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RECORD

The University Archives

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The University Archives

Established in 1954, the University Archives is the official repository for the records of the administration, of departments, clubs and societies, and of persons involved in, or closely connected with, the University. It also holds some of the archival records of institutions which have amalgamated with the University. It also houses a collection of photographs of University interest, both prints and negatives, and University publications of all kinds. The reading room and repository are on the 9th floor of the Fisher Library, and the records are available for research use by all members of the University and by the general public. Restricted access conditions may apply to some records. The reading room is open 9-1, 2-5, Mondays to Fridays. Copies of records and illustrations can be supplied for exhibitions, publications and course work.

The Archivist is responsible to the Registrar for the care and preservation of the University Archives, which include the records of the Senate, the Academic Board and those of the many administrative offices which control the functions of the University of Sydney. The implementation of the University's Archival Policy includes arranging the transfer of administrative records and the deposit of records of academic departments, individuals, clubs and societies. Other duties of the Archivist include the distribution of published material under the deposit provisions of the Copyright Acts, and the mounting of exhibitions, illustrating aspects of the University's history.

The provision of information to officers of the Administration is an essential duty of the Archivist, but the University's Archives do not operate as a general information centre. The purpose of the University Archives is to provide for the safe keeping of records from which researchers may extract information, and one of the most important duties of the Archivist is the preparation of finding aids in order to facilitate such research.

Access to records designated as archival is permitted only under the direct control and supervision of the Archivist, or recognised staff of the Archives. Access by approved persons may be permitted provided that, in general, the records are older than thirty years. Intending researchers are required to complete an application form. The conditions of access to records other than official material vary according to the conditions of deposit.

ARCHIVIST'S NOTES

As with 1994, we have managed to produce one edition of Record this year, and it may well be that this will be the general rule from now on. The University Archives has had a prolonged period of disruption since 1992, and it may be that this will continue for the foreseeable future. We are, of course, not alone in the University in this. Without the assistance of some professional part - time staff we would have been in dire straits indeed. The fact that the Assistant University Archivist is also the Freedom of Information Coordinator and Privacy Officer has meant that part - time staff may become the norm in 1996.

This edition does much the same things as before, including as it does two articles illustrating the research use of the University Archives, a list of accessions received in the Archives from July 1994 to June 1995, and some general comments on current activities. We are constantly striving to carry out the activities that we know we should be involved in, even though we know that, as a profession, we suffer from an poor image problem. The challenge is how to convince the University of Sydney to use the skills that today's archivists have in an internal records audit role, rather than the passive, custodial activities that most University people seem to think is our proper place. The University of Sydney does not, in the fullest sense, have an overall policy regarding records. There are in place some rules regarding some of the files raised, but they comprise but a small part of the total records being produced. In addition, devolution has resulted in even less control of records. There is great potential for records anarchy, indeed, it may already be with us. A University - wide approach to records problems is needed, and archivists are uniquely placed to assist here.

The two articles we include in this edition of Record are very good examples of the scholarly use of records held in the University Archives. Dr Peter Chippendale links the physical environment of the early University of Sydney to the prevailing concept of the what a university was in mid - 19th century England, an intriguing thought indeed. The idea at the time was that the colleges at Oxford and Cambridge were usurping the real role of the university, and that their primacy should be curtailed. It was also contended that the new university in the Antipodes should be secular, and open to all who desired to study, whilst at the same time permitting the establishment of residential colleges, which could cater for the different religious denominations. In addition, this was to be translated into the physical, or built, environment.

The second article, by Mr Keith Jones, our valued Honorary Research Affiliate, demonstrates how a single book of letters may be used to produce a fascinating social comment on the period of the first

world war in England. The bound set of letters were written by Florence and Geoffrey Sulman, the children of noted architect, Sir John Sulman. There are comments by Florence in particular which give an insight on the condition of the working class in England during the war. Florence, it seems, was a very perceptive observer of the social scene, viewed, of course, from the perspective of her solid middle - class upbringing. Geoffrey was much younger than Florence, and his letters reveal a boyish enthusiasm which is both naive and poignant, for he dies in a 'plane accident.

These two articles were produced using both official and unofficial records of the University. We would classify both writers as being non - official users, in that the product in both cases is a contribution to a historical appreciation of the University of Sydney. We should never lose sight of the fact that the University needs to retain official records in order to assist it in carrying out its legal obligations, and in facilitating its day to day administration. The challenge in the future, indeed it is already with us, is to control and preserve that small, but essential body of records that is now being produced on the personal computers all over the University, as well as the more traditional and conventional records. To do that means an involvement with the records process at the time of creation, perhaps even at the design stage.

In addition, there is a very informative piece by a temporary member of the Archives staff, Samantha Hughes, on a series of important negatives by Harold Cazneaux.

Kenneth E. Smith
University Archivist

THE IDEA OF THE UNIVERSITY IN THE ANTIPODES AND PLANNING THE SITE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

In November 1994 the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sydney, Professor Don McNicol, unveiled a capital works programme designed to upgrade the buildings, grounds and other facilities of the University over the decade to 2,004 at a cost of \$550 million. The Vice-Chancellor's description of the project as a 'watershed in the 144-year history of Sydney University',¹ suggests that it would be instructive not only to look forward, toward the realization of these plans, but also to glance backward, to the beginnings of the University and its establishment at Grose Farm in the mid-nineteenth century.

It is not generally recognised that the planning of the original site was designed not only to provide scope for the realization of a building programme on the grand scale, but also to give practical effect in the antipodes to a particular idea of the university which emerged in England in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, in connection with the debate of the time on the reform of Oxford and Cambridge. The purpose of this article is to explain this idea and its significance for the early development of the University of Sydney, including the selection and planning of the original university site.

The idea of the university which came to prevail in Sydney had its origins in the writings of Sir William Hamilton, Professor of Civil Law at Edinburgh, who attacked Oxford and Cambridge and proposed a plan for their reformation in a series of articles in the Edinburgh Review in the 1830's.² A graduate of Glasgow, Hamilton was familiar with the work of the advanced German Universities, and he had studied at Balliol College Oxford, where he had distinguished himself as a student of Aristotle.³ His writings on university reform became profoundly influential, not only on the reformers of the English Universities who came after him, but also on the development of the idea of the university in colonial New South Wales.

The articles in the Edinburgh Review brought together the principal lines of criticism against Oxford and Cambridge which had been developing in somewhat sporadic fashion since the late eighteenth century: the dominance of the colleges in university government and administration, studies and teaching; the religious exclusiveness of the universities, and the narrow and dated university curricula. Hamilton directed his particular attack against Oxford, which he regarded as 'of all academical institutions at once the most imperfect and the most perfectible'. He argued that at Oxford the colleges had illegally usurped the teaching function of the University; that collegiate teaching was

inefficient; and that the colleges were 'private institutions' which had transformed the public university into a foundation closed to all but members of the established church. He contended that Oxford should be reformed by re-establishing the primacy of the University over the colleges, through a revival of the teaching authority of a long- since moribund professoriate, and by re-establishing the ancient halls, so that undergraduates could be readmitted to the University whatever their religious beliefs.

Hamilton's thesis became the standard armoury of reformers of the ancient universities, and by the mid-century his insistence on the revival of the professorial system, as the means to re-assert the educational supremacy of the University over the colleges, was fundamental to the thinking of liberal reformers within Oxford itself, especially to members of the so-called 'Advanced Party' of the liberal revival which swept the University in the mid to late 1840's, such as Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, who became secretary to a royal commission appointed to enquire into the University and Colleges of Oxford in 1850. The commissioners' report, written by Stanley,⁴ argued that university teaching should be released from the narrow monopoly control of an ineffective system of tutorial instruction, staffed by transient college tutors who were merely marking time on their way to a clerical living. In a remodelled system of instruction collegiate tuition would be subservient to the teaching dispensed by an expanded professoriate of the University, staffed by men of scholarly distinction, who would be devoted to the academic career. The university professoriate, revitalised at collegiate expense, would have a substantial voice in the academic business of the University, hitherto dominated by a narrow oligarchy of college heads. This central contention, of the dominance of the professoriate, in the commissioners' idea of Oxford reformed, assumed a fundamental significance in the early development of the University of Sydney.

An Act to Incorporate and Endow the University of Sydney⁵, drafted by William Charles Wentworth,⁶ passed the Legislative Council of New South Wales on 24 September, 1850, and received Governor Sir Charles Fitzroy's assent on 1 October. In accord with its framer's proclaimed determination to eschew any suggestion of an attempt to recreate Oxbridge in the antipodes, the Act revealed no trace of the influence of the ancient English Universities or of their religious exclusiveness. Indeed, the Sydney Act was adapted from the legislation for the foundation of the newer, secular institutions at home - the University of London, chartered by the Crown in 1836, and the Queen's Colleges in Ireland, established from Westminster in 1845. On the model of the University of London, the University of Sydney, under the patronage of the State and governed by a lay (non-

academic) Senate, was to examine candidates instructed in recognized institutions, of any religious denomination or none, for the award of only secular degrees in Arts, Law and Medicine. At the same time, by dint of a provision in the Act that it should be lawful for the Senate to apply any portion of the endowment fund to the establishment and maintenance of a college under the direct supervision of the University (and therefore sharing in its secular, non-sectarian character) the University of Sydney, like the Queen's Colleges in Ireland, was founded and endowed by the State to provide secular instruction, for secular degrees, to non-resident students of a university college. This colonial hybrid of university and college, of London and Ireland, was well adapted to Wentworth's fundamental purpose - the achievement of the absolute primacy and ascendancy in the University of Sydney of the secular, non-sectarian tenets of National Education, which had recently been established in the colony's elementary schools.

The management of the affairs of the infant university was vested in a Senate of sixteen Fellows. An examination of the educational backgrounds of the Fellows on the foundation Senate reveals that five of them had no university background, five were Cambridge men, three had attended Trinity College Dublin, two had been to Edinburgh and one was an Oxford graduate. None of the Fellows had been directly concerned with the management of a university, and none had had any direct experience of the idea of a British university associated with the Queen's Colleges and the Queen's University in Ireland, or with the University of London or its suffragan colleges. Rather, the collective university experience in the Senate was overwhelmingly in the tradition of the undergraduate education of the unreformed Universities of Oxford, Cambridge and Dublin of the 1820's and 1830's.

Guidance for the governing body in more recent developments in British higher education, however, was soon forthcoming. It was provided by the foundation Principal and Professor of Classics of the Sydney University College - a college established by the Senate in direct connection with the University, as provided by the Act - the Reverend Doctor John Woolley. Nominated by a selection committee in England, the new Principal arrived in the colony in July 1852. Thirty-six years of age when he reached Sydney, Woolley was a brilliant Oxford graduate, imbued with the ideas and ideals of Oxford reformed which stemmed from the writings of Sir William Hamilton, the Oxford liberal revival and the Oxford Commissioners' Report. He had graduated with a first class in Greats from Exeter College in 1836, and in 1837 he had been elected from an open competition of Oxford graduates to a fellowship at University College Oxford, where he formed a close friendship with a contemporary Fellow and future Secretary to the

Oxford Commission, Stanley, whose views on the idea of the university Woolley would reflect strongly in New South Wales.

Ordained an Anglican Priest in 1841, Woolley had married in the following year and thereby forfeited his fellowship. From 1842 until his appointment to Sydney he had held Headmasterships in English Grammar Schools, and at the time of the Sydney appointment was Headmaster of King Edward VI's Free Public Grammar School in Norwich, a post to which he had been nominated by Bishop Stanley, father of his Oxford friend. Although he had thus left Oxford ten years prior to his arrival in New South Wales, Woolley had a comprehensive understanding of the reforms proposed in the mid-century for his alma mater. As he revealed, for instance, to a select committee of the New South Wales Legislative Assembly, which conducted an inquiry into the University of Sydney in 1859-60, he had held lengthy discussions with members of the commissions on both the ancient English Universities⁸ before he had sailed for New South Wales, and he had corresponded with them frequently thereafter.

In September 1852 Woolley recommended to the Senate that the professors of the Sydney University College (Woolley, Morris Birkbeck Pell, Professor of Mathematics, and John Smith, Professor of Chemistry and Experimental Philosophy) be re-styled Professors of the University and that their lectures be compulsory for all matriculated students. In a letter to the Senate, signed also by Professor Pell, but in Woolley's hand and obviously his work, the Principal argued that:

The name of 'college' is associated in English ears with the idea of complete education, and moral relation between pupils and tutors - and we are informed from many quarters, that this name has given rise to an impression that the Senate proposes as the model system of education, one in which religious training should bear no part.

In the design as we understand it, - that the university makes no attempt to educate; but furnishes instruction in those branches of learning which all may pursue harmoniously together - and has no objection to the affiliation of institutions by religious bodies, to provide home tuition, and religious teaching for members of their own communions - we are assured that very many hitherto unfriendly heartily concur.

The students of the present 'college' are in fact university students, corresponding to that large body who in Oxford and Cambridge formerly lived in 'halls'; the Professors have no nearer relation to them than to any other students who may attend their lectures.

Colleges will probably arise in connexion with religious bodies; if they adopt the teaching of your Professors, we shall gradually attain that system, which it is a prominent object of the Royal Commissions' to restore at home - the general teaching of the Professors, supported and enforced individually by college tutors.

*But if the pupils of the various constitutions are educated entirely apart, we cannot hope to escape the ill-effects which have resulted in Oxford and Cambridge from the overgrowth of the Tutorial system.*¹⁰

Evidently sensing, however, that a conservative Senate was not to be pushed too hard too quickly, in a subsequent letter the Professors asked that their request be amended to read:

That the Professors of the University College should be appointed Professors of the University, their lectures being open to all matriculated students.

*The question of compulsory attendance, though thinking it ourselves, most desirable, we will not include in our request.*¹¹

In this modified form the request was agreed to. In future the professors were to be styled Professors of the University and their lectures were to be compulsory for all matriculated students, except those belonging to an affiliated college.¹² The qualification on collegiate students notwithstanding, this alteration clearly brought the design of the University - whose lectures were to be open to all matriculated students - into closer harmony with the idea of the university in the writings of Sir William Hamilton and the Oxford Commissioners' Report, which asserted the educational authority of the central secular teaching university over its affiliated colleges. As the Vice-Provost of the University, Sir Charles Nicholson, remarked, among other things, in commenting on the change in the Annual Report of the University for 1852, the modification to the original design had been satisfactory to the Senate on 'purely academic grounds', since it brought the constitution of the University into closer proximity to that recommended for 'removing the deficiencies and abuses of the educational system in Oxford.'¹³

On 11 October, 1852, both the Vice-Provost and the Principal put a stamp of oratory on the new arrangements, in addresses largely intended to encourage the major churches, which had held aloof from the University on account of its secular character, to establish affiliated colleges under the provisions of the revised design. The occasion was the inauguration of the University, held in the Hall of the defunct Sydney College, whose dilapidated premises the Senate had leased from the school's trustees as

temporary accommodation for the University. In his address, for instance, Woolley emphasised the notion of religious education in the colleges as complementary to the secular instruction of the central university.¹⁴ It was a 'matter of just congratulation', according to the Principal, that from the outset the University of Sydney had 'distinctly marked the boundaries of Education and Secular Instruction: She neither presumes to distinguish from its accidents the essence of our common faith, nor degrades theological study to the level of a merely scholastic exercise, nor with profane foot intrudes into the arena of the sanctuary.'¹⁵ The majority of the undergraduates, the Principal noted, would be inhabitants of Sydney, and their religious training and moral discipline could be safely entrusted to the home. For other students, at the same time, the University had done all it could, but 'not the best that may be effected by others.' The lodging-house or hostel could not compensate for the home - a more constraining and more sympathetic society was required. Hence, Woolley declared,

*may [we] see reproduced amongst us the picture of that discipline which the great and good schoolmaster, Thomas Arnold, declared to be the one alone adapted to the nature of our British youth; that ere this generation has passed away, the waters of the Parramatta river, or the quiet bays of our beautiful harbour, will mirror in their crystal depths many a reverend chapel, and pictured hall, and solemn cloister, and pleasant garden, like those which gem the margin of the Isis and the Cam.*¹⁶

This invitation to the churches to establish affiliated colleges was directed especially to the Church of England, the colony's most numerous and most influential denomination, which had been at the forefront of opposition to the University. The Anglican episcopate, however, which sought a share in the University's annual endowment for the support of divinity chairs and religious instruction in any affiliated college, remained firmly opposed to the University of Sydney as a secular teaching institution exclusively endowed by the State. Nevertheless, in the light of the revised arrangements, a movement developed among some prominent members of the laity and some clergymen for the foundation of a Church of England College. This movement resulted in the formation of a Queen's College Committee, established at a public meeting of 'members of the Church of England desirous of promoting the institution and endowment of a college within the University of Sydney',¹⁷ held at St. James' Grammar School on 15 December, 1852, with the Chief Justice, Sir Alfred Stephen, in the chair.

This committee issued a prospectus for a residential Queen's College, which was to provide religious instruction, domestic supervision and moral discipline, together with tutorial assistance for the university

lectures and examinations. The college was to unite the tutorial and professorial systems - a union believed to be 'so important in Academical Education'.¹⁸ The committee approached the government for financial assistance,¹⁹ and by July 1853 on its own account had raised in excess of £6,000.²⁰

Meanwhile, the Bishop of Newcastle, William Tyrrell, and the Bishop of New Zealand, George Selwyn, who assumed episcopal responsibility for the affiliated college issue, when news reached the colony that the Bishop of Sydney had died on a visit to England, became apprehensive that the Queen's College Committee might establish an affiliated college without the sanction of the official church. They consequently sought a compromise with the University,²¹ and drafted a memorandum of the basis of an agreement between the Church and the University, the principal conditions of which were:

(1) That sites be reserved out of land granted to the University by government for the use of colleges connected with the major religious bodies;

(2) That before any degree or honour is awarded by the University every student be required to produce a certificate of competent religious attainment from the Principal of the College of his own denomination;

and

*(3) That while the professorial lectures be open to all matriculated students, they not be compulsory on students belonging to an affiliated college.*²²

At the same time the Colonial Secretary made any state endowment of the proposed college contingent upon a conference of the interested parties - Bishops, the College Committee and the Senate - to reach a satisfactory formula.²³ For the purpose of such conference the two church parties endorsed the Bishop's memorandum as providing a joint declaration of their position.²⁴

The Church of England delegation met with a delegation from the Senate in the rooms of the Speaker of the New South Wales Legislative Council on 26 July, 1853. The Anglican party put its case in accordance with the Bishops' memorandum, but the University delegation tabled counter proposals in harmony with the instructions of a special meeting of the Senate held three days previously.²⁵ The principal condition imposed by the Senate was that the professorial lectures be compulsory for all matriculated students, whether belonging to an affiliated college or not, the lectures in ethics, metaphysics and modern history excepted.²⁶

In the conference the allocation of land to the college seems to have been taken for granted and does not appear to have been discussed. The overriding issue

between the two parties obviously concerned the control of undergraduate instruction, with the University insisting absolutely on compulsory attendance of collegiate students at the professorial lectures, a stipulation in direct conflict with the third condition of the church party. On this issue it appeared that one side would need to yield. However, a way of breaking the deadlock was found in the condition of the church party concerning the production of a religious certificate. The university delegation agreed to this²⁷ in exchange for the maintenance of its proposed rule on the professorial lectures.

These arrangements represented a major victory for the central university. The exempt lectures in ethics, metaphysics and modern history were not of the staple of the arts course, and hence were of only minor consequence, whereas the requirement of compulsory attendance at the professorial lectures unequivocally asserted the teaching authority of the University over the colleges. This concordat between the University and the Church became the basis of a collegiate system, which in December 1854 was enshrined in the Affiliated Colleges Act. The Act provided for matching grants of up to £20,000 for college buildings and for £500 per annum for the salary of the Principal;²⁸ and, it is worthy of note, an amendment to the Act in 1858 abolished the religious certificate requirement, thereby making the triumph of the idea of the central secular teaching university complete.

In the meantime the Senate had entered into negotiations with the colonial government for the grant of a permanent university site, which would accommodate the buildings of both the University and its affiliated colleges. In August 1852 Nicholson informed the Colonial Secretary that it had proved impossible to negotiate the purchase of the old Sydney College from the trustees, and in any event the building was in such a dilapidated state that it was worth no more than the materials out of which it was constructed; hence, the governing body saw no alternative but to 'appeal to the Executive for a suitable site of land on which to erect a proper suite of buildings, and to apply to the legislature for a sufficient grant to defray the necessary expenses connected therewith.' The letter went on to suggest 'the spot of ground opposite the Australian Library' as a suitable site,²⁹ since it was centrally situated, and from 'its commanding position admirably adapted to a superstructure possessing pretentious to architectural elegance.'³⁰

The Colonial Secretary did not reply until the end of January 1853, when Nicholson was informed that His Excellency, having consulted Executive Council on the issue, was of the view that 'of the Crown Lands in Sydney still remaining unalienable, the most desirable

locality for the University Buildings will be found at Grose Farm', and the Vice-Provost was invited to propose for approval 'a selection of the necessary extent of land in the vicinity'.³¹ The area from which this selection was to be made was an extensive one, on the south western outskirts of the city. It included the whole of the land bounded by the Parramatta, Missenden and Newtown roads, although the original farm from which it took its name comprised only thirty acres granted to Major Grose by Governor Phillip in 1792 for a period of fourteen years, on part of which St. John's College, in the University of Sydney, now stands.

The Senate referred this offer to a sub-committee comprising Nicholson, Wentworth (who had been appointed to the foundation Senate) and Bishop Charles Davis, the Roman Catholic prelate on the governing body. In drawing up a proposal for what the Colonial Secretary had described as 'the necessary extent of land' required for the University, the sub-committee entered into a detailed consideration of the whole pattern of organization of the University of Sydney and its affiliated colleges. Its report would at once give practical effect to the idea of the central secular teaching university, and offer, or at least imply, substantial inducements to the churches to establish affiliated institutions in connection with the University. Undoubtedly, it gave encouragement to the Queen's College Committee in its fund raising activities.

The sub-committee submitted its report to the Senate in March 1853. The report pointed out that under the existing situation the advantages of the University were available only to those students whose homes were in Sydney, or whose parents considered it proper for them to reside in boarding houses. Obviously students residing in boarding establishments were not in the most favourable position to pursue their studies, let alone the 'many evils' likely to be experienced by others who took lodgings in the town. In any event the cost of boarding or lodging in Sydney was, and was likely to continue to be, prohibitive for many parents, and while some clergymen, or others of literary attainment, would be willing to take young men into their homes, and act as their tutors and moral guardians, the cost of rents and everything else in Sydney was so high that few would be able to do so, on terms as would induce parents to avail themselves of such offers. It was therefore proposed

to obtain a site for the erection of the University in a locality where a number (say 4) of Colleges of Residence may also be erected within such a distance of the University itself as to enable the students to attend the lecture rooms of the University without being exposed to distraction and loss of time necessarily occasioned by a long walk or ride. Were the University thus made the centre of a cluster of

*Colleges, one set of Professors in all or nearly all branches of secular learning would serve the students of all the Colleges provided the University lecture rooms be constructed on a scale sufficiently large to accommodate all at the same time. Moral training, discipline and religious instruction would devolve upon the Principal and Tutors or other authorities in each College. If the direction of these Colleges as far as moral and religious training are concerned, be committed to the heads of the four principal religious denominations recognised by the state [Church of England, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian and Wesleyan], it is conceived that objections on the score of religion raised against the University, as at present constituted, would be removed, and thus the members of all denominations would unite, in obtaining the great objects of University education for our youth.*³²

The report envisaged that the proposed colleges would form 'portion of the University', or at least 'necessary adjuncts' to it, and 'would consequently be so far subject to the surveillance of the Senate as may be necessary to secure the objects for which they were founded.' Whether it would be desirable to provide financial assistance for the colleges beyond the grant of a site, and 'at least partial aid in their erection' was a matter, according to the report, which need not 'at present' be considered. The committee calculated that to achieve the objectives contemplated in its report it would be necessary to approach the government for a grant of about 120 or 150 acres. The University itself would require at least 30 acres, and if residences were to be erected for the Professors at least 50 or 60 acres would be required. Each of the four colleges would require at least 20 or 25 acres so that students would have sufficient ground for recreation and each college would have room for a garden. Hence the committee recommended that the government be requested to make a grant to the Senate which would be sufficiently extensive to provide sites for both the University and the colleges, on condition that the Senate sub-grant parcels of land to each of the four major religious denominations. The Senate at the same time should exercise such control over the land, and over the colleges when erected, as might prevent any abuse of the grant.³³

The committee made no apology for recommending such an extensive grant of land:

It must not be forgotten that in establishing the University we are providing for the wants and acquirements not of this year, nay, it may be said not of this century, but probably of many generations yet unborn, and unless we endeavour now to avail ourselves of what still remains at the disposal of the Government, in a few years hence we may look around in vain for a site suitable and adequate to the wants of the University. That those wants are not over calculated in the above estimate will, it is presumed,

*be obvious to any person who will maturely consider what is necessary for the purpose. It appears that about 150 acres of land at Grose Farm are still at the disposal of the Government, and as this property from its proximity to Sydney would furnish a very eligible site for the University and Colleges, it is recommended that the Senate at once apply either for the whole or for as much as may be deemed necessary for the object.*³⁴

If this highly visionary report was thus directed to the future realization of a building programme on the grand scale, it was also well adapted to the realization of the idea of the central secular teaching university. The colleges would be tied geographically to the University, thus removing any excuse for independent collegiate teaching on account of the remoteness of the professors, and the collegiate foundations would be kept under the Senate's general supervision. At the same time, the grants of land, and the implicit invitation to the churches to apply beyond them for additional assistance, should make the proposal sufficiently attractive to secure ecclesiastical support.

On 1 April, 1853, the Vice-Provost forwarded a copy of this report to the Colonial Secretary, with a request that its recommendations be approved by the Governor.³⁵ However, after 'maturely weighing the arguments ... for so large an extent of land', His Excellency approved only that the whole of the Crown Land at Grose Farm be reserved from other alienation, and that just 100 acres be set apart for 'the objects contemplated by the Senate.'³⁶ The University was invited to select a site on the basis of this arrangement, and the Senate referred the issue to a sub-committee consisting of Nicholson, Davis and Reverend William Binnington Boyce, the Wesleyan cleric on the Senate.

The sub-committee arranged for a survey to be made and had a site plan prepared,³⁷ but the Senate rejected the plan on the grounds that it exceeded 100 acres, and hence did not accord with the terms of the grant. Consequently, the governing body instructed the Registrar, William Louis Hutton, to re-examine the site and modify the plan to conform with the extent of the grant proposed by the government. For some reason which has not come down to us, however, these instructions were not carried into practical effect, for on 10 September, 1853, Hutton laid before the Senate a plan setting out sites for the University and denominational colleges, as well as an area reserved for the common use of the colleges and the University, which amounted in all to about 120 acres - the minimum area recommended by the original sub-committee on the university site. The relevant minute of the Senate reads:

The Registrar laid before the Senate a Map of Grose Farm, which according to their directions he had prepared for the purpose of showing the allotments of

land required as sites for the University and the four denominational colleges:-

Whereupon

It was moved by the Right Rev Bishop Davis Seconded J.B. Darvall Esq, and carried -

*The Vice-Provost be requested to communicate with the government for the purpose of making application for the portions indicated in the map, and marked A,B,C,D,E,F, amounting in all to about one hundred and twenty acres; and requesting that the portion marked A should be the site of the University of Sydney; those marked B C D E the sites of the separate colleges founded in connexion with it; and that the portion in the immediate vicinity of the creek marked F, should be reserved for the common use of the several colleges and the University.*³⁸

A copy of the plan is extant and has been preserved in the University Archives.³⁹ It provides a graphic illustration of the Senate's attempt to give practical effect to the idea of the University of Sydney as a cluster of colleges around the central secular teaching university, with the colleges geographically tied to the central institution. A striking feature of the plan is the extent of the land set aside for the colleges, as foreshadowed by the original committee on the selection of the site. A little over 21 acres is apportioned to the University, while the sections designated for the four colleges are between 19 and 20 acres each, and the area set aside for the common use of the University and the colleges is just over 20 acres.⁴⁰ Despite their subordinate role in dispensing undergraduate instruction, the colleges were clearly intended to have a major role in the University's physical and academic design.

At the same time as it approved the site plan, the Senate adopted a report from a sub-committee of Nicholson, Davis and Wentworth which proposed that the whole of the land to be appropriated to the University of Sydney, including that to the affiliated colleges, be granted to the Senate, on the condition of its 'subgranting sites of not less than eighteen acres each, to separate Trusts representing the four religious Denominations recognized by the State, for the erection of their respective colleges.' The report suggested that each Trust consist of five persons - two nominated by the Senate, two by the founders of the college or the head of the relevant religious denomination, and the fifth to be elected by the other four. It also proposed that power be given to the Senate to resume the land if the purposes of the Trust Deeds were not fulfilled. In addition, designs for buildings under the Trust Deeds were to be submitted to the Senate for approval.⁴¹

Nicholson lost no time in forwarding a copy of this report, together with the plan prepared by Hutton, to the Colonial Secretary, with a request that the Governor make the proposed grant of 120 acres in accord with the conditions and reservations set out in the report.⁴² Without any apparent difficulty in relation to the 20 acre increase in the extent of the grant originally offered, Executive Council agreed to the proposal, and in July 1854 Hugh Kennedy, who had succeeded Hutton as Registrar, was informed that, pending a regular Deed of Grant, the Senate was authorised to 'take possession of the lands as a site for the University and the Colleges to be attached to it. Subject to the leases for the Grose Farm paddocks which will expire on 31st Instant and will not be renewed.'⁴³

Generous as this grant may have been, it subsequently proved to be inadequate for the ambitious building plans developed by the Senate, and a further application was consequently made to the government for an additional six acres on the Grose Farm site.⁴⁴ In November 1854 Kennedy was informed that the government had assented to the application,⁴⁵ and by Deed of Grant from the Crown, dated 18 January, 1855, a site of 126 acres at Grose Farm was formally conveyed to the Senate for the use of the University of Sydney and its affiliated colleges.⁴⁶ The site as described in the Deed was bounded, in broad terms, by the Parramatta Road on the north side, St Paul's Road (now Carillon Avenue) on the south and the Newtown Road (now City Road) on the south-east, by a 'curved line of fence' running from the Newtown Road to the Parramatta Road and adjoining what is now Victoria Park on the east, and by Missenden Road on the west. The Deed also provided for sub-grants of not less than eighteen acres each, to be selected by the Senate and made available by the University, for the erection of colleges in connection with the Anglican, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian and Wesleyan churches. The sub-grants were to be made to Trusts, which were to be established under the conditions previously recommended by the Senate and approved by the government.

The conditions of the Deed of Grant complemented the provisions of the Affiliated Colleges Act assented to in the previous month, and completed arrangements which, according to Nicholson, who was elected Provost in 1854, envisaged the University of Sydney as:

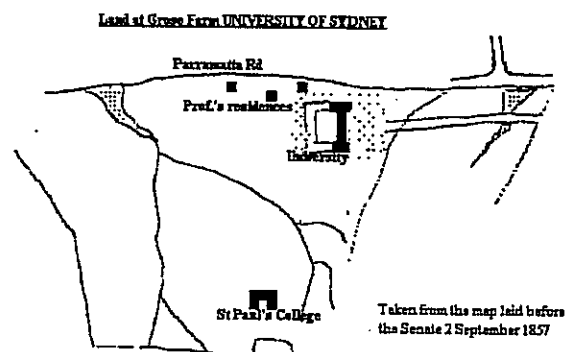
*a great centre, surrounded by a cluster of collegiate establishments, each possessing its own internal organization for the religious training and guidance of its inmates, each and all in their secular relations subordinated to, and forming integral portions of the University itself.*⁴⁷

In drafting this scheme, the Provost observed, great care had been taken to ensure that these internally

autonomous colleges should not cease to be essential members of the University, and that 'a state of things should not be allowed to spring into existence whereby the collegiate and tutorial instruction might ultimately overshadow and supersede that of the University.'⁴⁸ Under these arrangements and with these safeguards, in the University of Sydney, Nicholson claimed:

*the most perfect idea of a University, which the present age and circumstance of society will admit of will ... be carried out. It will furnish the closest approximation to that combination, which by Sir William Hamilton (so great an authority), is regarded 'as the condition of an absolutely perfect University' ... It will present a humble but living type of that constitution which has recently been applied to the University of Oxford, on the recommendation of the Oxford Commission.*⁴⁹

P.R. Chippendale



NOTES

1. Quoted in News (From the Campuses of the University of Sydney) Special Supplement, 23 November, 1994, p.1.
2. These articles were later brought together in Sir William Hamilton, Discussions on Philosophy and Literature, Education and University Reform, Third Edition, Blackwood, Edinburgh, 1866.
3. On Hamilton, see Dictionary of National Biography, Vol.8, pp.1111-1116; J. Veitch, Memoir of Sir William Hamilton, Blackwood, Edinburgh, 1869, and by the same author, Sir William Hamilton the Man and His Philosophy, Blackwood, Edinburgh and London, 1883.
4. Report of Her Majesty's Commissioners Appointed to Enquire into the State, Discipline, Studies and Revenues of the University and Colleges of Oxford, H.C. 1852 [1842], xxii, 1-773.
5. 14 Vict., No.31.
6. Australian Dictionary of Biography, Vol.2, pp.283-85.
7. Ibid., Vol.6, pp.435-37.
8. At the time of the Oxford Commission there was a corresponding Commission on Cambridge.
9. "Report from the Select Committee on the Sydney University", Evidence, pp.25-26, in Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales, 1859-60, Vol.4, p.7ff.

10. Woolley and Pell to Senate, [?] September, 1852, in Letters Received 1851-55, G3/82. (Sydney University Archives); Minutes of the Senate, 6 September, 1852.
11. Woolley and Pell to Senate, undated, Letters Received 1851-55, G3/82. (Sydney University Archives); Minutes of the Senate, 21 September, 1852.
12. Ibid.
13. "Report for 1852" in Calendar for 1853.
14. John Woolley, "Inaugural Address Delivered on the Occasion of the Opening of the University of Sydney" in Nicholson Papers P4, Miscellanea File (Sydney University Archives).
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid.
17. Empire, 14 December, 1852.
18. Origin and Foundation of St. Paul's College. (Mitchell Library) pp. 6-7. The name of the college was changed from Queen's to Trinity and finally to St. Paul's.
19. "Memorandum of Delegation of Promoters of projected Church of England College, relative to Aid being granted by Government towards their undertaking", n.d., in "Papers Relative to the Affiliated Colleges Partial Endowment Bill", p.4, Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales, 1854, Vol. 2, Pt. 1, p. 97ff.
20. Origin and Foundation of St. Paul's College, p 10.
21. See R. G. Boodle, The Life and Labours of the Right Rev. William Tyrrell, Wells Gardner, Darton, London, 1881, pp. 157-58.
22. See "Memorandum Proposed by the Bishops of New Zealand and Newcastle to be laid before the Archdeacon, Clergy and Laity of the Diocese of Sydney, as a basis of an Agreement between the Church of England and the University of Sydney", Sydney University and Colleges (1850 + MSS). D61 (Mitchell Library).
23. Copies of Colonial Secretary to Sir A. Stephen, 12 July, 1853, and Colonial Secretary to Vice-Provost, 12 July 1853, in "Papers Relating to Affiliated Colleges Partial Endowment Bill", pp. 5,6, Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Council of New South Wales, 1854, Vol. 2, Pt. 1, p. 97ff.
24. The memorandum was signed by the Bishops of Newcastle and New Zealand, the Archdeacon of Cumberland and 36 other members of the clergy and laity, including Sir Alfred Stephen.
25. Minutes of the Senate, 23 July, 1853.
26. "Report of the Committee on the Church of England College", Ibid., 1 August, 1853.
27. The university delegation agreed to this condition on the basis that it was in accord with the proviso in the twentieth clause of the Act of Incorporation, which permitted the Senate to secure the attendance of under-graduates at divine worship.
28. An Act to provide for the establishment and endowment of Colleges within the University of Sydney [assented to 2 December, 1854] 18 Vict., No. 37.
29. The Library was on the corner of Macquarie and Bent Streets where the State Office Block now stands.
30. Nicholson to Colonial Secretary, 30 August, 1852, Senate Letter Book G3/45. (Sydney University Archives).
31. Colonial Secretary to Vice-Provost, 27 January, 1853, in "Partial Endowment of Affiliated Colleges", Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Council of New South Wales, 1854, Vol. 2, Pt. 1, p. 97ff. Letters Received G3/882, fo. 44 (Sydney University Archives). According to the Minutes of the Senate, the governing body, for some inexplicable reason, resolved on both 21 August and 21 September, 1852, that the Vice-Provost approach the government for the grant of a site. Nicholson wrote to the Colonial Secretary on 30 August (see Senate Letter Book) but the reply from the Colonial Secretary refers to Nicholson's letter of 28 September. If there was such a letter, from a search in the State Archives of New South Wales it does not appear to have survived.
32. See copy of the report in Minutes of the Senate, 21 March, 1853.
33. Ibid.
34. Ibid.
35. Vice-Provost to Colonial Secretary, 1 April, 1853 in "Partial Endowment of Affiliated Colleges", Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Council of New South Wales, 1854, Vol.2, Pt. 1, p. 97ff.
36. Colonial Secretary to Vice-Provost, 20 June, 1853, Ibid., Letter Received G3/82, fo. 53 (Sydney University Archives).
37. Minutes of the Senate, 22 August, 1853.
38. Ibid., 10 September, 1853.
39. See Plan of Grose Farm. (Sydney University Archives).
40. Ibid.
41. Minutes of the Senate, 10 September, 1853.
42. Vice-Provost to Colonial Secretary, 12 September, 1853, in "Partial Endowment of Affiliated Colleges", Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Council of New South Wales, 1854, Vol. 2, Pt. 1, pp. 102-103.
43. Colonial Secretary to Registrar, 6 July, 1854, in Letters Received 1851-55 G3/882. (Sydney University Archives).
44. See Building Committee Minutes 1854-62 G1/4. 4th September, 1854. (Sydney University Archives).
45. Colonial Secretary to Registrar, 1 November, 1854, in Letters Received 1851-55 G3/82, fo.142 (Sydney University Archives).
46. "Deed of Grant Under Which the University Holds the Land Granted to it by the Crown", in University of Sydney, Calendar for 1858, pp. 39-46.
47. Sir Charles Nicholson, "Commemoration Address for 1854", in Inaugural Addresses on the Occasion of the Opening of the University of Sydney by the Vice-Provost and the Professor of Classics in 1852 and also Reports of Addresses at Various Commemorations Held in Subsequent Years and Delivered by the Chancellor Sir Charles Nicholson, n.p., n.d., p. 33.
48. Ibid.
49. Ibid., p. 34.

THE SULMAN LETTERS

Amongst the World War One material, requested by the Sydney University Union, held in the University Archives is a cloth covered and partly leather bound volume styled Letters from England and France by Florence and Geoffrey Sulman During War Time 1916-17. The volume contains 702 typed pages of letters. These letters were forwarded to Mr Barff, Warden and Registrar of the University, on 29th November 1918, by Sir John Sulman. The letters are copies, the originals being held by the Sulman Family at that time and Sir John, in the preface, has guaranteed the accuracy of the copies. For a full account of the collection of war service records of members of the University involved in World War I, see 'The Sydney University Union Records of World War I,' in Record No 2, 1991.

I have set out below some brief details of the donor of the letters, Sir John Sulman, and the two writers, his children Florence and Geoffrey. I used as a source the Australian Dictionary of Biography Vol. 12 for most of the information on Sir John and Florence.

SIR JOHN SULMAN

John Sulman was born in 1849 at Greenwich England. After being articled to two London architects he won a travelling scholarship in 1871. In 1872 he became an Associate of the Royal Institute of British Architects and a Fellow of the Institute in 1883. John Married Sarah Clark Redgate in 1875. Whilst working at his profession in Britain John Sulman had become an architect of some note. Sarah showed symptom of tuberculosis in 1884. In 1885 he sailed to Sydney Australia with his wife and son. One assumes this would have been mainly for the benefit of his wife's health. He went into practice in Sydney and was the architect of many well known Sydney buildings including the Women's College at the University of Sydney. He was a part time lecturer in Architecture in the Department of Engineering in the University from 1887 to 1912. His wife, Sarah, died in 1888 and in 1893 he married Annie Elizabeth Masefield.

John Sulman played an active part in his professional associations after coming to Australia. He was the pioneer of Town Planning in Australia and was Vernon Memorial lecturer in Town Planning at the University during 1919-1926. During his Australian career John Sulman carried out committee work and investigations for Government Departments. He was knighted (K.B.E.) in 1924. Sir John Sulman had a great interest in Art and was a Trustee of the Art Gallery of New South Wales for over 30 years. Sir John Sulman, Architect, Lecturer, Town Planner and Company Director, died in Sydney on 18th August 1934. As a memorial his family endowed the Sir John Sulman Art Prize. This annual award is given for best

subject painting, genre painting, or design for an intended mural and was first awarded in 1936. Sir John himself had, in 1930, established the Sulman Medal for Architecture to be awarded annually by the Royal Australian Institute of Architects for work of outstanding merit in New South Wales. Also, in 1929, he had established a book prize to be awarded annually to a graduate in Architecture at the University of Sydney.

Florence Sulman

Florence Sulman (known as Florrie) was born in January 1876 at Bromley, Kent, England, eldest child of Sir John Sulman and his first wife Sarah. Initially Florence was educated in Bromley. She left for New South Wales to join her parents in 1886, where she furthered her education at a school in the Blue Mountains, and later, at Abbotsleigh in Parramatta.

Florence took an interest in craftwork and design, and also became an amateur botanist, taking a particular interest in Australian native plants. She wrote a Popular Guide to the Wild Flowers of New South Wales which was published in two volumes in 1914. I recall that my late father, who was a teacher from 1909, had this work in his library as a text for use in the teaching of Nature Study.

In March 1916 Florence, then a lady of 40 years of age, accompanied her half brother Geoffrey to England. The purpose of this journey was for Florence to 'do her bit' in World War 1 and to be support for Geoffrey when required. Perhaps one could say she replaced his mother, Geoffrey being 21 years old at the time they departed from Sydney. After Geoffrey's death while serving with the Royal Flying Corps in 1917, she returned home to Sydney and continued her interest in craftwork. Florence also became heavily involved with the Kindergarten Union of New South Wales. In 1958 she was made a Member of the Order of the British Empire (M.B.E.) for services to child welfare. She was a lady who showed great concern for the underprivileged throughout her life. Florence had never married and died in Sydney in June 1965 at the age of 89 years.

Geoffrey Sulman

Geoffrey Sulman was born in Australia on the 11th April 1894, the eldest child of Sir John's second wife, Annie Elizabeth Masefield. When quite young he showed aptitude in scientific subjects and very early began to make mechanical models. When Geoffrey was 14 years of age his family moved from Turramurra to the Blue Mountains for the sake of his health, described by his father as not satisfactory, and which prevented his regular attendance at school. Geoffrey's physical health improved but the move was detrimental to his education. When the decision was

made for him to attend the Engineering School University of Sydney he failed to matriculate (in languages) and entered Year 1 Engineering in 1913 as an unmatriculated student.

The Examinations Register held in the University Archives has been perused, and it appears that in December 1913 Geoffrey sat for some of the First Year Engineering examinations and passed in Chemistry, Physics, and Mathematics. In December 1914 his name is recorded for Second Year Mechanical and Electrical Engineering, however no results were shown. The same applied for Third Year in 1915. This would seem to indicate that Geoffrey attended lectures and other course work but did not take the examinations. He also learned to drive a motor car and became a good motor mechanic. Flying interested Geoffrey and he experimented with gliders and small planes. Friendship with the son of the late Lawrence Hargrave (who carried out pioneering work in aeronautics) no doubt stimulated his interest.

Early in 1916, apparently in good health, he tried to enlist at Victoria Barracks Sydney but was turned down owing to the effects of a severe internal chill a year or so previously. Feeling that he must 'do his bit' in the war, he tried to get into munitions work in Australia but found there was no opening for him. So, with his parents' consent, he sailed for England.

THE VOYAGE TO ENGLAND

Geoffrey and his half-sister Florence sailed for England in P & O's *Mongolia* on 4th March 1916. The *Mongolia* carried some troops and well as civilian passengers. The ship was an 'M' Class vessel built by Caird and Co. of Greenock Scotland in 1903. She was sunk on 23rd June 1917 when she hit a mine 50 miles southwest of Bombay while serving as an armed merchant cruiser.

THE LETTERS

The letters written by Florence were those of a well educated, mature, middle class lady. Geoffrey's were those of a less mature young man, whose main interests seemed to be motor vehicles, aviation, and photography. Both writers had a firm desire to play a part towards the ultimate victory of the Allies in World War 1.

Florence and Geoffrey had numerous relatives in England and those relatives had contacts which they met and with whom they became friendly. This particularly applied to Florence who had spent the first ten years of her life in England and had probably made visits 'home' before World War 1. It should be remembered that most young Australians at that time were British Subjects whose parents or grandparents

had been born in the British Isles. Up to a point, this situation still existed in World War 11.

In addition it seems from Florence's letters that there were several women from Australia doing war work of some nature in England or France with many of whom she seemed to be acquainted. This meant that her letters to parents and siblings contained a great amount of personal news about people she was meeting and visiting. Consequently, I intend to deal with selected matters in the letters deemed by me to be of some general interest to readers:-

Letters dealing with trip on *Mongolia* en route to Europe

Geoffrey's letters mostly dealt with subjects in which he had a particular interest, such as photography. He had the use of a darkroom on the ship, or perhaps he converted his cabin for this purpose from time to time as he spoke often of developing and printing photographs. Geoffrey also showed his interest in motor cars as on more than one occasion when in port he and some of his shipboard friends hired a car with a driver in order to see the surrounding countryside. He gave the impression that the important part of these outings was the ride in the vehicle. Florence, on the other hand, as well as dealing in what could be described as family matters seemed to show an interest in people in addition to having a greater awareness of her surroundings.

In Florence's letter of 25th March 1916 she wrote about two French transports that arrived Colombo from Vladivostok during the night, each with 2,500 Russian troops on board, said to be bound for Mesopotamia and Salonika. Four thousand of the troops did a route march through the town in the morning and were reviewed by the Governor and the Russian Consul. Florence saw these troops marching and commented on their fine 'turn out.' It is assumed the information as to where they were bound was local supposition, as she subsequently wrote from London on 2nd May 1916 and stated:

All our friends are most interested to hear that we saw the Russians (that have landed in France) in Colombo en route from Vladivostok in two French transports.

This interested me, as I had not heard of Russian troops being in France during World War 1, so I spent some time with A J P Taylor's A History of World War 1 and eventually found a reference to these troops. It seems that in May and June 1917 the French Armies, who had had no success began to disintegrate, grievances came to a head and mutinies broke out in many units. The French Commander in Chief, General Robert Nivelle, was replaced by General Henri Philippe Petain on May 15th and order was restored quickly.

It was said that the mutinies, to some degree, were encouraged by two external factors. One was the defeatist, anti-war attitude of civilian agitators directed at the troops, which had commenced earlier in the year. The other reason was the Russian Revolution of March 1917 which encouraged a revolutionary mood amongst the troops of the two brigades of the small Russian Expeditionary Force. This mood tended to corrupt the French troops. The Russians themselves staged their own mutiny, having suffered great losses fighting alongside the French in the Aisne offensive.

Another letter from Florence to her half sister Joan from a London hotel on 18th April 1916 mentions their trip across the Mediterranean in the *Mongolia*. The Captain and Officers apparently considered this leg of the trip to be more dangerous than the previous portions of the trip from Sydney. (I assume this was due to German U-Boat activity). Florence wrote:

There were piles of life belts by every boat (lifeboat) and the boats were all swung out and provisioned and we had little lectures from the Captain and Officers on what to do in case of emergency. We felt that everything possible was done for the safety of the passengers and the only thing that bothered me was the number of small children, more than 20 in our side, and quite a number in the 1st saloon.

In another letter written on 24th April 1916 to her Mother (she referred to her stepmother as Mother) Florence mentions that she wore the warm dressing gown given to her by her mother for the first time in the Mediterranean and stated:

...and very thankful I was to have it to sleep in over my pyjamas. They were most comfortable and made one feel quite respectable whatever might happen ...

Florence and Geoffrey disembarked at Marseilles and travelled overland across France, making a short stay in Paris. One of the reasons given for this was that it was considered safer than completing the journey in *Mongolia*. Another might well have been a desire to see a little of France and Paris when the opportunity presented itself.

A letter of some interest from Geoffrey written whilst at sea on the *Mongolia* states that he and Florence became friends with a fellow passenger named Mr de Burgh. He was a farmer from Western Australia who had a property south of Geraldton, some 12 miles (20k) from the sea. De Burgh had his own irrigation scheme which interested Geoffrey as he had had some experience with pumps while spending some time on his half brother's property in Queensland. However, the portion of the letter that caught my eye was about de Burgh's use of bat droppings and bones of long deceased creatures as fertiliser. It seems there was a

series of caves in limestone hills on the property where he mined the deposit of droppings, which was up to 12 feet (a little over 3m.) in depth. This was then carted back for use as needed, the overall cost calculated by de Burgh at 2/- (20c) a ton.

Geoffrey and Florence kept in contact with Mr de Burgh. He is the only passenger from the *Mongolia* that they had mentioned since being in England. Florence, in her letter to her mother of 2nd November 1916 said, that she and Geoffrey visited Mr de Burgh who was staying with his married sister whose husband was a Scottish doctor. She also stated that his sister travelled out to Australia just before the war on the same vessel as Professor T W E David.

LETTERS FROM EUROPE

Florence and Geoffrey Sulman arrived in London on 15th April 1916, and for a few days stayed in a hotel in Bloomsbury. They then stayed at Crawley Down (near East Grinstead) with the Buckley family over Easter and later at Belgrave House, Russell Square. In the first few weeks they did some sightseeing around London, eg. visiting Madame Tussaud's Waxworks, a visit to the theatre to see 'Peg o' My Heart', etc. Geoffrey went looking for work and was delighted with the position he got at Thornycroft's Motor Works at Basingstoke. The work he was to do could be described in today's terms as 'getting the bugs out' of motor lorries being made under a defence contract for use by the armed forces of Britain. This included tuning the new motors and test driving the lorries on their completion. Meanwhile, Florence was making visits to relatives and friends and examining the situation as to what she could do as a voluntary war worker.

Geoffrey and Florence jointly purchased a second hand JH motor bike with Milford side car. The choice of this mode of transport meant that firstly, Geoffrey was 'wrap' in motor cycles; secondly, they were cheap to run; and thirdly, he and Florence could travel together around the countryside.

As Basingstoke is about 50 miles (80k) to the west of London, they found accommodation at Attwood House in Basingstoke after stopping for a short while at the Station Hotel, Basingstoke. It is interesting to note from Florrie's letter to her sister Joan, dated 8th May 1916 from the hotel at Basingstoke, the following paragraph:

We hear that 6,000 men, Scotch regiments of Kitchener's army were billeted on this small town of 12,000 inhabitants and practically everyone had to put up some soldiers.

Florence decided to go for a trip to Scotland on her own. In her letter to her father dated 12th June 1916,

from Oban, she talked of a short trip from Basingstoke which she did with Geoffrey earlier to the south coast of England stating:

From Hayling we could see the boom across the entrance to Portsmouth Harbour, and the forts in the centre. The northern entrance to the Irish Sea is protected in the same way between the north of Ireland and Scotland and boats have been in here several days waiting for it to open.

In a letter to her mother written on 9th July 1916 Florence mentioned that she got an opportunity to take the place of a woman at the hospital at Reading, about 15 miles (25k) to the north of Basingstoke, teaching soldiers various occupations, one being craftwork such as making cross stitch canvas belts. She was to go over one day a week. Florence was also working in the Basingstoke Provident Clothing Society as a collector. She called at about thirty houses every Monday morning and stated:

...the Clothing Society, which really acts as a bank for their (the women's) weekly 3d. or 6d. (6d. equals 2½ p) and gives them each 2 shillings and 6 pence (12½ p) to add to their savings from March to September or October when they can use it on clothing for the winter. It is quite well run and every care is taken to prevent cheating.

Florence also noted:

It was most interesting to get a chance of seeing into the working women's lives.

In addition, Florence was working for the Armenians as arranged by a Miss Wallis, a Quaker lady, sewing children's clothes. She commented: 'I am so glad to be getting at 'my bit' at last'; ie she is starting to do 'her bit' of war work.

Geoffrey, in his letter to his father and mother dated 31st July 1916, gave notice of his intention to join the Royal Flying Corps. He stated:

By the time this gets to you I hope to be the happy possessor of a commission in the RFC which I am endeavouring to secure now.

Florence, in her letter of 20th August 1916 to brother Arthur and his wife Nancy said that

Geoffrey wrote to Fred Sargood in the RFC for advice which he is acting on, getting letters of introduction to Sir D. Henderson, Head of RFC.

Florence went on to say

Well we shall see, and if he gets into khaki, I am going to don it or some other uniform too; as long as I am not too tied up to get to him if wanted.

Geoffrey, in his letter to his parents from Basingstoke dated 6th September 1916, said that the Secretary to Colonel Reynolds at Adastral House has suggested he take a month's holiday from his position at the Motor Works. He would not get another chance since he was going to try to get him a commission in the RFC by the first of the next month.

Geoffrey found that petrol for his motor cycle outfit was extremely expensive, as well as being severely rationed. The following extracts from his letter indicate some of Geoffrey's engineering skills. He mentioned the shortage of petrol for a trip around Britain and stated:

However I have just fixed her up to run well on kerosene which can be had anywhere for one Shilling (5p) per gallon.

He went on to say that he

...found on a trial run that it "knocked" very badly on hills, which meant a change down ... The knock is due to the very high compression of this engine. I will try to get over it by adding more heating coils, which will lower the density of the charge, thus reducing the compression. She starts from cold by putting a tablespoonful of petrol in the float chamber and, when this is nearly used up, turning on the paraffin (kerosene) which is much heavier than our kerosene.

Geoffrey added a note to the bottom of this letter for his brother Tom. He told him about the making of a special self-heating carburettor, and went on to say

Oh, I forgot to tell you I was promised a commission as a pilot, if I could pass the medical test at Queen Alexandra's Hospital.

Geoffrey passed his medical examination. The Medical Officer asked him if he smoked, and, on Geoffrey's replying that he didn't, said that in that case he was half way there. Geoffrey said there was one other candidate with him at the time of the examination who did smoke heavily and he (Geoffrey) listened while the MO gave the other man a kindly lecture on the effects of nicotine and altitude on the action of the heart.

When one recalls the comments on Geoffrey's health while a student in Australia, it is strange to find that approximately six months after he sailed from Australia he passed what one would expect to be a rigorous medical examination for flying purposes. Florence, in her letter to her mother on October th 1916, said: 'Mr de Burgh was down yesterday and said

Geoffrey looked twice the chap he did on board the *Mongolia*.' Florence's further letter to her mother dated October 9th, 1916 stated:

I asked him (Dr Melville, a medical practitioner who was a friend of both hers and of Geoffrey) if he thought Geoffrey had improved since he had been here, and he said decidedly he had, so I hope you won't think I am just trying to please you, but that he really does seem ever so much more robust ...

Florence's letter to her mother earlier (7th September 1916) talking of Geoffrey and the RFC said

I really believe that Geoffrey feels it is his duty to enlist, and to take the risks that he knows it means and we shall have to join that host of watchers who work and wait and ever hope for the best for 'our unit' in this great fight for right.'

Later in this letter Florence said:

I shall greatly appreciate the holiday that Geoffrey is hoping to take, if his motor bike consents to take us on paraffin.

Florence and Geoffrey commenced their motorcycle (with sidecar) trip through England and Wales at London. They stopped at the Peveril Temperance Hotel at Tilbury. Florence, in a diary she wrote whilst on the trip recorded:

Saw an English airship called the "Pulham Pig" pass over. It is a weird sight, like three great silver sausages joined together, with a slender framework hanging below.

I noted, in a letter to her brother Tom from Basingstoke after they returned from the trip, dated 27th September 1916, that she mentions German Zeppelins:

...there has been great excitement over the last two raids when the Zeps were brought down; we heard that one came down at Tilbury and the other at Colchester, both places we passed through, but being full moon we saw none of the monsters. It is marvellous what a little damage they do - everyone crowds out to see them - and they say all London sent up a huge cheer when the first one was brought down; it must have been some sight but I can't help thinking of the fate of the poor wretches in them.

They seemed to work their way across England, calling on numerous people, mostly Florence's friends. They went into Wales, back into England and through Warwickshire etc, and then home to Basingstoke by the 26th September.

Did 900 miles (about 1500k) on one pound's (£ 1's) worth of paraffin and five shillings (25p) worth of lubricating oil.

Geoffrey, in a letter to his father and mother from Basingstoke on 28th September 1916, referring to the trip which included a visit to his mother's family stated: 'Mother, your ancestors come from a beautiful place but oh so sleepy.'

Florence, wrote to her mother from Basingstoke on October 9th 1916:

The boy took the King's shilling on Friday, went to Reading and joined the Royal Berks for reasons best known to himself he said he preferred it to joining the Hampshire's at Winchester, which was the choice, as there is only a branch recruiting office here. So your big son is now in khaki, he left here on Saturday to find a suitable home for "Mary Ann" (the motorcycle) at Denham and was to go into camp before 4 o'clock yesterday.

Florence's letter to Nancy on the same date included the following:

It seems that all Flying Corps men have to enlist in a regular regiment and if he is not satisfactory in the Flying Corps he can be returned to that regiment.

Now that Geoffrey was in camp at Denham, Florence took a room in a cottage at Pinner with two Sydney women. She later moved to Northwood. Pinner and Northwood are a little west of Harrow and both were about 6 miles (10k) from Denham RFC Cadet Camp.

Geoffrey wrote to Florence at Pinner on 11th October 1916 stating his address as A Company, No.1 RFC Cadet Bat., Denham. It seemed that it was to be a couple of weeks before he would be able to visit Florence as the cadets were only allowed to wander within a radius of five miles (8km). They had been measured for their walking out uniforms and were not likely to get them for two weeks. The C.O. would not allow them to go on leave as Officer Cadets until they were suitably attired.

Geoffrey said in his letter that 'half the men in my hut, 14 out of 25, are colonials, Australian, New Zealanders, South Africans and others from British Columbia and Mauritius.'

In Florence's letter to her mother, dated 2nd November 1916, she said she was now living at Northwood - doing work at the Pinner VAD Hospital where there were several wounded Australian soldiers. In her letter to her mother of 14th November 1916 she stated that she had been invited to call and see Susan, Countess of Malmesbury, who was in charge of the soldiers occupations at Northwood Hospital. After a

certain amount of hesitation 'Lady Malmesbury was 'sold' on the idea of the soldiers who were interested in Florence's craft work being instructed. Lady Malmesbury even worked a badge herself, of her late husband's Royal Engineers. Florence said in her letter to her mother, on 30th November 1916, that Lady Malmesbury 'is so charmed with it, and my kindness in teaching her, that she can't do enough for poor me.'

The work Florence was doing was teaching the soldiers to use enlarged drawings or tracings of their regimental badges to embroider cushion covers, etc. She provided the drawings or tracings required by the men, doing this work at home.

Her letter of 14th November to her father mentions that she had been taken to the first of a series of town planning lectures given by Professor Adshead and enclosed a copy of the syllabus. She said 'I was introduced to quite a number of T(own) P(lanning)ites...' She also said: 'I will try and find out what you want to know about Letchworth and the Co-operative houses, if I can.'

Geoffrey, in his letter to his father and mother from Denham Camp on 8th November 1916, said he had received a letter postmarked Goondiwindi Queensland: 'The chaps made jokes about it and wanted to know what language it was in. I only smiled for I knew.' In the same letter he said:

I don't remember whether I asked you to send me my next allowance, instead of paying it into my Savings Bank A/c. I have had some heavy bills for kit and may get a bit short, as I am only getting a bob (one shilling or 5p) a day as a cadet.

It would appear impossible for a person to have become a RFC Officer Cadet without having some private income.

Two paragraphs from Florence's letters interested me greatly. In her letter to her father from Northwood of 14th November 1916, she said

Uncle Walter has just gone over to Switzerland with, and in charge of, 18 wives who have gone over to see their prisoner husbands...

Then, in a letter to her mother of 30th November 1916 she wrote:

She (a lady friend) and I went to see an Australian girl at Harrow on the Hill, who had only come over from Germany a week before, and she was telling us how thoroughly organized all food and even clothing supplies are, she couldn't buy even a pair of gloves without a ticket and proving to the police, that she needed them. The week's allowance of food for each person is four pounds (about 1.8k) of rye bread or

flour, two ounces (60g) of butter, no other fat at all, 5/8 of a pound (300g) of meat, and no sugar only saccharine for sweetening purposes and 4 hundredweight (210k approx) of potatoes per year per person. The food in the shops here absolutely astounded her. Her husband was in Ruhleben, they had been in Germany on their honeymoon when the war broke out.

In Geoffrey's letter to his younger brother "Tomass" (Thomas, was aged 16 years when Geoffrey and Florence left Australia) from camp at Denham on 17th November, 1916 he said, when speaking of some 'well off' cadets and their cars etc, (these cadets were in a minority): 'An excess of wealth does not improve a chap much.' In the same letter he gives an illustration once again of his engineering ability. He told Thomas:

You would be amused at my barrack room engineering though. The bolt of my rifle I use as a vice for small parts, and a poker is not disdained for a soldering iron. The chaps (a great number of whom had motor cycles) can't understand yet how I ran my 'bus' on paraffin alone, as nobody else can do here in this cold weather.

He is the consulting engineer for his hut and has to diagnose magneto troubles, with a bayonet for a screwdriver. He said 'Torch battery carbons carved down make fairly good brushes.'

Geoffrey, in writing to his father from Denham on 30th November 1916, thanks his father for increasing his allowance, and stated

At present as you know I am only getting one bob a day (5p), and half of that goes to necessary subscriptions. I believe when we get our certificate and commissions as well as a flying allowance that we will nett from 12 to 15 bob a day (60 to 75p), but that will not be for some time yet, and during the three months engine course at Oxford we don't get a penny, as the whole allowance goes in messing and fuel etc.

Florence's letter to her mother from Northwood of 13th December 1916, referring to Geoffrey, said

He has heard definitely that they are to go to Oxford for the next three months, and he seems quite pleased for me to go and take rooms there too... It certainly was a shock to hear that Australia turned down "conscription", but almost every soldier I have spoken to was against it, and Harold Walt said that that is the general spirit at Harefield. What do you think of the Peace proposals - everyone here is rejoicing that Lloyd George has been made Prime Minister, and everybody is ready to be up and doing if only the Government will do something. There is talk of conscripting women's labour and all are willing...My

'little bit' is taking on well now at both Northwood and Pinner... I am feeling quite sorry to be leaving both hospitals but as I am to start work at Crawley Down I suppose I should feel satisfied that I am spreading good work. Of course I shall have to supply these hospitals with drawings for some time to come. And I shall hope to find a niche for my work at Oxford too.

Florence wrote to Nancy from Northwood on 21st December 1916, 'We go to the Buckley's for Xmas. I know they will look after him (Geoffrey) right well.' Geoffrey had come to Northwood on sick leave suffering with laryngitis and had to report at camp on the 27th. Later she said:

Everyone is talking of Lloyd George, and what he is going to do, and what they hope he is going to do. Every yard of land is to be cultivated, restaurant meals have already been curtailed to 2 shillings and six pence (12½ p) lunch and 5 shillings (25p) dinner, no more white bread from January 1st and sugar is to be further restricted, but the people are ready for anything so long as the war is "pushed on" successfully, and they are not asked to "wait and see" as in Asquith's day.

Florence's letter from "The Grange", Crawley Down, (home of the Buckleys) to her mother on the 27th December 1916, again speaking of Geoffrey, said:

He had to report at Denham yesterday and hopes to be sent on to Oxford today... Today Lady Brown, who is Commandant of the Hospital (Crawley VAD Hospital) is coming to tea (wife of Sir Hanbury Brown), also her married daughter; to see my work and start it at the hospital here, this is my fourth hospital.

Geoffrey wrote to Florence (no date) giving his new address 'RFC, Jesus College, Oxford.' Florence wrote to her mother from her new address of 59 St. John Street, Oxford on 9th January 1917. Florence's Aunt Anne had written to Dr and Mrs. Smith (Dr Smith was an official at Mansfield College) and said she had given her an introduction to them.

They have arranged for me to meet Mrs Spooner, wife of the Warden of New College [after whom the Spoonerism is named - ed], who is the head of the occupations work for wounded soldiers here; there are 2,000 in Oxford so I hope soon to be busy again. In fact I am as busy as I can be, getting drawings done for Crawley Down, Northwood, and Pinner, who all apply to me for any new ones they want.

In some earlier correspondence Florence had mentioned that she was waiting on some letters and that probably they had gone down on the ship that was lost carrying mail from Australia. In this letter she stated:

No more mails are to be published, but I know that the Medina mail leaves this Friday as our friend Mr de Burgh is returning by her to WA, to let his brother enlist... Many new restrictions have come in with the New Year, 400 trains have been withdrawn, and fares put up 50%, and each passenger only allowed 100 pounds (45k) of luggage.

In Geoffrey's letter to Arthur from Jesus College, Oxford on 24th January 1917 he said:

Two months I spent lugging a rifle about the country and the rest of the time have been attending lectures at a University. I have passed exams in Military Law, Hygiene, Discipline, Machine Guns, Topography, etc., and have still to pass in Wireless etc., etc ... We are just 54 miles from the centre of the University and are not allowed in without a special pass, but they rather encourage us to ride motor cycles, so I guess I will get it all right.' (Speaking of his J.H. motor cycle which has now been repaired and was in London).

From St. John St., Oxford on 21st February 1917
Florence wrote to Mother

Geoffrey hopes to get over on his motor bike at the weekend to see me, but I shall be very sad without my boy, we are quite good mates after our year together. I think you would find that he had developed considerably. Violet (a friend) was quite surprised to find such a young man; he is getting over his stiff stage and also toning down in his rather downright ideas.

In a letter to his parents from Jesus College Oxford, dated 27th February 1917, Geoffrey proudly informed them: 'After just five months of training, I have at last got my commission.' He was posted to France to learn to fly. This posting was not without a certain amount of drama for him and, up to a point, for Florence. A number of the newly created officers were posted as pilots to different squadrons based all over England. Geoffrey was not in this list of students and shortly after this a notice came out saying that all unposted officers were to go into training as observers. Geoffrey was most upset about this situation and protested immediately, even saying that he would resign his commission, return to Australia, and enlist there to become a pilot. It is not clear whether he was serious about this suggestion. Initially he saw the Adjutant, who was uncooperative in the matter. However Geoffrey then demanded to see the Colonel and, finally, the Adjutant took his name and said he would see what he could do. It is assumed that after some discussion between the Adjutant and the Colonel, Geoffrey was granted his wish to be trained as a pilot.

Six officers were posted to France. Five had their tickets for flying, which was the reason for their going; the other was Geoffrey, who was due to commence initial flying training. He had no idea why he was so fortunate. However he subsequently discovered that although he passed well, all those whose names commenced with letters in the latter part of the alphabet were listed to be observers. For instance, his roommate at Jesus College, Pierson, was posted as an observer. J

Florence, in her letter of 3rd March 1917 to Mother, written from a hotel in the Strand, London, referring to Geoffrey's posting and her reaction, said: '...then the relief of hearing he was among a favoured few to be sent to Vendôme,' some 90 miles (145kms) south west of Paris.

Geoffrey spent his last few days at Oxford in Queens College, High Street, as an officer, and he said 'the mess was something to talk about.' Florence described Geoffrey's kit, which he had to obtain before departing. It consisted of a camp washstand and bath, a camp bed and chair and 'a long tin box like Father's military one' for his clothes. 'He has ordered two uniforms to be ready by Saturday evening.'

Florence, who had gone to London to be with him at departure time, wrote to Mother on 7th March 1917, having returned to Oxford. The letter included 'Geoffrey left at 11 o'clock yesterday from Charing Cross.' He wrote to Florence a letter dated 6th March 1917, giving his address as Hotel Meurice, 35 Rue Victor Hugo, Boulogne sur Mer.

Geoffrey's first letter from Vendôme to Florence was written on 10th March, 1917. He had spent the first night in Boulogne, the second in Paris. The next evening he caught the Vendôme train and arrived there at 11p.m. No conveyance was at the station so they put up at a pub and went out to the 'drome next morning. Later he wrote:

We are billeted in a room in the town and go out to the aerodrome by char-a-banc in the morning, getting breakfast out there after some flying or "jerks" (P.T.)...Today I went up for the first time and it was just great. The first time I went for a joy ride which only lasted seven minutes. The next time was as pupil in the evening, and I had control for part of the time, much to my delight. This joy lasted twelve minutes. Each time lasted it seemed to me for but a few moments. The first machine was a tractor, and the second a pusher...You asked me to tell you what the first go felt like, I am dashed if I can tell you, except that it was absolutely "Bonzer." It's well worth travelling half round the world for.

In his letter to Florence from the Aerodrome Vendôme, France, dated 20th March 1917 Geoffrey said: 'We are now living up at the camp again as we have to get up so early for flying. At 5.30 the ones first on the list get out and the others an hour later. We are billeted in a long airy hut, most cheerful and fresh with its two rows of white beds and washstands down either side. Most of the occupants are young Canadians in the RNAS (Royal Naval Air Service). My word you don't know how I love this big open country after stuffy little England, it's almost like home with the long coarse dry grass everywhere.'

Florence wrote to her mother whilst on the train to Oxford on 22nd March 1917. She was returning from Berkhamstead in Hertfordshire where she stayed overnight as she had been requested to start the soldiers' work in a VAD Hospital at Ashbridge, Lord Brownlow's country home. She said:

I expect you have heard a good deal about the rationing that we are asked to do now, potatoes are so scarce that even hotels are having potatoless days. I often have rice as I really prefer it to potato. Sugar is the only ration that soldiers are put on...

Florence further wrote:

We are reading such awful accounts now of the devastation left by the retreating German Army and wonder what will happen when they come to a stand. Wasn't the Russian revolution a surprise! I had no idea that the Tsar was a weak man, his wife seems to be most blamed for the German influences at work.

In Geoffrey's letter to his sister Joan from Vendôme France on 30th March 1917 he said

...it won't really be so long now, only a few weeks anyhow. We will be sent back to England again for our advanced course and "wings." If I am good enough I may with luck pass into a "scout" squadron. However I am afraid I am rather too much of the slow type, more suitable to bombing and long reconnaissance flights. Chaps like our "Tomass" are more in demand for the little swift ones. You never know your luck though, so I hope for the best.

Writing to her mother from Oxford on 4th April 1917, Florence told her she had started work at Thame VAD Hospital which was half an hour by train from Oxford, and said:

And I am feeling more and more convinced at the initial good of our work in helping the poor boys to regain their mental balance.

Geoffrey wrote to his father and mother from Vendôme on 11th April 1917. He had turned 23 years of age on that day. He informed his parents that he

was now flying solo, stating 'When we go solo we wear weird helmets popularly known as "Crash Helmets" or "Pumpkins."'

On 11th April 1917 Florence wrote to her father from Oxford. She was at New College with Mrs. Spooner, the Warden's wife, who has been reckoning up the work sent out since the New Year, this figuring out to be no less than 1,000 pieces. They were starting a competition amongst the soldiers, the results of their work to be sold at an Exhibition in June, the soldiers getting 25% of the price for which the work was sold plus a chance to win a cash prize.

Geoffrey's letter to Joan from Vendôme on 15th April 1917 informed her that he has been flying on cross country exercises and at the rate he is going he will soon be back in England. He said that: '...if it wasn't for the sake of seeing Florrie I should be very sorry as I love this part of France.' His further news was that he had broken the record at the camp for the longest time spent in the air in one day by any officer under instruction. He spent five hours and fifty seven minutes aloft.

In Geoffrey's letter to Florence of 24th April 1917 he gave his new address, Royal Flying Corps, Wye Kent (about 16 kms southwest of Canterbury). In this letter he said: 'We will go for our "Wings" here, and then go straight to the front I believe...' On 28th April Geoffrey wrote to his parents from Wye. He had got his J.H. motor cycle and sidecar back from the Buckleys at Crawley Down where it was taken when he left for France. He said in this letter, 'I got a good report from Vendôme, and was recommended for a scout, so if I shape decently I may get it.'

Florence wrote to her father from St John Street, Oxford on 16th May 1917 and said

I only just got down to Wye in time, as he was sent on to Waddington, about 5 miles (8k) south of Lincoln, early Monday morning. He does not expect to be there more than 10 days or a fortnight and then goes to Turnbury, Ayrshire, Scotland for aerial gunnery.

Geoffrey wrote to his father and mother on 18th May 1917 giving his new address of 51 Reserve Squadron, Waddington, Lincolnshire. In the letter he also gave his current weight, having been weighed in a chemist's shop. He said: 'I found I was 12 stone 4 pounds (76kgs). I left Australia 10.7 (67kgs).'

In a letter to his mother from Waddington on 30th May 1917 Geoffrey said he was doing some fine cross county flights. In this letter he stated:

I am now finishing on one of the very finest "buses" turned out by England. These fine craft have Rolls Royce Engines of very high horse power and are a

dream to fly. I only hope to go to France on one of them.

The aircraft he was referring to was a De-Haviland (DH4).

I am the only one who has looped in this squadron since I have been in it. Also hold the height record of 16,000 feet in a certain machine or for that matter no other machine in this squadron has gone to that height.

The details given in the copies of Geoffrey's log book sheets show that this aircraft to have been a Martinsyde.

Florence mentions this feat in her letter to her father from Hessle, Hull dated 30th May 1917 when she said, writing on Geoffrey's height record on the squadron, 'It seems that the other men don't care to go so high. He said he felt all right, his engine being much more affected than himself.' In this same letter Florence said Geoffrey had flown all aircraft that were required in the course including his own DH4 very fast scout. Florence further said, 'Geoffrey expects to be sent to Turnbury near Ayr to do an aerial gunnery course which will take a month.'

Florence wrote again to her mother from Hessle, North Hull, on 31st May 1917. She was staying with Mr & Mrs Bilson. Mr Bilson was an architectural friend of her father. Mrs. Bilson, who was keen on the idea of sewing badges as work for soldiers, took Florence to a large new hospital in Hull where Lady Nunburnham, the daughter of Lord Carrington, was Commandant. Mrs. Bilson who was a good needleworker, was talking of giving up her work in the kitchen of the hospital and taking up the type of work Florence was doing as the only occupation the soldiers have at this stage was pen painting.

Florence was going to Grassmere to see the Lakes District with a friend of Mrs. Bilson and said

I wonder if you and Father will allow me to use your Xmas and Birthday money for this trip, not that I am at all short but there was really nothing I want.

In Geoffrey's letter to his brother Arthur, and his wife Anne, from RFC Waddington Lincoln on 1st June 1917, he thanks them for the present which he finds most useful. Geoffrey called the present a triplex safety mask. The glass in the mask was Triplex, which prevents it splintering in the event of being hit by shrapnel or being involved in a crash. He said, '...at 100 miles (160km) an hour rain stings like nothing on earth.' He went on to say:

I believe I am not going to be sent out to France immediately, but am to do about a couple of months

instructing on Scouts. Also I have been collared by the "Officer in Charge of Instructions" and told I am to give a course of lectures on engines to about fifty-odd officers.

Geoffrey wrote to Florence from Waddington on the 11th June 1917 and told her he was now a temporary Flight Commander, commanding half a dozen Martinsydes. He also told Florence: 'My name was down for the Turnbury course but it has been taken off, and I was told that I could not be spared at present.'

At this point I will give the specifications of the two aircraft mentioned by Geoffrey, the D.H.4 and the Martinsyde.

The D.H.4 - Gross weight: 3,312 pounds; Span: 42 feet 5 inches; Length: 30 feet 8 inches; Engine: 250 hp Rolls Royce Eagle; Armament: 1 x .303 Vickers, 1 x .303 Lewis; Crew: 2; Speed: 117 m.p.h. at 6,500 feet; Ceiling: 16,000 feet; Range: 3½ hours; Bomb Load: 4 x 112 pounds.

The Martinsyde G100 "Elephant" - A long range flying scout. Gross weight: 2,458 pound Span: 38 feet; Length: 26 feet 6 inches; Engine: 120 h.p. Beardmore; Armament: 2 Lewis machine guns; Crew: 1; Speed: 108 m.p.h. at ground level, Ceiling: 16,000 feet; Range: 4 ½ hours; Bomb Load: 1 x 230 pounds or 4 x 65 pound.

The single seater scouts were designed for long range reconnaissance work, and relied on their speed to avoid interception.

I will also take this opportunity to mention that 'Waddington' will have particular significance for many of the members of the RAAF who served in Britain during World War II. R.A.F. Station Waddington was the home of Bomber Command's No 467 Australian Squadron.

THE DEATH OF GEOFFREY

Florence wrote a long letter to 'My Dear Home Folk' from Lincoln dated 20th June 1917. The first news of Geoffrey's accident was a wire on Saturday evening the 16th June 1917 to Oxford, saying

Regret to inform you your brother 2nd Lieutenant G. Sulman, RFCG.L., has been admitted to 4th Northern General Hospital, Lincoln, suffering from severe injuries result of an aeroplane accident, condition critical advise you to proceed there at once.
Aeronautics, 51 Lincoln.

There were no trains from Oxford to Lincoln until Sunday morning and Florence arrived at Lincoln at 4:15 in the afternoon. She was met at the Station and

taken straight to the hospital. Three doctors had been to examine him, and all said they must wait for consciousness to find out injuries, which might be serious internally although no bones were broken.

Florence was told that when he was first brought to the hospital on Saturday morning they had no hope of Geoffrey's recovery but by Sunday he had improved so much that there was some hope. There seemed such a chance of recovery on Monday that Florence waited until Tuesday to advise the family in Australia. Geoffrey's CO saw Florence on Tuesday and begged to be allowed to send the cable for her, so she worded it and he sent it. It read as follows:-

Son injured 16th, still unconscious, suffering concussion, no bones broken, every care taken, sister is with him. Staying in Giles 87 Lincoln - Aeronautics, 51 Lincoln. Received 6 p.m. 20th June 1917.

On Monday and Tuesday Geoffrey remained the same, not giving any signs of consciousness, however he kept his left hand moving. At 5:30 a.m. on Wednesday 20th June Florence was called by telephone and was told he was failing. Florence went to the hospital. She said Geoffrey 'had lost the power of swallowing and got lower and lower.' He died around 8:00am without regaining consciousness. Florence, in her letter, said:

I feel even now, there is so much to be grateful for, he was here, I was able to be with him and he had a peaceful end which are comforts that so many sorrowing hearts are not granted.

Florence sent the following cable home:

Lincoln 20th 1:20pm. Sulman Lawson. Passed away eight this morning am arranging cremation, he wished it, are you willing. Sulman. 87 Lincoln. (87 was the 'phone number in Lincoln where she was staying.) Received Lawson 6 p.m. 20th June 1917

THE FUNERAL

Florence received a cable from her father sent on 21st June saying: 'Our dearest love - carry out Geoffrey's wish.' Apparently she and Geoffrey had been talking of cremation one day and he expressed a wish for it, so when she was talking with the Quartermaster at the Military Hospital she enquired if it were possible and his response was that it could be done at Hull. The RFC Major (Geoffrey's Squadron Commander) asked Florence if it should be a military funeral and she said 'yes' because it only seemed fair to Geoffrey after doing his best to do 'his bit.' The Major said he had flown over 60 hours, a splendid record, and was a fine pilot.

The details of the cremation and the funeral were obtained from Florence's letter to home from Waddington dated 26th June 1917, Mr Buckley's from Crawley Down to her father dated 27th June 1917, and the one from Uncle George (Dr Colborne) to her father dated 25th June 1917.

Geoffrey's body was taken to Hull for cremation on Saturday 23rd June. After arrival at the station, there was a two mile drive to the crematorium and all the way his coffin covered with the Union Jack was saluted by every soldier it passed.

His uncle George (Colborne) conducted the service at the Crematorium. Florence and Uncle George chose a simple mauve (her mother's colour) glazed pottery casket for the ashes which were to be returned to the Military Hospital at Lincoln.

Those attending the funeral met at the Military Hospital at 2 p.m. on Monday, 25th June 1917. The casket containing the ashes of Geoffrey was placed into a coffin covered with the Union Jack and placed on an aeroplane carrier trailer attached to an Army motor lorry. The men of the squadron led the procession to the St Nicholas churchyard followed by the band, then the motor towing the aeroplane carrier. Next came two carriages for the close relations and finally a body of about 100 officers of the RFC to complete the procession.

The Army Chaplain, the Rev. Johnson, a Wesleyan, met the party at the gate of the churchyard and the coffin was carried to the graveside where the casket was taken out of the coffin. After the service three volleys were fired and the Last Post sounded. Then all the men and officers marched past the grave, and saluted. Uncle George assisted the Non-conformist Chaplain by giving a final prayer and the benediction.

Florence, in her letter of 26th June, said

The beauty and peace of this last week have been beyond all understanding, and I do truly feel that a Higher Power has been near.

Mr Buckley, in his letter of 27th June said of Florence,

She was just wonderful, thinking about everything and about everybody's comfort, and nothing at all about herself.

THE ACCIDENT - WHAT HAPPENED

I have decided that the best way to describe what occurred would be to quote a rather long paragraph in a letter to John Sulman, Geoffrey's father, by Major C.H. Hiatt, Commanding Officer, 51 Reserve Squadron Royal Flying Corps, dated at Waddington on 25th August 1917.

Regarding the actual details of the accident, I am quite at a loss to account for the newspaper cutting you enclosed, the details of which are wholly inaccurate. The facts are as follows;- On the morning of the 16th June 2/Lt Sulman took the air in a B.E.2e Bi-plane with another Officer, and was going to instruct him in landings. The aeroplane was fitted so that both Officers could control the machine, and your son went in the Passenger's seat in front, with the other Officer in the Pilot's seat behind him. They took the machine off the ground and at about the height of 150 feet attempted a steep turn. To turn a machine it is necessary to have both 'Bank' (ie to slant the machine in the same direction as the turn is to be made), and rudder. In this case too much 'Bank' was used for the amount of rudder, with the result that the machine fell forward, and spun to the ground.

THE FINAL LETTERS IN THE COLLECTION

Florence's letter to her father from Oxford written 3rd July 1917 made it clear that her initial intention was to return to Australia as soon as possible and to travel via Panama. She visited the P. & O. Office and saw the head of the Passage Department. 'He said that I should have to get my passport signed by the Home Secretary and his signature can only be obtained in very urgent cases. Then, when one has a passport, it is a matter of months before there is a chance of getting a passage by the N.Z. Shipping Co., Via Panama or Shire Line I think it was.'

Florence sent a cable to her father which said 'Return impossible unless very urgent much love.' This was to let him know that she was doing her best and that she wished to return at once if it was possible. Her father sent an answer, 'Fully realize cannot return, all well, much love.' She had decided to stay on at Oxford and continue her war work.

When she was at Waddington she arranged with Major Hiatt of the 51st Squadron to have Geoffrey's motorbike put up into a case so that his special paraffin attachment could not be tampered with. Geoffrey had mentioned at an earlier date that he was considering taking out a patent on his modified carburettor. She was to find a suitable warehouse for storage of the machine and advise the Major where to send it. The Major gave her the Magneto which he had had taken off so that no one could use it, and kept it in his office. The side car was in a garage at Ashford, Kent and she intended to try to sell it.

Florence arranged for Geoffrey's kit to be sent to her at Oxford. She hoped to find a needy Australian cadet who would be glad of the bed, bath, chair, kit bag, hold-all and tin box at half price. All personal possessions except worn clothes she was to bring home.

Florence, when writing about Geoffrey in this letter said,

I remember him saying he found he could fly as well as most of them although he might not seem so quick and smart. He had developed into a man after your own heart Dad.

Florence put a death notice in The Times for Geoffrey and asked the Major if she might put 'temporary instructor' to show how well he had done in the short time. It seemed good pilots were often used as instructors before they were sent to the Front.

Writing to her mother from Oxford on 11th July 1917 Florence said she had given her father a copy of the letter of sympathy that she received from Buckingham Palace and her acknowledgment. The letter from the Palace read as follows :-

Privy Purse Office
Buckingham Palace, S.W.,
July 4th, 1917.

Dear Madam,

I am commanded by the King and Queen to express their sincere sympathy with you at the loss you have sustained by the death of your brother, Second Lieutenant G. Sulman, who Their Majesties regret to hear has died as the result of an accident whilst in the service of his country.

Yours very faithfully,
Stamfordham.
For
Keeper of the Privy Purse

Miss F. Sulman

Florence said to her mother,

I thought how you would appreciate the gracious thoughtfulness of their Majesties who thus acknowledge each life given for our country.

In Florence's letter to her mother from her new address at Oxford, 20 Worcester Place, dated 18th July 1917, she informs her mother that

Aunt Mary writes that a nephew of Uncle Walter's, who walked nine hundred miles (1,450k) in Canada to join up, has just been lost in the RFC at the Front, he was only just married too. So one feels that there are many too suffering with us; and is the World going to be any better for all this pain?

Florence's letter to her mother from Oxford dated 1st August 1917 (This is her last letter in the collection)

indicates that Florence has been unwell and has sought medical treatment, the verdict being that she was "run down". She said: 'I am feeling much better this week and am to report to my lady doctor tomorrow.' Florence then asked, 'Have you heard about the Russian "Joan of Arc" and her battalion of women? Enclosed is a cutting about her.'

CONCLUSION

Florence showed her ability and attention to detail in sorting out Geoffrey's affairs in England, including his financial matters. She surely was a fine support for Geoffrey, and although being of an earlier generation became a close companion.

Of Geoffrey, one might contemplate what influence he may have had as a pioneering aviator during the period between the two World Wars, had he survived.

I feel that Lieutenant Commander G. Fraser of R.N.V.R., writing to Geoffrey's father on behalf of the Officer Commanding the British Flying School at Vendôme, France, on 23rd August 1917 best expressed his potential, as follows:

This class report only accompanies pupils who show promise of becoming 1st Class pilots, undoubtedly your son was one, and I venture to state that the country has lost one of its most promising officers.

In 1918 Geoffrey's parents gave a gift of £250 (\$500) to the University of Sydney to establish an annual prize of £ 10 (\$20) for the best essay or thesis on Aeronautics, styled 'The Geoffrey Sulman Memorial Prize.' Later, in 1933 Sir John and Lady Sulman gave a gift of £ 500 (\$1000) to the University to found the 'Geoffrey Sulman Memorial Lectureship' for the advancement of the study of Aeronautics in the University.

I'm sure I have expanded my knowledge of military history through reading these letters and thanks to Florence's letters I have gleaned some knowledge of British social history matters during the World War 1 period.

Keith Jones
August 1995.

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K.T.J.



Geoffrey Sulman (centre) in front of a DH4 at
Waddington, Lincoln, 1917.

HAROLD CAZNEAUX - GLASS NEGATIVE COLLECTION

The Archives holds an impressive collection of glass negatives and a large proportion of these are attributable to Harold Cazneaux (1878-1953), the well-known Australian photographer.

The glass negatives were deposited in the Archives by the photographer's daughter Mrs Rainbow Johnson; the Archivist's report for 1959/60 records that she deposited 6 boxes of negatives and prints. The prints have not been located.

Of the 524 glass negatives held in the Archives it appears that approximately 300 were taken by Cazneaux between 1900 and 1930.

The most identifiable group of images are those taken for publication in *The Home* journal, 1st September 1927. This issue of *The Home* features the launch of the University's 75th Anniversary Appeal by Appeal Director Professor E.R. Holme.

This issue of *The Home* also features images of the original Fisher Library, the Clock Tower and Macleay Museum in a separate article by Professor J. Le Gay Brereton. In addition there are numerous images from Anatomy, Pathology and Microscopy classes, experiments and Research work in the Physics Department and Engineering School.

A separate story in the same issue of *The Home* features Cazneaux images of the Veterinary School at the University - these images show the Observation Box and students examining animals.

The bulk of the images in the Cazneaux collection depict University grounds and buildings, including the residential colleges and Royal Prince Alfred Hospital. Of particular interest are the images of the construction of new buildings, such as the Botany School in 1924/25 and images of the Physics Building, in particular the interior details, which are the only images of these buildings for this period held in the Archives.

Some images have already been reproduced in other publications such as G. Fisher's *The University of Sydney 1850-1975*. Whilst others have been used as references for the conservation planning of the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital buildings and grounds.

The glass negatives were stored in cardboard boxes and some were interleaved with tissue paper, consequently they are in good condition; very few have deteriorated or discoloured and only 2 or 3 are cracked.

It was noted on several of the boxes which negatives were intended for Professor Holme for *The Home* article and a few of the negatives are engraved with the photographer's initials "HC". Identification of the remaining negatives was based on style and quality of the photography as well as the dates of the images. In addition the Cazneaux negatives were half-plate size compared to some earlier images on larger plates and later images on quarter plate.

At present the glass negatives are being copied onto microfilm in order to make them available to researchers.



**Summary List of Records Accessioned in the
University Archives, July 1994 to June 1995**

(Note: Restricted access conditions may apply to some records on this list)

This list is compiled in accession number order, together with creator or donor. It does not include publications received, unless such material is part of a record group.

1262 STUDENT FILES. NEW SOUTH WALES CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC
1263 ADDITIONAL RECORDS OF THE ASSOCIATION. WOMENS SPORTS ASSOCIATION
1264 PERSONAL ARCHIVES OF PROFESSOR CLIFFORD TURNEY. PROFESSOR CLIFFORD TURNEY
1265 "HOW TO TREAT YOUR DOCTOR". CLIVE HERBERT SELBY MB.BS (1933)
1266 PUBLICATIONS AND EPHEMERA. SYDNEY UNIVERSITY FILM GROUP
1267 PRIVATE FOUNDATIONS ACCOUNT LEDGER. BURSARS OFFICE, ACCOUNTANT
1268 INSTITUTE OF NURSING STUDIES MISSION STATEMENT. SENATE
1269 BENTIVOGLIO FAMILY PHOTOGRAPHS.
1270 RECORDS OF GUILD TEACHERS COLLEGE. GUILD TEACHERS COLLEGE
1271 SRC AND CRICKET PHOTOGRAPHS. MRS JEAN NEVELL
1272 40TH YEAR REVIEW OF THE 54 CLUB. MR ALLAN GAMBLE
1273 STUDENT'S HANDBOOK. UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY
1274 INDEXES TO MINUTES OF THE ACADEMIC BOARD. ACADEMIC BOARD
1275 MINUTES OF THE ACADEMIC BOARD. ACADEMIC BOARD
1276 ST PAULS COLLEGE FILM. NOT KNOWN
1277 CONFERRING OF DEGREES - 100,000TH GRADUATE. NOT KNOWN
1278 RECORDS OF THE STUDENT ACTION FOR ABORIGINAL. DR M R DWYER
1279 ADDITIONAL PAPERS OF N. DERERA. Mr N Derera
1280 MISCELLANEOUS RECORDS OF L J A PARR. LESLIE JAMES ALBERT PARR
1281 ADDITIONAL STUDENT RECORDS. GUILD TEACHERS COLLEGE
1282 VIDEO COPIES OF CINEMATOGRAPHIC FILM BY PROFESSOR SIR HENRY BARRACLOUGH
1283 ADDITIONAL PAPERS OF PROF. HARRY MESSEL. PROFESSOR HARRY MESSEL
1284 ADDITIONAL RECORDS OF THE SCHOOL OF PHYSICS. SCHOOL OF PHYSICS

1285 MISCELLANEA RELATING TO PSYCHOLOGY. PROFESSOR R. A. CHAMPION
1286 RECOLLECTIONS OF HENRY MACINTOSH. Ms Barbara Storey
1287 RECORDS OF THE SOCIETY. Sydney University Society to Welcome Pope John Paul II
1288 GLASS NEGATIVES BY CAZNEAUX AND OTHERS. HAROLD CAZNEAUX AND OTHER PHOTOGRAPHERS
1289 ARCHIVES FINDING AIDS. UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES
1290 MISCELLANEOUS PRINTED PUBLICATIONS. VARIOUS AUTHORS
1291 RECORDS RELATING TO THE FORMATION OF CHAST. Ms Alison Turtle
1292 ADDITIONAL RECORDS OF THE LAW SOCIETY. LAW SOCIETY
1293 SOME MINOR PAPERS OF JACK WILLIAM RODERICK. JACK WILLIAM RODERICK
1294 PHOTOGRAPHS OF FIELD BATTERY, SYDNEY UNIVERSITY REGIMENT. MR JACK NICOL
1295 JOHN ALBERT BASIL WALKER - CERTIFICATES AND PHOTOGRAPHS. JOHN ALBERT BASIL WALKER
1296 CONSERVATORIUM ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS. CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC
1297 CAPITAL PRESERVED TRUSTS. ACCOUNTANTS OFFICE (MR G. B. STOWELL)
1298 ADDITIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS. CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC
1299 COPIES OF OBITUARIES PUBLISHED IN UNION RECORDER.
1300 ADDITIONAL RECORDS OF THE SPORTS UNION BLUES ASSOCIATION. SPORTS UNION
1301 ENGINEERING PHOTOGRAPHS. OTTOMAR GEORGE VICKERY BE (1922)
1302 TRANSCRIPT OF DIARY OF EDGAR SELWYN HARRISON. MR J BYRNE
1303 PERSONAL ARCHIVES OF YVONNE ANNE LARSSON. DR YVONNE ANNE LARSSON
1304 PHOTOGRAPHS OF "G SUIT" AND CENTRIFUGE. KEN SMITH (FORMER ASSISTANT TO PROF FRANK COTTON)
1305 THREE PUBLICATIONS BY SIR BRUCE WILLIAMS RE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY UNIVERSITY FINANCING