ceremony held at 9.30am on 27 October 1995.

Citation

Presented by the Vice-Chancellor and Principal Professor D McNicol

Chancellor

I have the honour to present Professor Henry David Jocelyn for admission to the degree of Doctor of Letters (honoris causa).

After graduating from the University of Sydney in 1954 with First Class Honours and University Medals in both Latin and Greek, Professor Jocelyn was appointed to a Teaching Fellowship in the Department of Latin. He read Part II of the Classical Tripos at St John's College, Cambridge, graduating in 1957 with a rare 'starred and lettered' First. Elected a Scholar of the College, he was awarded the Sandys Studentship tenable at the British School at Rome. In 1959 he returned to Sydney as Lecturer in Latin and he was appointed to a Readership in 1963 and to a Personal Chair in 1969.

As early as 1963 referees were speaking of Professor Jocelyn as one of the leading Latinists of his generation, as a scholar of complete intellectual honesty and as a penetrating critic. His first book based on his Cambridge PhD thesis, an edition of the Tragedies of Ennius, was printed by Cambridge University Press in 1967, and re-printed two years later after an enthusiastic reception by British, Continental and American scholars. Fifteen years later he was elected to the Editorial Board of Cambridge Texts and Commentaries. By 1973 Professor Jocelyn had refused several attractive offers of Chairs in the USA and Germany, but succumbed to an invitation from Manchester. Easier access to the scholarly community of Europe and the great libraries were clearly the deciding factors.

Since then two more books have appeared, he has been a joint editor of another three, and contributed substantial sections to over thirty more. These included a penetrating discussion of the growth of classical studies in Australia and New Zealand in a history of 20th century Greek and Latin philology published in Italian at Pisa in 1989, and on the university and classical studies in the Illustrated History of the University of Oxford published in 1993. He has contributed a vast, unceasing series of important articles to the major classical periodicals of the UK, the USA and Europe, and is in constant demand by their editors as a reviewer.

When he left Australia, he had already been elected to the Australian Academy of the Humanities and, in 1982, he was elected to the British Academy. Ten years later, J.N. Adams, who had been one of his students in Sydney, and later a colleague at Manchester, was similarly honoured. The University of Sydney can, therefore, claim as its own two of the very few Australians to have achieved this distinction.

Professor Jocelyn's contribution to Latin Scholarship has been prodigious, and is already a landmark in the history of classical studies. He has brought great honour to this University.

Chancellor, I have great pleasure in presenting Professor Henry David Jocelyn for admission to the degree of Doctor of Letters (honoris causa).