



The University of Sydney

1997

# RECORD

## The University Archives

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Ninth Floor, Fisher Library

Telephone: + 61 2 9351 2684

Fax: + 61 2 9351 7304

[www.usyd.edu.au/su/archives](http://www.usyd.edu.au/su/archives)

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## Archivist's Notes

This issue of *Record* marks a significant event in the life of the University Archives, the retirement earlier this year of Ken Smith as University Archivist after 16 years. Ken came to the University at the end of 1980 following the retirement of Gerald Fischer, the second University Archivist. His archival background covered the University of Wollongong and the establishment of the first archives for the Council of the City of Sydney. Commitment to archival theory and sound practice has characterised his professional life and enabled Ken to build on the firm foundations of his predecessors. Ken led the University Archives through some difficult and challenging times, not only for the Archives but the University in general. The higher education amalgamations of 1990 saw a major increase in the Archives holdings with the acquisition of the records of institutions joining the University. A period of major administrative realignments in the early 1990s presented new challenges, but also emphasised the paramount importance of good recordkeeping, a point Ken never lost the opportunity to stress. The Archives office does not feel quite right without Ken's presence, although he has been a frequent, and very welcome, visitor lately while preparing a paper to be presented to a conference of Japanese university archivists. The bright future anticipated for the University Archives will only be possible because of the years of dedicated work by Ken.

*Record* contains its usual mix of interesting articles. Two are by frequent contributors, Dr Peter Chippendale and Mr Keith Jones. Keith continues his fascinating series of pieces on the experience of members of the University during war. The current contribution is titled "The Academy Behind Wire" and is concerned with the education of 8th Division officers whilst prisoners of war. Peter Chippendale has written a detailed assessment of the University in the 1860s, which raises the still current issue of the relationship of the University and society. In the first article in this issue we are pleased to have an essay by Professor Sir Bruce Williams, Vice-Chancellor of the University from 1967-1981. Sir Bruce provides an important account of the creation of the Academic Board in 1975. The Board still exists, but in 1996 its constitution changed from that established under Sir Bruce.

T J Robinson  
Assistant University Archivist

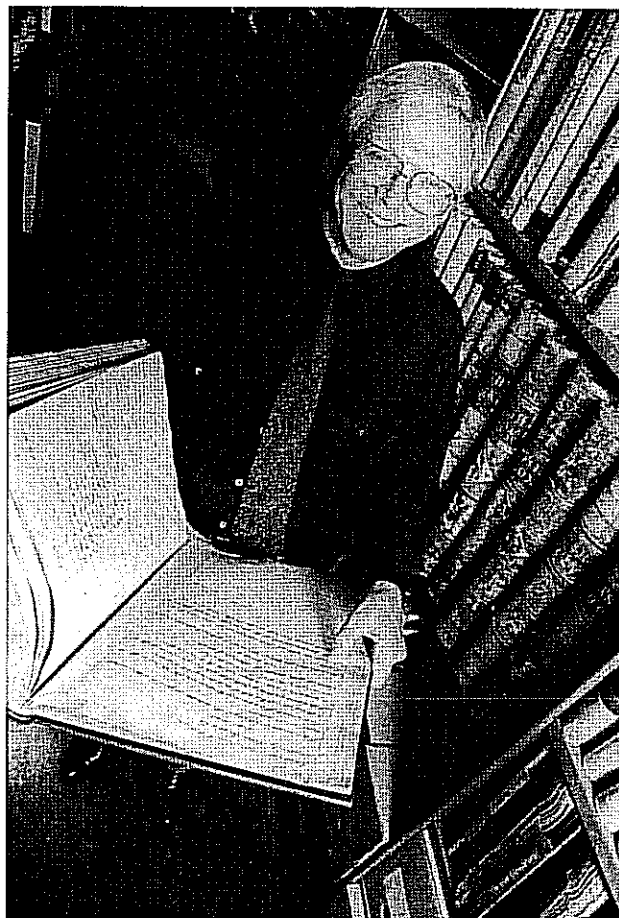


Photo: Tracy Schramm

Ken Smith, with the first minutes of Senate.

# From Professorial Board to Academic Board

The Academic Board that replaced the Professorial Board in 1975 had its last meeting in October 1996. The Chair of the Academic Board, Professor John Mack, invited me to make the closing remarks at that meeting. Before doing so, I read the relevant sections of *The History of The University of Sydney*. I found the accounts there, of the related changes in the membership of Senate and of the Chief Academic Board in the By-laws on Faculties and the creation of a By-law for Departments, were rather sketchy. I decided to refresh my recollection of the processes of change by consulting the Minutes of the Senate and Professorial Board and *The University of Sydney News*. The account that follows is the outcome.

In September 1967, when I became Vice-Chancellor, the University and University Colleges Act stated that no person could be a student of the University unless living at home, or with a relative, or in a University College, or in a lodging approved by the Chancellor or Vice-Chancellor. Whether the lodgings of students had ever been approved was not clear, but it was clear that, at least recently, the University had not been acting in accordance with the Act in conferring degrees on many of its students. It seemed obvious to me that at least one section of the Act should be changed despite the warning from the Chancellor that it would be dangerous to ask the Government to do so: "The last University that asked for a change did not get what it wanted, but had two Archbishops added to its Council".

Apart from the question of compliance with the law, that provision in the Act implied that the University had an obligation to act *in loco parentis*, and that, given the increase in the age of students since the Act was passed, seemed no longer appropriate. I had observed "revolting students" in Europe and the United States of America and thought that the serious discontent of students in Europe, the United States of America, and Japan, might spread to Australia. In that event, I thought that the University's By-law on discipline, which implied a University role *in loco parentis*, would create problems. The Senate of the University did decide to ask the State Government to change the Act, and it introduced a new By-law on Good Order which included provision for students on the Proctorial Board.

The University Act provided for the Chairman of the Professorial Board, four of the ten Deans of Faculties, and a graduate elected by the students, to be Fellows in a Senate of twenty-six. At the Senate meeting of November 1967 there was a debate about which four Deans should be chosen. During the debate, Mr Justice Le Gay Brereton was minuted as saying "Consideration should be given to the Constitution of

Senate", and the Vice-Chancellor as responding "that he was aware of the need for consideration of this sort and he hoped in due course to place some proposals before Senate".

In December 1968 the Senate considered a letter from the President of the Sydney Association of University Teachers (SAUT) which stated that there was a considerable body of opinion, particularly among the sub-professorial staff, that they were wrongly denied knowledge of, and participation in, the affairs of their governing body. The President requested that one of the then three co-opted Fellows of Senate should be nominated by the permanent academic staff. The Senate resolved to inform the President that it was not able to do as requested but that it was already considering the broader issue of the Constitution of Senate.

In March 1969 the Senate appointed a Committee "to advise the Vice-Chancellor" on possible amendments to the Act and called for submissions to the Vice-Chancellor. In September 1969 the Senate approved the Vice-Chancellor's draft proposals and their publication and referred them to the Professorial Board, the Student Representative Council (SRC), and the Standing Committee of Convocation, for comment. At its November meeting, on the motion of the Vice-Chancellor seconded by Mr H. D. Black, Senate agreed proposed amendments to the Act. The proposals included an addition to the Senate of two Fellows elected by academic staff and two students elected by the students, and the power of Senate to elect a Chancellor who was not at the time a Fellow of Senate.

The Act was amended in 1970, though not entirely as the University requested. The responsibility of the Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor to approve lodging was removed and the provision for additional student Fellows was approved. There was, however, provision for more staff Fellows than had been requested, though, as an offset, members of staff were made ineligible for election by the graduates. At the time, there were two members of staff elected by the graduates, namely, H. D. Black and E. L. Wheelwright.

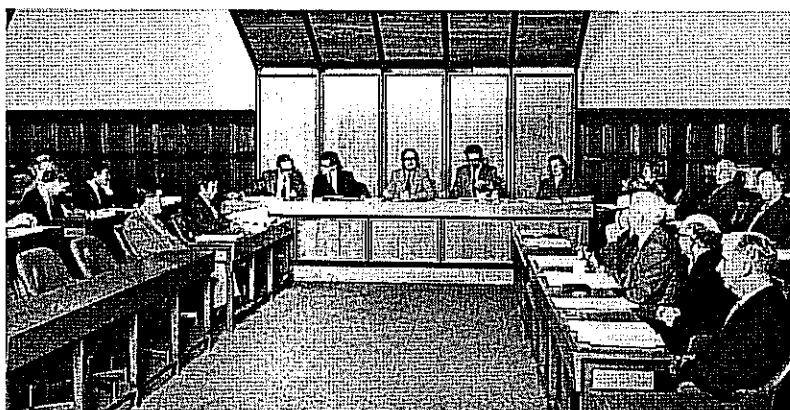
The decision to publish draft proposals for changes in the Act was part of a new policy on communication and consultation. A draft of new By-laws for the maintenance and enforcement of good order within the University had also been published and discussed with the SRC and Professorial Board before Senate made a decision. In the past there had been too much secrecy. Agendas of the Senate and Professorial Board, and even statistics on pass rates in the various subjects, had been treated as confidential. The decision to

publish a weekly *News* (from March 1969), and the institution of Faculty and Departmental student-staff liaison Committees, student membership of the Proctorial Board and, before long, of Faculties, were designed to improve communications and generate a greater sense of participation. In an address to Convocation in October 1972, I suggested that our new procedures on communication and consultation might prove to be more important than constitutional changes, and perhaps they were.

Just as with the Senate, the membership of the Professorial Board was a live issue. The Universities of La Trobe and Macquarie, founded in 1964, had small Academic Boards which included "sub professorial" members of staff, and several British universities had made such provisions. As President of the Staff Association, I had been involved in such a change at Manchester and I had been a member of the UGC Committee which created the University of Lancaster and provided for elected non-professorial members of their Academic Board equal to one-third the numbers

stronger departments, and to check the disintegrating effect of the proliferation of subjects in undergraduate studies, and it encouraged further discussion of new ways of organising Departments.

In July 1970 the Professorial Board considered a proposal from its Committee that non-professorial members of the Academic staff, equal to one-third the number of professors (and perhaps some students), be added to the Board. The Board requested a further report, including the case for a small Academic Board which I had advocated in Board discussions. In September, the Board considered a further report from its Committee which outlined four possibilities, three of which would have reduced the size of the Board by between two-thirds and one half. In a "straw vote" the Board voted for the other possibility - namely, an addition of non-professors equal to one-third the number of Professors and an Executive of twenty-four. In October 1971 the Board decided, by twenty-one votes to eight, to agree to the proposal discussed a year earlier for a larger Board. In October 1972 the Board



A meeting of the last Professorial Board, 1974

of Professors. Not surprisingly, I encouraged discussion on whether the constitution of the Professorial Board, which had been created when there were few full-time members of the academic staff other than professors, was still appropriate where the number of Professors had declined to just 10% of full-time academic staff. Discussions in the Board had already begun on proposals from SAUT and the SRC for non-professorial and student membership when I circulated a paper on *Structure and Process in University Government*. The paper which went to Senate was dated 4 May 1970, though the Professorial Board Minutes for June 1970 referred to "the Vice-Chancellor's paper currently being discussed by Senate, which the Professorial Board Committee had discussed in March".

This paper on *Structure and Process in University Government* outlined the case for a broader membership of the Professorial Board, for less secrecy, and for prompt and adequate communication of decisions. It referred to the failure of Faculties to co-ordinate the academic activities of increasingly

agreed to draft By-laws for a proposed new Academic Board with one significant change from the earlier proposal. The draft By-laws were passed on the understanding that the new Academic Board would be left to make a decision on an Executive Committee. There was a strong fear that the small Executive might reduce the role of Professors.

Another paper of mine written for Senate - *Functions and Membership of Boards, Faculties, and Departments* (July 1971) - emphasised the need to draft new By-laws for the Board, the Faculties, and Departments, which reflected the inter-related nature of their roles. At that time there was no By-law on Departments. "The Professor and his staff" constituted the Department which, for most members of the academic staff, was the most important part of university administration. Some Professors held departmental meetings and some did not, the growth of specialisation and multi-chair departments created complications, and the contrast between the role of sub-professorial staff in their departments and in the "democratic" faculties, and the exclusion of sub-professors from the chief academic

body, added to tensions and, some maintained, a sense of alienation.

The growth in the influence of Departments was due largely to the growth in the size of Departments, but it was helped by a change in the By-laws in the mid thirties. Where previously the Faculties had "the general direction and supervision of the teaching in the subjects pertaining to the Faculty" and reported to Senate, from 1936 Faculties were to supervise the teaching and report to the Board, not to the Senate. Given that the Board consisted of Professors, most of whom were Heads of Departments, the effect of that change was to strengthen Departmental autonomy. That effect led me to propose that the chief academic body should be a General Board of Faculties, and to request a thorough discussion of that possibility. There was an associated proposal for a By-law on Departments which made provision for Departmental meetings, for submission to Faculty of any proposals for courses of study or examinations where the Professor or Professors did not accept proposals of the majority of academic staff, for the Vice-Chancellor to be able to appoint as Head of Department a person other than a Professor - some of whom were keen not to be Heads of Department -, and for formal consultation with students.

The Senate began its discussion of the paper on *Functions and Membership of Boards, Faculties, and Departments* in September 1971. It appointed a Committee chaired by the Chancellor to draft new By-laws for an Academic Board, Faculties, Schools, and Departments. Draft proposals were approved by Senate in May 1973. The proposals were published in *The University of Sydney News* on 9 May and comments were requested by 31 July.

The reports of the Committee to the December 1973 Senate listed the submissions received - many more than on previous occasions - and outlined the changes in the draft proposals made as a result of eight meetings following the receipt of submissions. The number of meetings indicated that serious attention was given to the submissions and also that there were some differences within the Committee. The Senate approved the revised draft By-laws at that meeting and "sent them down town for approval". Approval took some time, and the Academic Board - with power to delegate its functions to an Executive Committee - came into being in June 1975.

The draft By-laws which Senate published, and on which requested submissions, did not include my proposal for a small General Board of Faculties. That was regarded as too radical and was very unpopular with the - often few - Professors who attended Board meetings. It is interesting that the new Academic Board has much in common with a General Board of Faculties, though it is larger than the one I proposed.

The reputation of the new Board with those who are not members will depend in considerable measure on the quality of decisions, on appropriate measures of consultation, and on prompt explanations of difficult decisions. There have been occasions in recent years when the University forgot the importance of good communication and discussion - even at times cultivated secrecy - and it is to be hoped that the new Board will establish sensible attitudes and procedures from the outset.

Bruce Williams  
Vice-Chancellor and Principal 1967-1981  
The University of Sydney  
August 1997

# Critics Conservatives and Reformers - The University of Sydney in the 1860's

## Introduction

When William Charles Wentworth introduced A Bill to Incorporate and Endow a University to be called 'the University of Sydney' to the Legislative Council of New South Wales in October 1849, he informed the House that the measure was designed to provide the facility "to the child of every class, to become great and useful in the destinies of his country"; it was not a measure for the rich, but for the poor; it would effect "the prevention of the degeneracy in mental case, of the whole country", and if it resulted in "no higher achievements than the preparation of the youth of the colony for the departments of Government, the money it asked for would be well applied." The Bill may, he declared, outstrip the public expectation, but it was better to do much than to do too little - to make the institution great at once, "to give it lofty aims and ends, than to endow it moderately, and see it dwindle into insignificance." And to the cheers of the House, Wentworth urged the legislature forward to the foundation of a great national institution, a foundation of knowledge "at whose springs all may drink, be they Christian, Mohammedan, Jew or Heathen"; by its establishment they would ensure that when the hour of separation from the motherland drew near, it would be "unstained by the torrents of blood which marked the severance of the American colonies from the parent state"; this would be the "crowning Act of Council"; this of all its Acts contained the germ of immortality." (See Wentworth's Speech, reported in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, 5 October, 1849).

A decade later, however, little appeared to have come of Wentworth's magnificent vision. Indeed, apart from an extensive building programme, which critics labelled wasteful and ill-directed, the University appeared to be retrograding rather than advancing. Student numbers were chronically low, the curriculum was narrowly dominated by classical and mathematical studies in the tradition of unreformed Oxford and Cambridge, the professional faculties of law and medicine were little more than examining boards, and an elaborate scheme for affiliated colleges was in the doldrums. To the outside observer the University, far from representing the fulfilment of Wentworth's vision, rather appeared as an isolated classical enclave in colonial society, a costly toy for the amusement of the privileged orders and a drag upon the public purse.

During the 'sixties the governing body of the University, under the lash of its critics, attempted to reform the content and conduct of the studies of the institution, so as to extend its benefits to a wider cross-section of colonial society. These attempts were not always without internal opposition, and the movement

for reform was subject to much halting and even turning back along the way. Indeed, by the end of the decade, under the apparent influence of a certain conservatism within the governing body, a lack of community response to attempts to widen the university curriculum and a want of additional financial support from the state, the movement for reform appears to have achieved little. This paper attempts to throw some light on this rather curious decade in the University's history.

## "A Sham, A Delusion and A Swindle"

In 1860 the University of Sydney could scarcely have been described as a flourishing institution. Only nineteen students matriculated in that year and there were a mere eight graduates. These meagre numbers were typical of the University's early years. As the foundation Professor of Chemistry, John Smith, observed in May 1859, "the University is going on so far as stone and lime are concerned, but rather retrograding in the matter of students - only five new ones matriculated this year. I take in one class the students of the first and second year and have a grand sum total of ten."<sup>1</sup> Although 1859 was one of the leaner years for matriculants, throughout the early years (and well beyond) their numbers were very low indeed, and in the fourteen years from 1852 (when the University was inaugurated) to 1865 they totalled only 176. The great majority of students, furthermore, did not graduate. Between 1856, when the first degrees were awarded, and 1865 (see Table 1 below), only 65 students graduated Bachelor of Arts, the sole degree to

Year	Matriculants	Graduates
1852	24	
1853	13	
1854	10	
1855	11	
1856	1	7
1867	19	10
1868	7	nil
1859	5	8
1860	19	8
1861	11	2
1862	9	3
1863	16	16
1864	10	5
1865	21	6
Totals	176	65

Table 1 Numbers of Matriculants and Graduates 1852-65<sup>1</sup>

which the instruction of the three foundation professors - of classics, mathematics, and chemistry and experimental physics - was devoted. The high dropout rate further depressed the size of the student body, and the total number of students at the University at any one time was very small indeed. The 16 students who matriculated in 1863, for instance, brought the total number of matriculants attending lectures to only 32.<sup>2</sup>

At the same time progress in the establishment of the professional schools of Law and Medicine, envisaged by the Act of Incorporation of 1850,<sup>4</sup> and again projected by the Vice-Provost, Sir Charles Nicholson, at the inauguration<sup>5</sup> was minimal. By-laws adopted by the Senate, (the governing body of sixteen Fellows) in December 1855, established Faculties of Law and Medicine.<sup>6</sup> The new Faculties, however, functioned as little more than examining boards. Moreover, the Board of Examiners in Law contemplated in the by-laws was not appointed until 1864, and it was not until that year that the first degrees in Law (four LLBs) were awarded;<sup>7</sup> and it would be another twenty-six years before a School of Law was ultimately to emerge in the University. Again, in Medicine, although the relevant Board of Examiners was appointed without delay,<sup>8</sup> it was not until 1866 that the first degree of Bachelor of Medicine was conferred,<sup>9</sup> and it was not until 1883 that a medical school finally emerged. Meanwhile, studies in the Faculty of Arts, albeit including the lectures of the scientific professor, continued to be heavily dominated by classical and mathematical studies, in the tradition of the ancient English universities of Oxford and Cambridge.

In another direction - the establishment of affiliated colleges - the progress of the University was also disappointing. The Act of Incorporation provided that on completion of a course of instruction determined by the Senate, students from other educational establishments were to be admitted as candidates for the degrees in Arts and in Law, provided that the establishment was recognised by the Senate for this purpose.<sup>10</sup> This provision was complemented by the Affiliated Colleges Act of 1854<sup>11</sup>, which set down the arrangements for a collegiate system. These arrangements were based upon a compromise agreement reached, after much acrimonious debate, between the University and the Church of England,<sup>12</sup> which, like the other major denominations, had originally opposed the secular principle upon which the University had been founded.<sup>13</sup>

The plan established by the Colleges Act was designed, in the words of the Preamble, "to encourage and assist the establishment of Colleges within the University of Sydney, in which Colleges systematic religious

instruction, and domestic supervision, with efficient assistance in preparing for the University lectures and examinations shall be provided for students of the University." The Act required that all students of a college be matriculated students of the University, and it gave what it termed "permanency" - by enactment of the legislature - to certain provisions of the concordat between the University and the Church, in particular: that it be compulsory for students of an affiliated college to attend the lectures of the university professors, with the exception of the lectures on ethics, metaphysics and modern history; and that no degree be awarded by the University to any student unless he produced from the Principal of his college (or if not belonging to a college, the responsible person recognised by the University), a certificate that he is "of competent religious attainments."<sup>14</sup> This last provision, however, was never enforced. It was strenuously opposed by the professors and was finally repealed in 1858.

The repeal of the requirement for a religious

certificate, it is worthy of remark, brought fully to fruition, in the design of the University of Sydney, the idea of the central secular teaching university. This was the idea that the central university should dominate secular instruction, while the affiliated colleges should be restricted to tutorial assistance, religious instruction and domestic supervision under denominational discipline. This design had been impressed upon the Senate by Rev. Dr. John Woolley, Principal and Professor of Classics (and a brilliant Oxford graduate), who had been profoundly influenced by the idea of "Oxford Reformed" - the idea of the



Dr John Woolley

university advanced in the report of the royal commissioners who had inquired into the University and Colleges of Oxford in the mid-century. As Nicholson explained it in his Commemoration Address for 1854, the University of Sydney could be envisaged 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." Under these arrangements, according to Nicholson, "the most perfect idea of a University" would be carried out; the University of Sydney would 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."<sup>15</sup>

The financial provisions of the Affiliated Colleges Act offered substantial inducements to the major churches to establish colleges in accord with these arrangements.

Under the legislation a state endowment of up to £20,000 was available by way of a matching grant toward the cost of a college building, and an endowment of £500 per annum was payable for the salary of the Principal. In addition, in 1855 a Deed of Grant from the State to the University of Sydney for a 126 acre site at Grose Farm, on the south western outskirts of Sydney, provided for sub-grants to be made by the Senate for the erection of colleges in connection with the Church of England and the Roman Catholic, Presbyterian and Wesleyan Churches.<sup>16</sup>

The collegiate arrangements set in place by the Colleges Act and the related Deed of Grant appeared to usher in a new period of prosperity for the infant university. Thus the Senate, on a note of high optimism, in its Annual Report for 1857<sup>17</sup>, observed that the Anglican College of St. Paul's had opened, and that an Act of Incorporation for the Roman Catholic College of St. John's had passed the legislature.<sup>18</sup> At the same time, the Presbyterians and the Wesleyan Methodists had made movements towards the establishment of colleges within the University for members of their respective creeds. The governing body therefore looked forward to a period of imminent growth and prosperity. "There seems every reason to expect", it reported to the Parliament, "that within a short period the University will be supported by four Colleges of Residence, in which students not living with their friends, can receive moral training and religious teaching whilst attending the course of instruction supplied by the University in its Lay Faculties. With the prospect of these valuable adjuncts, and the increasing number of scholars attending the higher class of schools, the Senate confidently anticipate that within a shorter period than might have been expected, the number of students in the University will be such as to yield a considerable addition to its annual income, and thus afford the means of enlarging the Professorial staff."<sup>19</sup>

These high hopes, however, were not fulfilled. St. Paul's made a disappointing beginning. By 1860 it had only one student in residence, while St. John's remained the only other collegiate plan under active contemplation.<sup>20</sup> The Presbyterians, labouring under schism and insuperable legal difficulties, did not secure the passage of an Act of Incorporation of a St. Andrew's College until 1867, and although the College operated out of temporary premises from 1874, it did not open within the university grounds until June 1876.<sup>21</sup> The Wesleyans, furthermore, after an enthusiastic start, abandoned a movement to establish a college at Grose Farm,<sup>22</sup> and an Act of Incorporation for a Wesley College, passed in 1860,<sup>23</sup> became no more than a dead letter on the nineteenth century colonial statute books.

The lack of progress in the establishment of a collegiate system contrasted with the advancement of the

Senate's elaborate and expensive building plans. As Professor Smith intimated in 1859, the single area in which the University appeared to progress was in the construction of the institution's buildings, and when the Main Building and Great Hall were opened to the public at Grose Farm for the first time in July 1859, their architectural splendour attracted the lavish praise of what was generally a very critical Sydney press.<sup>24</sup> In other circles, however, these outstanding colonial examples of Elizabethan architecture were regarded as monuments to an orgy of spending and waste engaged in by the Senate, in its pursuit of a costly and useless ornament. Thus a Select Committee of the New South Wales Legislative Assembly, appointed in 1859 to inquire into the state of the University, reported:

"That the University has not yet realised the expectations of the public seems clear, and it is also evident that great mistakes have been made with respect to it. A large amount of unnecessary expenditure has been incurred, in an attempt to raise here, all at once, buildings not at present required, on a scale of magnitude which, in other parts of the world, has almost invariably been the growth of ages."<sup>25</sup>

The report was highly critical of the actual and potential levels of expenditure on the building programme of both the University and the affiliated colleges, and so far as the building nearing completion at Grose Farm was concerned (the Main Building or Eastern Front), the committee found itself at a loss to understand "the correctness of the principle on which the Senate originally acted in projecting such a structure." If architectural display was calculated to cultivate and improve the youthful taste, it may well be asked "how the griffins, unicorns, or other monstrous shapes which have been selected as decorations suitable for the University, could possibly serve this end."<sup>26</sup>

The select committee, it is worthy of remark, had been appointed against a background of public criticism of the University, within the parliament and without.<sup>27</sup> Critics pointed to the narrow and dated curriculum, dominated by classical and mathematical studies, the failure of the Senate to develop professional schools, and the high cost and general inutility of the University. In 1859, moreover, correspondents in the Sydney Morning Herald attacked the Senate's uncompromising insistence on undergraduate attendance at the professorial lectures.<sup>28</sup> A correspondent who styled himself "Ne Detur Indigno", for instance, claimed that in its insistence on attendance at the professorial lectures the University of Sydney had shown itself as backward in meeting the public demand as the University of Melbourne had shown itself to be forward.<sup>29</sup> This line of criticism, it is worthy to note, would assume increasing importance in the following decade.

Although the parliamentary committee was appointed



against this background of wide-ranging public criticism of the University, its report was not entirely condemnatory of the institution. The committee found, for instance, that the low enrolments could be attributed to the fact that in "such a busy community" parents found it more conducive to their own interests, as well as to the advancement of their sons, to employ them in commercial or pastoral pursuits. Nevertheless, the report was highly critical of the Senate's management of the institution, especially of its spending, or potential spending, on the building programme and on the scheme of the affiliated colleges. It noted that the Main Building had already cost about £70,000 and if completed according to the plan selected - the most expensive of those submitted to the Senate - it would cost, according to the Architect's estimate, at least £150,000. The annual endowment [£5,000 per annum] had so far cost £50,000, and the affiliated colleges, assuming that each was aided to the same extent as St. Paul's, would cost at least an additional £60,000 - or it could be £80,000 - to build. Thus on the plans proposed the country was exposed to an outlay which could not fall short of, and may very considerably exceed, a quarter of a million sterling - independently of an additional endowment of £2,000 a year for the Principals of the Affiliated Colleges, "a purpose, which, according to the evidence, by no means requires such an expenditure."<sup>30</sup>

The liberal-radical Empire, however, claimed that this indictment of the financial management of the Senate did not go "half far enough". A lengthy editorial in the wake of the committee's findings went on to contend that the inquiry had effectively revealed the University of Sydney as "an utter failure". The whole affair of the University was little better than "a sham, a delusion and a swindle." The Empire calculated the cost to the country of the solitary student at St. Paul's - on the basis of the state endowment - at £1,200 per annum. This was in stark contrast to the parsimony of the government in the education of the lower classes - the "wretched pay and still more wretched accommodation which is provided for the teachers and children of both the National and Denominational Schools." The whole affair of the University of Sydney could give rise only to astonishment and indignation.

"Talk of class legislation and the influence of the aristocracy in England. The worst case of class legislation which has been perpetuated in England for a century would sink into insignificance if compared

with the grossness of this University job - this monstrous plunder of the public, sanctioned by an irresponsible Government, and consummated by an irresponsible Senate."<sup>31</sup>

The governing body of the University, however, appears to have been unmoved by these strictures. Its only response to the report of the parliamentary inquiry was to adopt the Heads of a draft Bill to amend the Act of Incorporation in respect of the electorate and composition of the Senate.<sup>32</sup> The

draft was incorporated into a University Amendment Act which received the royal assent in April 1861.<sup>33</sup> Otherwise, however, there was no attempt to respond to the report of the select committee in the parliament or in the Senate. Indeed, it was an indication that the governing body of the University intended to hold the institution to its old ways that, when it received a petition from certain citizens of Sydney, in November 1860, requesting that it permit degrees to be conferred upon candidates who had not attended the professorial lectures, it replied:

"the Senate regret that they cannot accede to a proposition, the adoption of which would involve an utter subversion of the system which after the most careful and mature consideration has been established in this University. The Senate consider it essential to the value of the Degrees themselves as well as to the attainment



Professor Morris Pell

of the high educational objects for which the University was founded that the provision of a degree should prove not only that the holder has acquired a certain amount of information, but that he has undergone a systematic course of mental training under the immediate direction and guidance of eminent scholars, such as it has been and will be the case of the Senate to place in the Professorial Chairs of this University."<sup>34</sup>

### Extending the Benefits of the University

In the early 'sixties the Empire continued its attacks on the University, especially the Senate's preoccupation with the models of Oxbridge, the inutility of the institution and the sectarian character of its affiliated colleges.<sup>35</sup> But the university authorities remained unmoved. Indeed, at the Annual Commemoration and Degree-Confering Ceremony held in the Great Hall in April 1864 the Acting Chancellor, Edward Deas Thomson, claimed that:

"the institution has proceeded on the same even tenor of its way which has happily characterised its progress since its first establishment. I believe that we have

every reason to be satisfied with the increasing pervading influence which it exercises on the community, by its silent but persistent advancement of the important objects contemplated by its founder. It is not in the nature of an institution of this kind to produce striking effects for many years after its first existence .... In establishing this noble foundation, the object has rather been to plant the acorn, that is to grow up into a large and stately tree, to endure for ages, than to sow the grain of wheat, which is to spring up, ripen, and be cut down in a few short months."<sup>36</sup>

Deas Thomson went on to contend that the chief object of an institution such as the University of Sydney was to prepare the student by instruction in the ancient classical languages, and in the various branches of art and science, "to draw deeply from the inexhaustible and priceless well-springs of knowledge and wisdom, which are our rich inheritance from the authors and philosophers of all ages." The curriculum of the University of Sydney was designed to open these "invaluable treasures" to the diligent student.<sup>37</sup>

The *Empire*, however, found much wanting in the Chancellor's address. An editorial in the wake of the Commemoration observed that the University of Sydney had not yet grown beyond "the necessity of crying in its annual appeal to the people through the lips of the Chancellor, 'Patience good friends' Every year, and especially in the years 1863-64, when the economy was a matter of preeminent public concern, natural and reasonable inquiry was made as to the results of the large expenditure on the colony's highest educational establishment. The numbers of students and graduates were still small and it was incumbent on those who managed the affairs of the University to furnish reasons for their assurances that the colony was indeed gaining "real benefits" from the annual expenditure of public funds on the institution. A large present sacrifice may willingly be made to realise the future potential of the University; but this ought to be kept in proportion to the demands made on the patience of the people by those who waved the cherished hopes of the founders before a "confiding public" in "jubilant orations" year after year."<sup>38</sup> It was all very well to exhort students to refute the objections of those who questioned the utility of institutions such as the University of Sydney, but it ought to be remembered that:

"... it becomes professors and Chancellors, as well as students to bear in mind that no exotic lamentation over the 'utilitarian spirit of the age' will suffice, in the eyes of those who really furnish the material support of the University, to vindicate its claims on their regards. Let those who glory in the privilege of intellectual communion with the great thinkers and elegant and forcible writers of past ages, show by their hearty sympathy with the upward movements of the present day, and their ready adaptation of their acquirements to work that will benefit their

contemporaries, that in conversing with the giants of other days they have caught somewhat of their spirit."<sup>39</sup>

In December 1864 the Senate provided the first indication that it may heed such criticism, when an attempt to promote reform came from within. On the motion of the Reverend Robert Allwood, an Anglican clergyman who had joined the Senate in 1855 (later Vice-Chancellor, 1869-83) the governing body established a committee to examine the expediency of altering the regulations so as to enable matriculated students "of every condition of life and living at any distance from Sydney" to share in the advantages of the University. It was furthermore made a specific instruction to this committee that it consider the question of the extension of the university curriculum.<sup>40</sup> The committee consisted of the Vice-Chancellor, Deas Thomson; John Hubert Plunkett; Allwood; the Principal and Professor of Classics, Rev. Dr. John Woolley; and the Professor of Mathematics, Morris Birbeck Pell.<sup>41</sup> But since Woolley shortly afterwards departed on leave for England - from which he did not return, having tragically drowned in the Bay of Biscay in January 1866 - Professor Smith was added to the committee.<sup>42</sup> As will be seen, the Principal's absence may well have been crucial to the outcome of the committee's deliberations.

On the day of his departure, in a long letter to the Senate, Woolley, mentor of the prevailing constitution of the University, detailed his views on what he described as the "momentous change which it is proposed to introduce" - a reference to a proposal, which the committee later put to the Senate, to permit exemptions from the professorial lectures. The letter argued that since its introduction the prevailing constitution of the University had met with general approval on both academic and religious grounds. Moreover, its favourable reception was not only justified on theoretical grounds, it had also been borne out by results: the University had not been a failure; on the contrary, it had exercised a marked influence on education in the colony, and whether its success could be increased depended upon the meaning which the Senate attached to "success". If success were to be measured by numbers, a scheme to permit dispensations from the professorial lectures offered little prospect of any increase. In Melbourne, where such a plan was already in operation, the numbers had scarcely been any greater than in Sydney. The number of matriculated students at Melbourne in 1862-63 was thirty-seven, while in Sydney, with a population little more than half as large, it was thirty-one.

A better measure of the success of the University, according to the Principal, was the quality of the education which it offered, and in this regard it was the judgement of the most experienced persons, especially of Her Majesty's Commissioners who had recently inquired into the University of Oxford, that advanced

classes were far superior to private study. The Commissioners had rejected a proposal for Oxford similar to the present one, on the grounds that:

"University education consists not in formal and periodical examinations, but in the catechetical lecture, the frequent written exercises, the daily conflicts of wit, as well as the hours of recreation in the tutor's room."<sup>43</sup>

Woolley went on to claim that the popular demand was not for a relaxation of the rule requiring attendance at lectures, but for an expansion of the curriculum. Furthermore, the advocates of the exemption plan regarded it as no more than a first step, and they would not be content until the remaining restrictions were removed and the professorial lectures were made "contemptible and useless by the scanty remnant who attended them." He concluded:

"... I have spent in the attempt to inaugurate this noble design, twelve of the best years of my life. I am bound by ties of personal regard to almost every member of the Institution. And I can say from my heart that I am anxious not for the success of any pet scheme of my own, but for the diffusion through our instrumentality of sound and useful knowledge."<sup>44</sup>

With Woolley in England, however, the governing body, acting on the report of the committee on the extension of the benefits of the University, resolved, *inter alia*, "that the Senate shall have the power to dispense with attendance on University Lectures in the case of any matriculated student not being a member of an affiliated college who shall satisfy the Senate that there are sufficient reasons for such exemption."<sup>45</sup> The attempt to implement this resolution, however, provoked a further struggle. When Professor Smith moved the adoption of a by-law, three months later, to give practical effect to the plan, James Martin (later Sir James and Chief Justice of New South Wales) challenged the competence of the governing body to legislate for such a regulation, "inasmuch as it was in opposition to the spirit and terms of the Incorporation Act."<sup>46</sup> The objection was referred to a committee of the Fellows of Senate who were members of the Bar.<sup>47</sup> It reported that the Senate did in fact have the necessary power, although some doubt existed on whether such a by-law would be "consonant with the spirit of the legislation."<sup>48</sup> The doubt, however, appears to have been swept aside when Sir William Manning, later to become a great reforming Chancellor, successfully moved the adoption of both the report and the proposed by-law<sup>49</sup>, and a belated protest against the new regulation, after it had received Executive Council approval, by the graduates, undergraduates and other members of the University, was subsequently dismissed.<sup>50</sup>

Nevertheless, the Senate shrank from other proposals

which may have realized Woolley's worst fears. At the meeting at which the exemption by-law was adopted it was moved by Manning and Allwood, "that the heads and managers of competent Colleges throughout the Colony other than Colleges affiliated under the Act XVIII Victoria No.37 [the Affiliated Colleges Act of 1854] be invited to connect themselves with the University in accordance with the 11th Section<sup>51</sup> of the Act for incorporating the University of Sydney."<sup>52</sup> The motion, however, was defeated; whereupon Manning and Allwood attempted a slightly modified form of the proposal, moving, "that public attention be drawn to the 11th Section of the University Act with reference to the connection with the University of Colleges and Educational Establishments, not being affiliated Colleges."<sup>53</sup> This motion was likewise lost. If the Senate stood ready to open the University to "non-resident" students, it was by no means ready to disturb the idea of the cluster of colleges around the central secular teaching university.

Proposals to expand the university curriculum, however, appear to have aroused little controversy, and by-laws adopted in 1865, as a result of the recommendations of the committee on the extension of the benefits of the University, expanded the scope of both the matriculation and BA examinations. The matriculation examination, which had been restricted entirely to classics and mathematics, was extended to embrace English grammar and composition and either French or German;<sup>54</sup> and studies for the BA were broadened, in that candidates for the degree were to be permitted to elect at the beginning of their third academic year to be examined for the degree in two or more of the following groups:

- "1. Classics, that is - the Greek, Latin and English with the French or German languages.
2. Mathematics and Natural Philosophy.
3. Chemistry and Experimental Physics and such branches of Natural Science as may at any time be taught at the University.
4. Logic, Mental Philosophy and the Constitutional History of England, and such branches of Political Science as may at any time be taught at the University."<sup>55</sup>

These arrangements required an expansion of the teaching programme. A Readership in German, which had originally been established for the conduct of what were termed "voluntary classes", but which had been discontinued in 1856, was revived, and readers were appointed in English language and literature, political economy, and geology and mineralogy. The Senate also accepted an offer to appoint a reader in oriental languages without pay.<sup>56</sup> These appointments, made

late in 1865 and during 1866, would be announced by the Chancellor with considerable satisfaction at the Commemoration for 1867. (There was no Commemoration in 1866 as a mark of respect to the late Dr. Woolley).

Meanwhile, on 8 April 1865, just three days after the Senate had adopted the reforms arising from the report of the committee on the extension of the benefits of the University, the Chancellor delivered his Annual Commemoration Address to a distinguished gathering in the Great Hall. Deas Thomson informed his audience that aided by the recent reforms the University of Sydney was entering upon a new era of growth and prosperity. Indeed, in no period of its history had the University been in a more prosperous and hopeful condition. Twenty-one students had matriculated at the commencement of the academic year and the total number of students pursuing their studies in the University had reached forty-six, the highest since the establishment of the institution. At the same time the Senate had felt itself imperatively called upon to extend its degrees and honours to those who in practice were excluded under the regulations which had thus far prevailed. The governing body had therefore adopted the rule for dispensations from attendance at the professorial lectures, under certain conditions. The degree structure and matriculation requirements had furthermore been liberalised and expanded and their utility had been correspondingly enhanced. The Chancellor nevertheless made it clear that the theory of the central secular teaching university was to remain intact. He cautioned:

"The Senate at the same time, are fully alive to the advantage of academic training, and are resolved to maintain the University as a teaching establishment. No alteration is contemplated in the law or regulation requiring attendance on the University lectures of the students belonging to the suffragan colleges. And it is believed that a large majority of the matriculated students will still avail themselves of the advantages of attending the professorial lectures, and of forming those academic associations which so frequently prove agreeable and advantageous in after-life."<sup>57</sup>

The subsequent practice of the University confirmed this pronouncement. In the seventeen years from 1866 to 1882 (years for which figures are available from the Annual Reports) only forty-eight applications for exemptions of this kind were successful, and these do not appear to have been lightly granted.<sup>58</sup>

The Chancellor's enthusiasm for the changes endorsed by the Senate was shared by the hitherto almost totally critical Empire, which proclaimed that the people of New South Wales had every reason to regard with more than usual interest and confidence the University Commemoration of 1865.<sup>59</sup> Another observer, however, was less enthusiastic. In the light of Deas Thomson's address Joseph Sheridan Moore, a former

Benedictine monk and foundation headmaster of St. Mary's Roman Catholic College at "Lyndhurst" in the Glebe, delivered a public lecture on the University of Sydney which he subsequently published under the title, *University Reform - Its Urgency and Reasonableness*.<sup>60</sup> Moore conducted his own City College where he coached aspirants for university honours<sup>61</sup> and, according to the introductory note to his public lecture, he had been appointed secretary to a committee which had been established "to assist in opening the doors of Sydney University to the intellect of the whole country."<sup>62</sup> His pamphlet called for the restoration of the spirit of enlightened liberality and social utility in the University of Sydney which had been proclaimed by its founding father, William Charles Wentworth, and enthusiastically endorsed by the legislature, at the time of the University's foundation.

Moore echoed criticisms which had been levelled at the University in the previous decade. The original idea of the university in the University of Sydney, he contended, had been enshrined in Wentworth's magnificent vision of an institution whose advantages were to be enjoyed by the entire public of the colony; but fifteen years on, taking everything into account, superior education in New South Wales had cost the community, directly and indirectly, something like a million pounds sterling, with nothing like an adequate return to show for it. Both the press and public opinion had pronounced the University of Sydney a failure. The reform announced by the Chancellor, of dispensations from the professorial lectures, was a partial step toward the restoration of the national character of the institution. If it achieved nothing else it might at least turn the affiliated colleges to some practical utility. So far they had cost the country about £100,000 and shown themselves, if they were of some celestial value, to be of no earthly use. They could provide board and residence for young men engaged in business during the day who wished to study in the evening and attend the classes conducted by the tutors of their respective colleges. But if the University was to be restored fully to the community a much more extensive programme of reform was required. The Senate from the outset should have established a School of Medicine and a School of Applied Science embracing architecture and civil engineering. The problem with the University of Sydney was that it had been too thoroughly assimilated to the models of Oxford and Cambridge, which offered a form of education that was "eminently unpractical" and "not at all in accord with the spirit of this mechanical age."<sup>63</sup>

At the end of 1865 the Senate was apparently provided with an opportunity to meet such criticism, when the Director of the Sydney Infirmary sought the cooperation of the University in the establishment of a Medical School. The Senate, however, deemed it inadvisable, on account of financial difficulties being

experienced by the Government, to approach the Parliament for the necessary funds, although it left the door open for the Directors to raise the issue again in the future.<sup>64</sup> When the Directors renewed their approach twelve months later, the Senate resolved to contact the Medical Council of England "with a view to the recognition of the University Examinations and also of such of its classes as might form part of the 'curriculum' of medical study."<sup>65</sup> A committee was furthermore appointed to liaise with representatives of the Infirmary<sup>66</sup> and an application was made to the Colonial Secretary for an annual grant of £500 for the salary of a Professor of Anatomy, and other charges connected with the proposed Medical School, and for £1,000 for building an anatomical museum in Sydney. It was considered that the expenditure of these funds would enable a scheme of medical education, extending over the first two years of a complete course, to be initiated.<sup>67</sup>

Deas Thomson unveiled the details of the scheme in his Chancellor's Address at the Annual Commemoration held in the Great Hall in May 1867. The Chancellor announced that a "preparatory medical school" was proposed to be established, to offer the first two years of medical education out of the four years' training required by the licensing bodies for the medical profession in the United Kingdom. This School would combine teaching by university lectures in anatomy, chemistry, botany and dissections with hospital practice and clinical instruction by the physicians and surgeons of the Infirmary. Evidently wishing not to arouse official opposition to the scheme on financial grounds, the Chancellor was careful to make clear that no extensive or extravagant proposal was in contemplation. All that was required to give effect to the plan was the establishment in the University of a lectureship in anatomy, a building for a dissecting room and museum, and a small anatomical lecture-room. A lectureship in botany, for which "the proper appliances" were afforded at the Botanical Gardens, was also needed. The University would be enabled by the combined teaching in the colony and in the United Kingdom to grant, after examination, degrees in medicine and surgery, and "a new and honourable field of employment" would be opened up to the colonists as medical practitioners. An application had already been made to the Government for the necessary financial assistance, and since it had been favourably received, it was hoped that when the sanction of the legislature had been obtained the plan would be speedily carried out. The Senate, meanwhile, had applied to the British Colleges for the recognition of the instruction given in the University as part of the curriculum for medical students.<sup>68</sup>

The Chancellor went on to announce other developments which, together with the proposed Medical School, suggested that a major revision, if not revolution, was underway in the idea of the university in the University of Sydney. Alexander Morrison

Thomson,<sup>69</sup> Doctor of Science in the University of London, had been appointed Reader in Geology and Mineralogy. The new reader had already begun teaching these branches of science and funds placed at his disposal by the Senate had enabled him to bring from England a collection of over 2,000 specimens for the illustration of his lectures. When this was supplemented by a similar collection from the southern hemisphere, it would enable comparisons to be made of the mineral and fossil productions of different regions, and the practical usefulness of the University would be exhibited "in the development of our mineral wealth."<sup>70</sup> Readers had also been appointed in the English and German languages and literatures, and the Senate had made "a valuable addition" to the course of studies in the University by the appointment of a Reader in Political Economy. This was a study of great importance and in the not too distant future it was hoped to establish a full chair in the subject. In addition, the Reverend Wazir Beg, MD having offered his services gratuitously as Reader in Oriental Languages and Literature, the Senate had appointed him to this office. The appointment provided an opportunity for such of the students who may wish to compete for appointments in the Civil Service of India to acquire a knowledge of the languages required for official duties in that country.<sup>71</sup>

Of more direct relevance to the colony, however, was the announcement of the institution of two public examinations, similar to the "middle class" examinations conducted by the University of Oxford. The first of these would be known as the Junior Examination and would be open to all candidates under the age of sixteen years. The examination was designed for those who had completed their schooling but did not wish to proceed to the University. It would embrace "all the ordinary branches of knowledge included in a school course as well as the classical and modern languages." The examination would provide a yardstick for judging the relative merits of schools professing to offer a liberal education, as well as an opportunity for boys who had received a sound education to obtain certificates to that effect. The second or Senior Examination would be open to all candidates whatsoever and would embrace a wider range of subjects, including natural philosophy, various branches of natural science, as well as political economy. It was considered that this examination would prove a "boon" to many mature age persons who "from being engaged in tuition or for other reasons are desirous of obtaining some public recognition of their merits." By these examinations the influence and utility of the University in promoting the general dissemination of knowledge and a taste for literature and science would be more widely and more directly felt<sup>72</sup> - a prediction which would prove ultimately correct over the next decade.

The Chancellor informed the gathering that the Commemoration had been delayed from its usual time

to permit the presence of the Reverend Charles Badham DD, who had recently arrived from England as the newly appointed Professor of Classics and Logic and who justly claimed a reputation as "one of the most distinguished scholars in Europe."<sup>73</sup> Badham enhanced the liberal tone of the proceedings by proclaiming that the University of Sydney was the "University of the people of New South Wales - not a place for the glorification of particular individuals"; and its peculiar function was at one with the function of all universities, namely, "to give civil society its dignity and its permanence." For this purpose the place of the classics as the cornerstone of the curriculum, according to the new Principal, remained beyond dispute.<sup>74</sup> For the next decade and a half Badham would be the dominant influence in the University.

### "A Genuine Spirit of Reform"?

In the wake of the Commemoration the Empire noted a high degree of satisfaction on all sides at the addition made to "the reputation and power for good of the University" by the appointment of "so eminent a scholar" as Dr. Badham. However, with the achievement of the University for the benefit of the colony still "almost entirely future", the new Principal had "an arduous work before him."<sup>75</sup> Another editorial a few days later held that the University had failed "in all but an infinitesimal degree" to fulfil the expectations of its founders or to justify the enormous expenditure of public funds which it had involved, and that the "sundry charges" which had recently been announced were really only "confessions of past errors" rather than evidence of the existence of "a genuine spirit of reform." The editorial cited the operation of the by-law on dispensations from the professorial lectures announced in 1865 as a case in point. It had been supposed that the statute would materially improve the character and increase the influence of the University, but it had soon become evident that this "pretended concession to popular feeling" was no more than "a sham". Admittedly, some "practical good sense" had recently been shown in the adoption of regulations for middle class examinations and in the foundation of an elementary medical school. But the "pittance" of twenty-five pounds a year which the Senate paid the lecturer in political economy was an indication of the estimation in which it held that new post. From time to time courses of lectures had been instituted in new branches of study, but as these had not been made compulsory their effect on the promotion of learning had been "worse than nothing". It was therefore to be hoped that Dr. Badham's influence on the University would prove beneficial and that he would substantially improve the place.<sup>76</sup>

Almost fifty-five years of age when he reached Sydney in April 1867, Badham, however, displayed little

inclination to modify the idea of the University or of a university education which had been stamped upon the University of Sydney by his predecessor. A product of unreformed Oxford, whose classical scholarship had been broadened by extensive travel and study on the Continent and by continuing contact with Continental men of letters, the new Principal was unanswerably committed to the classics, properly taught, as the foundation stone of all university education. As he informed his audience at his first public appearance in the colony, at the Commemoration for 1867, when they were "taught amiss", Latin and Greek deserved "all the better things that have been said against them"; but if "taught aright", if taught "in a proper spirit" they scarcely needed any defence.<sup>77</sup> Badham, it is worthy of remark, was yet to feel the full impact of the philistine attitude of the pioneering colonial society into which he had descended. By 1870 he found himself, as he put it, like "an itinerant organ-grinder" having to listen to "the never varying and never ending" strains of his own music in defending classical studies against the prejudice which colonial parents constantly displayed toward them.<sup>78</sup>

As Latin and Greek formed the cornerstone of the higher learning, attendance on the professorial lectures, according to Badham, was fundamental to the attainment of the true benefits of a university education. As he put it at his second degree-conferring ceremony, if the University were to encourage private study it would result in no more than cram - "men coming to disgorge so much 'Bohn' upon us, or so much 'Giles', or whatever names the precious cribs might have". There would be "no knowledge of the language, no proof of exercised thought or of training whatever." The whole process would militate against the concept of the classics "properly taught", which was of the very essence of the idea of a university education. If a student hoped to gain a dispensation from him, the new Principal proclaimed, he would need to prove first that he had someone to guide him, that he really was too far removed from the University by distance or occupation. "Prove this to me", Badham declared, "and you are admitted as a student, and take your degree at the proper time; but let me not hear of you coming up once a year to give me the result of your private and unassisted lucubrations."<sup>79</sup>

In confirming both the preeminent place of the classics in the university curriculum and the over-riding importance of attendance at the professorial lectures in the idea of a university education, Badham would hold the University to its old ways. Doubtless this outlook strengthened the position of conservative elements within the Senate, where, exclusive of the professors, eight of the sixteen Fellows by 1867 were still foundation members (although two of these, Wentworth and Nicholson, had long since returned to England). Even before Badham's arrival the governing

body had shown itself remarkably cautious in giving practical effect to the most significant of the recent reforms - exemption from attendance at the professorial lectures. In December 1865 it granted the first applications, two in number (submitted in respect of the following academic year) and it further resolved to advertise the exemptions plan in the press.<sup>80</sup> However, when Professor Smith presented it with five motions on exemption applications on 7 March, 1866, the governing body resolved to adjourn their consideration to 17 March, "as it was hoped that on that day the Senate would have the advantage of Professor Woolley's counsel and advice."<sup>81</sup> Woolley of course was not to return, but in any event the number of successful applications for exemptions for the academic year 1866 remained at two, and in the following sixteen years the numbers ranged from none at all in 1877 to a mere seven in 1878.<sup>82</sup> As previously noted, the Empire had branded the exemptions plan as no more than a "pretended concession to popular feeling", after only one year of its operation,<sup>83</sup> and the succession of Badham undoubtedly ensured that the future of the scheme would remain severely restricted. It is worthy of note that in 1870 the Senate made it mandatory for each applicant for an exemption to obtain a special certificate from the examiners that his current attainments were such as to enable him to keep up by his own studies with the regular course of lectures.<sup>84</sup>

While the scheme to extend the benefits of the University by opening the institution to "non-resident" students ultimately proved of little practical utility, apparently on account of a lack of enthusiasm for the scheme from within the University, other reforms withered upon the vine for want of public support. In September 1867 a report from the Board of Professors in the Faculty of Arts informed the Senate that no student had elected to be examined in German and that no lecture on the subject had been given during the year; whereupon the governing body resolved not to renew the Readership in German for the following year.<sup>85</sup> In January 1868 another report from the professors maintained that lectures on the French language could not be continued with advantage, since very few students entered the University with sufficient knowledge of the language to enable them to benefit from a course of lectures at university level, and the Senate consequently dispensed with this reader's services.<sup>86</sup> Again, at the beginning of 1869, it was determined that the Readership in Oriental Languages would not be filled as no students were offering in the subject,<sup>87</sup> and that a Readership in Jurisprudence (first filled in 1858 in connection with the Law Faculty) which had been under threat as early as 1865, on account of low enrolment,<sup>88</sup> should likewise be phased out.<sup>89</sup> At the same time the Senate deferred a decision on the question of renewing an appointment in political economy,<sup>90</sup> presumably in order to permit account to be taken of a report on the

subjects of the BA examination, shortly to be brought up, which would touch upon this study.

The question of the subjects of the BA examination was re-opened after the Chancellor tabled correspondence between him and Professor Smith, in May 1868, on the studies of the University.<sup>91</sup> In July the Senate resolved to refer the Chancellor's letter to the "Conference Board", since it involved "the whole question of the present 'curriculum'."<sup>92</sup> The Board, comprising the Chancellor, the Vice-Chancellor and the Professors of the three Faculties, was required under the by-laws to consider "all questions relating to the studies of the University, or which may be referred to them by the Senate."<sup>93</sup> No record of the Chancellor's correspondence or of the proceedings of the Board, or indeed of the report which it presented,<sup>94</sup> appears to have survived. Nevertheless, the Senate adopted the report in December 1868 and established a committee comprising the Chancellor and the three Professors to frame by-laws which would give effect to the report's recommendations.<sup>95</sup>

Adopted by the Senate in March 1869, the new by-laws reduced the range and the flexibility of choice in the subjects in which candidates could elect to be examined for the BA. The four groups of subjects from which candidates were enabled to select two or more for examination under the regulations of 1865 were reduced to three, the fourth group - comprising logic, mental philosophy, the constitutional history of England and political economy - being deleted.<sup>96</sup> At the same time the first group, which had included "Greek, Latin and English with the French or German languages" under the head of classics,<sup>97</sup> was reduced to the Greek and Latin languages only. The second and third groups remained virtually unchanged. To ensure a competent knowledge of every subject under these new arrangements, no candidate at the beginning of his third academic year could elect to be exempted from examination in any one of the three groups unless he had obtained a second class place in that group at the second yearly examination.<sup>98</sup> Presumably on account of these revised regulations, it was determined not to renew the appointment in political economy in 1869,<sup>99</sup> although at the end of that year A.M. Thomson's appointment in Geology and Mineralogy,<sup>100</sup> subjects retained in the new groupings, was elevated to the status of a full chair.<sup>101</sup>

The rationale for the revised scheme of studies was detailed by the Chancellor in his Commemoration Address for 1869. The fourth group of subjects had been deleted, according to Deas Thomson, because objection had been made to this group on a variety of grounds: that the lectures and time of preparation in this school were unequal to those in the other three schools, and the option which it afforded invited students away from subjects, which, "if not more important are more strictly academical as a means of



mental training"; that logic was made a branch of study necessary for only one section of the students; and that constitutional history was liable to "serious objections on the ground of its involving questions which affect the religious opinions of a part of the community". Hence, in future, logic would be taught to the students of the second year so that it would no longer be a matter of option, while constitutional history and political economy would no longer form any part of the BA examination. However, a prize would be awarded to "the best proficient in political economy among the under-graduates of the third year and graduates of not more than two years' standing."<sup>102</sup>

Not only was the expansion of the curriculum, which had promised a few years earlier to revolutionise the courses of study in the Faculty of Arts, largely reversed by 1869, but the medical school which had been projected by the Chancellor failed to materialise. The Senate did not obtain the grants, of £500 to meet the salary of a Professor of Anatomy and other recurrent costs, and of £1,000 for building an Anatomical Museum, for which it had applied to Government in February 1867.<sup>103</sup> The application was renewed in 1868,<sup>104</sup> but again without success.<sup>105</sup> In 1870 the Royal College of Surgeons in England notified the Senate that it would recognize the first two years of training proposed to be offered in the projected Medical School, with a view to the completion of the remaining two years of the course and examination in England.<sup>106</sup> This advice prompted the Senate to renew its approach to Government for the desired funds,<sup>107</sup> but it was once more denied.

Given that attempts to establish a Medical School floundered from want of government support and that attempts to expand the curriculum in Arts met with little or no student or community support, there was a measure of justification for the Chancellor's observation at the degree-conferring ceremony in 1869 that:

"... If the progress of the University has not been equal to our anxious wishes, this has arisen from a variety of causes beyond the control of the Senate, and not from the absence of the requisite facilities for enjoying the advantages of academical instruction. The recent depression of the times, and it is feared a less transitory cause - the desire so common among parents in the country, to place their sons in situations of emolument at a very early age, rather than to prepare them by a careful University training to occupy the higher positions in society and in the State - have tended hitherto to prevent this great Institution from commanding the extensive patronage and support to which it is entitled, as the highest educational establishment. Let us hope that this indifference to the great educational benefits of a University education may not continue, but, that with every succeeding year, we may have the gratification of hailing the

accession of a largely increased number of students."<sup>108</sup>

Nevertheless, the progress of the University appears to have been impeded by a fundamental conservatism among members of the Senate. By 1869 the governing body had retreated from reforms which had introduced a measure of choice and flexibility into the requirements for the BA. Furthermore, it had displayed little enthusiasm for opening the University to a wider social cross-section by exercising its power of dispensation from the professorial lectures. It is of interest to note, for instance, that Deas Thomson seems to have been proud rather than perturbed to announce, in his Chancellor's Address for 1871, that up to that year only three students had graduated Bachelor of Arts without having attended the full course of lectures. Two of these had been allowed credit for terms kept in the Universities of Cambridge and Edinburgh, and in the remaining case "exemption from attendance on lectures was allowed under special circumstances."<sup>109</sup>

The conservatism of the Senate may have derived in part from what the Empire perceived as its exclusive composition. An editorial in the wake of the Commemoration for 1868, for instance, contended that the community had learned to regard the Senate as an aristocratic body, although the people generally were as much entitled to be called the University's patrons as "the select circle of gentlemen who have taken it into their special keeping."<sup>110</sup> The editorial argued that if anyone took the trouble to compare the membership of the Senate with the lists of Directors of the various banks and mercantile associations of the colony, he would find considerable similarity between them. Senators and Directors alike had been chosen on account of their social and monetary position and they all moved in the very highest society. The Senate was undoubtedly aristocratic and that being so, its proclivities must also be aristocratic.<sup>111</sup>

Whether it stemmed from these alleged aristocratic leanings, or from a want of financial or community support for curriculum expansion, the isolation of the University from colonial society continued, and the attempt to extend the benefits of the institution could only be counted as a signal failure. From 1864 to 1872, for example, the highest number of matriculants was 21 in 1865 and the lowest was a mere 10 in 1864 and 1868. In the same period the highest number of BAs awarded was 12 in 1870, and the lowest was 5 in 1864.<sup>112</sup> It is also of interest to note that by 1872 the total number of degrees awarded was only 239. Of these, 140 were degrees of Bachelor of Arts; 67 were MAs; 13 were LLBs; 6 were LLDs; 8 were MBs and 5 were MDs.<sup>113</sup>

Peter Chippendale  
August, 1997



1. Smith to Rev. David Bruce, 6 May, 1859, Smith Papers M47 (USA).
2. Report of the Senate for 1863 in *JNSWLC*, 1864, Vol.2, p.93.
3. See Matriculants Graduate and Postgraduate Degree Register G3/70 (USA). There are discrepancies between the numbers in the Register and the numbers in the Annual Reports of the Senate. The total number of matriculants in the Reports for the same period is 183. The Annual Reports put the total number of graduations in the first degree in Arts in the same period at 50. The Register, however, appears to be the more reliable source for the period under discussion. Although there were no graduates in 1858, the Senate declared three undergraduates entitled to their degree at the end of 1857. See Minutes of the Senate, 12 December, 1857.
4. *An Act to Incorporate and Endow the University of Sydney*. 14 Vict. No.31. [assented to 1 October, 1850].
5. Sir Charles Nicholson, Inaugural Addresses Delivered on the Occasion of the Opening of the University of Sydney in 1852; also Reports of Addresses at Various Commemorations Held in Subsequent Years, (n.p.) (n.d.), p.9.
6. By-laws, Rules and Regulations attached to Report of the Senate for 1856 in *VPNSWLA*, 1856-57, Vol.2, p.63.
7. Report of the Senate for 1864 in *JNSWLC*, 1865, Vol.12, p.201.
8. Minutes of the Senate, 13 June, 2 July, 1854.
9. Report of the Senate for 1866 in *JNSWLC*, 1867-68, Vol.15, Pt.1, p.601.
10. *An Act to Incorporate and Endow the University of Sydney*, Section 11.
11. *An Act to provide for the establishment and endowment of Colleges within the University of Sydney*, 18 Vict., No.37. [assented to 2 December, 1854].
12. See Report of the Committee on the Church of England College in Minutes of the Senate, 1 August, 1853.
13. See *VPNSWLC*, 1856, Vol.2, for petitions to the Legislative Council from the major religious denominations against the University Bill.
14. *An Act to provide for the establishment and endowment of Colleges within the University of Sydney*, Sections 8,9.
15. 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.
16. See copy of Deed of Grant in Calendar for 1858, pp.39-46.
17. St Paul's opened in the vestry of St. James' Church in 1857, and toward the end of that year the Warden of the College, Hendry Judge Hose, continued the classes in the completed section of the College at Grose Farm, though he did not take up residence there or receive residential students until February 1858.
18. *An Act to Incorporate Saint John's College as a College within the University of Sydney*. [Assented to 15 December, 1857]. 21 Vict.
19. Report of the Senate for 1857 in Calendar for 1858, pp.104-5.
20. See "Report from the Select Committee on the Sydney University", *VPNSWLA*, 1859-60, Vol.4, Report, p.7ff.
21. See I. Nish, "A History of the College" in *The Andrew's Book*, Sydney, 1964, pp.1-11.
22. See Creswell O'Reilly, *Wesley College: A Historical Outline*, typescript, Sydney, 1952, p.4.
23. *An Act of Incorporate Wesley College as a College within the University of Sydney*. [Assented to 1 June, 1860]. 23 Vict.
24. *Empire*, 18 July, 1859; *S.M.H.*, 13 August, 1859.
25. "Report from the Select Committee on the Sydney University" in *VPNSWLA*, 1859-60, Vol.4, pp.165-330. Report, p.7.
26. *Ibid.*, pp.8-9.
27. See, for instance, letters to the press by the distinguished Sydney schoolmaster, Timothy William Cope, *SMH*, 2 November, 20 November and 27 November, 1857; also speech by Terence Aubrey Murray in the New South Wales Legislative Assembly on introducing a motion for the appointment of a select committee to inquire into the University, in *Ibid.*, 14 September, 1859.
28. See letters by "A Constant Reader" and "X.Y.Z.", *Ibid.*, 17 March, 1859 and 24 March, 1859.
29. *Ibid.*, 21 March, 1859.
30. "Report from the Select Committee on the Sydney University" in *VPNSWLA*, 1859-60, Vol.4, p.165ff.
31. *Empire*, 25 June, 1860.
32. Minutes of the Senate, 1 March, 1861.
33. *An Act to amend the Sydney University Incorporation Act* [Assented to 26 April 1861] 24 Vict., No.13. The select committee had claimed that members of the Senate were appointed for reasons of social position rather than of literary attainment. The amendment Act provided for professorial representation on the Senate and formed the Fellows of the Senate, the professors, graduates holding higher degrees, principals of incorporated colleges within the University and certain officers of the University into a convocation for future elections to fill vacancies on the governing body. The legislation also changed the titles "Provost" and "Vice-Provost" to "Chancellor" and "Vice-Chancellor".
34. Minutes of the Senate, 7 November, 1860.
35. See the *Empire*, 19 May, 1862 and 1 May, 1863. See also letter by "J.R.", *Ibid.*, 26 May, 1862.
36. E. Deas Thomson, Chancellor's Address at the Annual Commemoration held on 2 April, 1864, in newspaper cuttings in Deas Thomson Papers, Vol.4, p.832 ff (ML).
37. *Ibid.*
38. *Empire*, 4 April, 1864.
39. *Ibid.*

40. Minutes of the Senate, 20 December, 1864.
41. *Ibid.*
42. *Ibid.*, 4 January, 1865.
43. Woolley to Senate, 26 December, 1864. Aw 27/4 (M.L.).
44. *Ibid.*
45. Minutes of the Senate, 4 January, 1865.
46. *Ibid.*, 26 July, 1865.
47. *Ibid.*
48. *Ibid.*, 6 September, 1865.
49. *Ibid.*
50. *Ibid.*, 4 October, 1865 and 10 October, 1865.
51. The eleventh clause of the Act read: "And whereas it is expedient to extend the benefits of colleges and educational establishments already instituted, or which may be hereafter instituted for the promotion of literature, science and art, whether incorporated or not incorporated, by connecting them, for such purposes, with the said University: Be it enacted, that all persons shall be admitted as candidates for the respective degrees of Bachelor of Arts, Master of Arts, Bachelor of Laws, or Doctor of Laws, to be conferred by the said University of Sydney, on presenting to the said Senate a Certificate from any such colleges or educational establishments, or from the headmaster thereof, to the effect that such candidate has completed the course of instruction which the said Senate, by regulation in that behalf shall determine: Provided, that, no such certificate shall be received from any educational establishment, unless the said University shall authorize it to issue such certificates; Provided also, that it shall be lawful for the said Senate to apply any portion of the said endowment fund to the establishment and maintenance of a college in connexion with and under the supervision of the said University."
52. Minutes of the Senate, 6 September, 1865.
53. *Ibid.*
54. *Ibid.*, 5 April, 1865 and 5 July, 1865.
55. See by-laws appended to Report of the Senate for 1865 in *JNSWLC*, 1865, Vol.14, Pt.1, p.445.
56. See Minutes of the Senate, 4 October and 1 November, 1865; 3 January, 3 October and 4 December, 1866.
57. E. Deas Thomson, "Commemoration Address for 1865" in newspaper reports of various commemoration addresses etc. in Deas Thomson Papers, Vol.4, p.821ff. (ML).
58. The numbers are in the Annual Reports of the Senate until 1883. Exemptions continued to be granted after that date and they can be found in the Minutes of the Senate.
59. See the editorial in the *Empire*, 10 April, 1865.
60. J. Sheridan More, *University Reform Its Urgency and Reasonableness*, Cole, Sydney, 1865. (An Oratory Delivered at the Temperance Hall on Wednesday Evening, 12 July, 1865).
61. See Francis D. Glass's article in *ADB*, Vol.5, pp.278-9.
62. See "Introductory Note" in Moore, Op. Cit.
63. See *Ibid.*, *passim*
64. Minutes of the Senate, 6 December, 1865.
65. *Ibid.*, 7 November, 1866.
66. *Ibid.*
67. *Ibid.*, 25 February, 1867.
68. E. Deas Thomson, Chancellor's Address delivered at the Annual Commemoration held on 18 May, 1867, in the *Empire*, 20 May, 1867.
69. *ADB*, Vol.6, p.268.
70. Deas Thomson, 18 May, 1867, in the *Empire*, 20 May, 1867.
71. *Ibid.*
72. *Ibid.*
73. *Ibid.*
74. Charles Badham, "Commemoration 1867", in *Speeches and Lectures Delivered in Australia by the Late Charles Badham DD Professor of Classics in the University of Sydney*, Dymock, Sydney, 1890, pp.2-3.
75. *Empire*, 23 May, 1867.
76. *Ibid.*, 27 May, 1867.
77. See Badham, Op. Cit., pp.2-3.
78. Badham, "Commemoration 1870", *Ibid.*, pp.28-29.
79. Badham, "Commemoration 1868", *Ibid.*, p.12.
80. Minutes of the Senate, 6 December and 9 December, 1865.
81. *Ibid.*, 7 March, 1866.
82. See the figures in the Annual Reports of the Senate.
83. *Empire*, 27 May, 1867.
84. Report of the Senate for 1870 in *JNSWLC*, 1871-72, Vol.20, p.427ff.
85. Minutes of the Senate, 4 September, 1867.
86. *Ibid.*, 8 January, 1868.
87. *Ibid.*, 3 February, 1869.
88. See *Ibid.*, 13 February, 1865.
89. *Ibid.*, 3 February, 1869.
90. *Ibid.*
91. *Ibid.*, 6 May, 1868.
92. *Ibid.*, 1 July, 1868.
93. See by-laws appended to Report of the Senate for 1865 in *JNSWLC*, 1866, Vol.14, Pt.1, p.443.
94. Minutes of the Senate, 2 September, 1868.
95. *Ibid.*, 2 December, 1868.
96. See Report of the Senate for 1869 in *JNSWLC*, 1870, Vol.18, p.347ff.
97. *Supra*.
98. See Report of the Senate for 1869, Op. Cit.
99. Minutes of the Senate, 25 February, 1867.
100. *Supra*.
101. Minutes of the Senate, 3 November, 1869.
102. E. Deas Thomson, "Chancellor's Address at the University of Sydney Annual Commemoration, 1869", in newspaper reports of various commemoration addresses etc. in Deas Thomson Papers, Vol.4, p.821ff. (ML).
103. Minutes of the Senate, 25 February, 1867.
104. *Ibid.*, 3 June, 1868.
105. *Ibid.*, 4 November, 1868.
106. *Ibid.*, 6 July, 1870.
107. *Ibid.*
108. E. Deas Thomson, "Commemoration Address for

1869" in newspaper reports of various commemoration addresses etc. in Deas Thomson Papers, Vol.4, p.821ff (ML).

109. Deas Thomson, "Commemoration Address for 1871" in newspaper reports of various commemoration addresses etc., *Ibid.*

110. *Empire*, 11 April, 1868.

111. *Ibid.*

112. See Matriculants Graduates and Postgraduate Degree Register G3/70 (USA). There are some discrepancies between the figures in the Register and those in the Annual Reports of the Senate in respect of both the matriculants and the graduates. The figures in the Register appear to be the more reliable for the particular period under discussion.

113. See E. Deas Thomson, "Commemoration Address for 1872" in newspaper reports of various commemoration addresses etc., Deas Thomson Papers, Vol.4, p.821ff.

#### Abbreviations

*ADB* Australian Dictionary of Biography

*JNSWLC* Journal of the New South Wales Legislative Council

ML Mitchell Library

*SMH* Sydney Morning Herald

USA University of Sydney Archives

*VPNSWLA* Votes and Proceedings of the New South Wales Legislative Assembly

*VPNSWLC* Votes and Proceedings of the New South Wales Legislative Council

# The Academy Behindwire

## The education of a group of 8th Division Officers while Prisoners of War of the Japanese in Borneo during World War 11

The major portion of the material used in this article was drawn from two reports contained in the Army Education Service papers amongst the Personal Papers of the late Mr. J. L. J. Wilson and his family, held in the University of Sydney Archives:

- (1) *B Force Officers Education Group General Report*
- (2) *The Story Behind the Report of B Force Officers Education Group - Kuching P. W. Camp* by Lieutenant T.H. Roberts, sometimes referred to in this article as the Roberts Report.

John Lascelles Jenner Wilson was born in Sydney in 1898. During 1901-1907 he lived with his parents in India where his father was a schoolmaster and later the family moved to England where he received his early schooling. A later move took him to New Zealand where Wilson attended Auckland Grammar School. He then served with the New Zealand Armed Forces from 1918 - 1919.

Wilson went on the land until 1924 and in 1925 became actively involved in adult education in the Department of Tutorial Classes at Auckland University College. In 1934 he graduated with a B.A. from Auckland University College. He became a part time Lecturer at the College in 1934 and in the same year was appointed a Tutor-Organiser for the Department of Tutorial Classes at Otago University College.

In 1936 Wilson was appointed Assistant Director of Tutorial Classes in the University of Sydney, and he served in the Australian Army Education Service from 1941 to 1946. At the end of the war in the Pacific he was an Assistant Director of the Army Education Service with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. From 1946 to 1950 he was seconded to the Commonwealth Office of Education. In 1950 he returned to the University of Sydney and was appointed Director of Tutorial Classes. Wilson held many appointments associated with Adult Education, and other positions such as Editor of the Current Affairs Bulletin, in conjunction with his Directorship of the University's Department of Tutorial Classes.

He retired from the University of Sydney in 1963 and later - from 1965 to 1969 - he was Acting Director of Adult Education at the Australian National University. Wilson continued to work as a Tutor in the University of Sydney Group Discussion Scheme close to the age of 90. He died on the 24th June 1988.

## Some Background

The General Officer commanding Allied Forces in Malaya, Lieut. General Percival, capitulated to the Japanese in Singapore on 15 February 1942. It seems the Japanese were not geared at that time to deal with the many thousands of British and Australian prisoners and Percival was directed to set up his own administrative organisation at Changi on the eastern tip of Singapore Island.

On 17 February 1942 15,000 men of the 8th Division of the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.) commenced the march across Singapore to the Changi Barracks.

B Force, consisting of 150 Officers and 1350 other ranks from units of the 8th Australian Division held at Changi, left Singapore by ship in June 1942. They arrived at a camp in Sandakan, one of the chief towns in British North Borneo, in July, where they were initially employed by their Japanese masters in airfield construction.

Another group of Prisoners of War, known as E Force, of about 1,000 Allied troops including 500 Australians left Singapore, arrived in Borneo in March 1943, and later joined B Force at Sandakan. Sometime between then and early 1944 the officers of both B and E Forces were moved collectively to a camp at Kuching, located down the western coast of Borneo. Kuching was the chief town and administrative capital of Sarawak, a British protectorate in northwest Borneo.

The Roberts Report stated that the section of the camp at Kuching that housed the Australian Officers from the 8th Division was less than an acre of ground where 138 officers were crowded into three huts. The area, which was surrounded by barbed wire, also contained a kitchen. There were eleven such camps for various Allied Prisoners of War and civilian internees at Kuching. Communication between these compounds was forbidden; yet managed by devious means to take place from time to time.

It was mentioned earlier that B Force Officers numbered 150 when the force left Singapore in 1942 and this number would have been augmented by officers from E Force in 1943. And yet the Roberts Report, which was written after the men were recovered on 11 September 1945, mentions only 138 officers. This figure probably represents the number of survivors. About 1,800 Australians died in Borneo.

## The School

An Educational School had been established at Changi, and the majority of the officers of B Force had taken

some part in it for the few months they were there. They still desired to further their studies, but upon reaching Sandakan found that the Imperial Japanese Army Officers were unsympathetic, in that 70 of the officers were required to form a working party. This meant that about half the prisoners were not available during daylight hours and evening lectures were inhibited as their captors had imposed severe lighting restrictions. The problems were compounded by the refusal of the Japanese to co-operate in obtaining books from the Sandakan Library. Notwithstanding these restrictions a certain amount of valuable work was done. Evening classes were conducted where possible and a great deal of private reading was carried out by the men, from any books that were available.

Following the removal of the officers of B and E Forces to Kuching Camp, the circumstances became far more conducive to educational activities. The officers were not required to work, other than performing duties to maintain their camp services, such as the preparation of food etc. Further, access was given to the Kuching and Camp Central libraries. More will be said later about these valuable libraries.

When the officers arrived at Kuching they formed the Education Committee to arrange and oversee studies. Major F. A. Fleming acted as Director and was responsible to the Force Commander, Lt.Col. A. W. Walsh.

The Committee consisted of the following six officers, with the ability to co-opt others whose skill and advice was invaluable:

Major F.A. Fleming, M.A., Dip. Ed. Melbourne (formerly Senior House Master and History and English Master, Scotch College Melbourne).  
Lieut. G.H. Owens, B.A. Queensland, (formerly senior Language Master and Vice-Principal Townsville Grammar School).  
Lieut. J.C. Pryce, B.A. Sydney (English Honours), Department of Education N.S.W.  
Capt. R. Speirs, M.B., B.S. Sydney.  
Lieut. C. Watson, Stock and Station Agent, Victoria.  
Capt. J. Rowell, Solicitor, Brisbane.

The General Report of B Force Educational Group was compiled by Major F.A. Fleming with Lieuts. G.H. Owen and J.C. Pryce. The preamble section of the General Report records the dedication of those concerned.

"The Committee considers further that the force as a whole owes a great deal to those who, as well as carrying on their own studies, unselfishly gave their services to the camp in general. Details of their efforts may be gathered from the attached reports, but generally speaking a commendable spirit was shown by all, by their offering freely, at considerable risk to their health and safety, to do whatever they could to assist

in the general scheme."

The Kuching School still faced great difficulties in that rations were poor, particularly over the months leading up to the surrender of the Japanese. The Japanese camp officials were difficult and unhelpful. It was often necessary to post scouts whilst a lecture was in progress in order to advise of the approach of the Japanese guards, and sometimes classes were interrupted with rather unpleasant consequences.

Lighting restrictions also applied at Kuching. Even the use of home-made sludge lamps was forbidden under pain of a beating. There was a complete lack of facilities for maintaining records. Frequent searches by the Japanese led to the seizure of notebooks and other papers. Both paper and pencils were more or less forbidden and over the last year in the camp these items were almost unprocurable through the 'underground' supply sources.

When considering the general living conditions imposed on the officers the following statement made in the Committee's General Report illustrates the position: 'Living together in this camp in circumstances approximate to the worst conditions of the slum areas of Asia, with facilities for hygiene and comfort non-existent.'

## Gardens

It became evident that there was an urgent need to provide green vegetables, as these were the only protection against the dreaded beri beri, no medical supplies being available. From those amongst them with the appropriate knowledge, the officers were initiated into the mysteries of vitamins and proteins. Every inch of available ground in the small area of the Officers' Camp was utilised in the growing of vegetables by the prisoners.

The gardening committee conducted experiments and concluded that Kangkong, which grew quickly, was the most suitable vegetable due to its very high vitamin content. This vegetable was cultivated and all fit personnel amongst the officers worked to produce kangkong within the relatively small area available.

## Lectures and Activities

At Kuching a program of lectures was arranged, the object of the committee being to provide educational value together with general interest. In addition to the Education Committee there was an Entertainment Committee which had been formed at Sandakan and continued its work at Kuching - an Officers Choir of 50 voices was formed, variety shows were written and produced, a parliamentary debating club was formed and bridge and chess tournaments were organised. A weekly paper had even been published surreptitiously

during the time at Sandakan

After arrival at Kuching more time was available to produce and rehearse musicals, and concerts became a weekly event. Due to a lack of works by recognised playwrights, the officers wrote their own plays which were performed with pleasing results. Some officers took part in hobbies such as carpentry etc. At Christmas time the Japanese allowed the officers to send toys made in the camp to the Internees section as presents for the children.

Lectures were given at Kuching on the following subjects: -

English Literature; French; German; Spanish; Dutch; Malay; Hindustani; Japanese (conducted by Lieut. Esler, camp interpreter); Greek; Latin; History; Philosophy; Biology; Science and Mathematics; Navigation; Statistics; Photography; Chemistry; Psychology; Art (including Appreciation, History and Practical Work); Religious Studies; Economics and Law; Accountancy; Agriculture.

In respect of Law Lectures, the studies were under the direction of Lieut. L.L. Draney, Barrister at Law (Queensland). Under each subject heading in Section (b) of the Group General Report details of the course concerned and the name or names of the officers involved as lecturers were given. Also included under Appendix B was a list of 43 general lectures on various subjects of general interest plus the names of the officer who gave the lecture.

## The Libraries

There was a library at Changi, and one at Sandakan. However at Kuching two libraries became available, one known as the Kuching Library, the other as the Camp Central Library. Lieut. Roberts, in his report, mentions both the libraries in a section titled 'About Books'. It seems that one of the libraries had belonged to an internee who was anxious that the books should be used by the group. It is assumed that this was the Kuching Library, the other being Camp Central Library. Both these libraries, in the hands of the Japanese, were kept in the Japanese Office and books were requested so many at a time.

The origin of the Camp Libraries both at Sandakan and at Kuching is not clear. Perhaps they were acquired from local sources such as previous town libraries in Borneo. It certainly would not be expected that libraries at Allied Prisoner of War Camps under the control of the Japanese would have been sent from Japan. In the POW Camps in Europe under control of the Germans the libraries were made available by the International Red Cross. The Red Cross did supply Japanese camps with items such as special foods and

cigarettes. Could they also have supplied books?

The books available at Kuching were a great help to the Education Committee. Hereunder is a list of the subjects covered and the number of volumes applicable to each subject held in the Camp Central Library:-

Subject	No of volumes
Shakespeare	24
Other Elizabethan Literature	9
Biography	56
Autobiography & Reminiscences	16
Essays and Essayists	29
English Literature (Period & Criticism)	14
Poetical Studies	7
Poets - Work of	16
Prose and Writing	5
Reading and Thinking	6
Travel	5
Short Stories & Classics	16
Miscellaneous	8
Drama	11
History	37
Misc Novels of Historical Import	13
Scientific & Technical	25
Philosophy, Psychology, Education and Politics	25
Music	6
Classical (Greek)	4
Total	365

## Lieutenant Washington's education whilst a P O W

'The Law School Comforts Fund Material' article in *Record* September 1990 cites Lieut. F. L. Washington's paper entitled 'The Law School in P.O.W. Camp Kuching (Borneo)'.

Over a period of approximately 3 years at Sandakan and, later, at Kuching, Lieut. Washington actively engaged in legal studies at every available opportunity. At Kuching he received a certificate issued by Lieut. Len Draney (the Officer in Charge of the 'de facto' Law School at Kuching) dated 4th September 1945. This certificate included a statement which said that he (Lieut. Draney) was satisfied that this student had more than an elementary knowledge of the subjects listed (there were ten in all) and it appeared that Washington's knowledge was such that in many of the subjects little further study would be needed for him to reach a standard to pass any reasonable examinations in these subjects.

## Washington and Anson's *Law Of Contracts*

Lieut. Washington in his paper gave an interesting story about one particular book. In the early part of 1944 at Kuching, when currently only light novels had

been available for reading due to some whim of their captors, a book arrived in the Officers Camp entitled *Anson's Law of Contracts*. The text had been smuggled in from a nearby camp where some of the British residents had been interned (it had belonged to a Government Official). This caused jubilation amongst the legal fraternity and their students in the camp.

There was a danger of the book being confiscated by the Japanese as had happened in the case of other texts, so Washington undertook to type two copies of *Anson's Law of Contracts*. The surreptitious typing was done on a portable typewriter that when not in use was encased in a small wooden box, the lid of which was painted as a draughts board. The machine escaped detection despite many searches by the Japanese officials.

The problem was to secure sufficient paper to make the copies required. This situation was overcome by using various scraps of paper such as the wrappings of rice biscuits, clean portions of newspapers, and paper obtained to roll tea leaves as their substitute for tobacco etc. It took about a month to complete the typing task and on completion the book was smuggled back to its owner.

The Japanese officials later instituted a camp library and other books became available. These included *Anson's Law of Contracts*. It happened that at that time paper for smoking was unobtainable and covetous eyes were cast on the two typed copies of *Anson's*. The pressure that was brought to bear led to a decision that the typed copies of *Anson's* would be smoked. The bits of the copies of *Anson's* were returned in correct proportion to the original owners who had supplied the paper. Washington stated that he well remembered smoking his efforts and wrote in his article 'No doubt the inhalations of legal knowledge at Kuching will in due course improve the decisions of the High Court of Australia'.

In March 1946 Lieutenant Washington entered the Sydney University Law School and commenced the LLB course after having returned to civilian life in Australia.

## Recovery and Return

Japanese forces capitulated on 15th August 1945 and the formal surrender took place in Tokyo Bay on 2nd September 1945.

On Morotai Island Australia's General Sir Thomas Blamey accepted the formal surrender of all Japanese forces in the eastern half of the Netherlands East Indies on the 9th September 1945. In Blamey's speech to the Japanese Delegation after receiving the surrender in which he expressed the feelings of the Australian Forces he included the following words: 'You will

ensure that all Allied personnel, prisoners of war or internees in Japanese hands are safeguarded and nourished and delivered over to Allied Commanders .....'.

Following the surrender on Morotai, Major-General G.E. Wootten, General Officer Commanding the 9th Australian Division, required the Japanese Thirty Seventh Army, led by Lieutenant General Baba Masao, to formally accept the surrender terms at Wootten's residence on Labuan Island. This surrender covered the forces throughout British Borneo.

H.M.A.H.S. *Wanganella* embarked her first recovered Prisoners of War from Kuching on 13 September 1945. The Kuching River was unfit for navigation of large vessels so the men were taken aboard from barges.

Before leaving the camp at Kuching the men apparently decided that as an AIF Unit returning to duty they should parade in a soldierly manner. It was decided they would march up the gangway of *Wanganella* in their faded uniforms and battered headgear, taking a salute and presenting their papers with military formality. It seems it did not happen this way; they needed assistance to come aboard. What had been intended to be an impressive arrival sadly became what had been expected by the staff of the Hospital Ship. Notwithstanding this Lieut. Roberts stated that it was the 'most moving parade that I have ever seen'.

T.K. Fitchett in his work *The Vanished Fleet*, in writing the history of the M.V. *Wanganella*, made the following statement in the section dealing with *Wanganella* as a hospital ship during the years 1941-45 which illustrated the situation of the men from the AIF Officers Camp at Kuching. 'At Kuching she embarked the prisoners of war and internees who had been held in the infamous Sinchang Barracks. After their brutal treatment, it was necessary to rest them for a week aboard *Wanganella* before proceeding to sea, so pitiful was their mental and physical condition'. (Dates given by Lieut. Roberts in the Foreword mentioned below suggest the resting period of a week may have been less.)

Lieut. T. H. Roberts, the Education Officer of 2/2 Australian Hospital Ship (*Wanganella*) wrote a Foreword for the B Force Officers Group General Report. In the foreword he points out that the report was brought on board in its original form, having been compiled by Major Fleming and Lieuts. J. C. Price and G. H. Owen. It had been written minutely on fragments of inferior paper and, after writing, it had been hidden away in various locations in the camp as the production of such a document was forbidden by the Japanese under pain of a beating.

The report was edited and typed on board between 15

and 18 of September 1945 whilst on the voyage to Morotai. Meetings between the Committee and Roberts were held at the bedside of Major Fleming, who had collapsed with acute malaria. The haste in production of the Report was considered necessary by Roberts as he wished it to be placed in the hands of the Australian Army Education Service (A.A.E.S.) without delay in order that its value in the rehabilitation of the men could be assessed.

Roberts stated that the Group General Report made reference to some of the difficulties under which the activities of the School took place and said: 'To describe this as an understatement would be indeed an understatement'. He went on to say that he would at a subsequent time write the story which will be considered an essay in heroism.

This document was later written by Roberts on the outward voyage of the Hospital Ship and titled *The Story Behind the Report of B Force Officers Educational Group, Kuching P.W. Camp*. Currently a copy is held among the papers of J. L. J. Wilson at the University Archives.

## Conclusion

Amongst the Australian Army Education Service Papers is a lengthy memorandum forwarded back to Australia, presumably to Colonel R.B. Madgwick, Director of Army Education, from Lieut. Colonel J. L. J. Wilson, Assistant Director of Army Education on Morotai Island, where the headquarters of the Australian Forces in the Netherlands East Indies was located. Wilson was the senior Education Officer at this Advance Headquarters of the Australian Military Forces.

The Memorandum was dated the 24th of September 1945. It included copies of the Reports and discussed their future publication and distribution along with other matters.

There is a statement in the abovementioned memorandum which indicates that the POWs from Kuching were not being taken directly home to Australia on the hospital ship. A paragraph in Wilson's memo requests information of the intention regarding publication of the *B Force Officers General Report* so that it could be passed on to the officers before they leave for the Mainland. (Wilson also mentioned that his Committee had agreed that the B Force Officers would be grateful if they were given a copy.)

The No.113 Convalescence Hospital was located at Morotai and possibly the recovered men were treated there pending fitness to travel in a normal troopship back to Australia.

Further, the earliest time that *Wanganella* could have

arrived in Morotai would have been 18 September. Wilson's memorandum of 24 September mentions the Kuching prisoners descent upon the libraries in the two hospitals and goes on to say that the hospital's Education Officers 'have never had such avaricious clients, nor ones with such uniformly good tastes for serious reading'.

Lieut. Roberts in his foreword to *B Force Officers Education Group General Report* referred to its importance to the Australian Army Education Service in the following words: 'Apart from the intrinsic interest of the Report, it should be treated as a valuable document in assisting to evaluate the educational level of personnel from Kuching P.W. Camp who may seek advice or rehabilitation training'.

In his report *The Story Behind the Report of B Force Officers Education Group, Kuching P.W. Camp*, when writing about the atmosphere existing in the Camp, Roberts goes on to say about the Officer Prisoners: 'They do not seem to think it at all remarkable that they should have set up and operated what amounts to an academy inside the jungle and the barbed wire, and this under the hostile and uncomprehending eyes of a race whose culture is surely the most egocentric and alien in the world. The B Force Officers Report was therefore written not as a record of heroic accomplishment, but merely to furnish a sort of certificate which would serve in the Western world, to which they all hoped one day to return, in place of the Leaving Certificate or other permit to enter the institutions of advanced study. Surely no such certificates have previously been issued in Australia's Educational history'.

Finally, there is a rather solemn aspect to the story of the 'B' Force Officers at Kuching in which fate played a part.

It was noted in the background section of this article that when the officers of B Force, along with some from E Force, were transferred to the camp at Kuching, other ranks remained at Sandakan. In January 1945 these men of the 8th Division together with 750 British prisoners were forced to take part in what is now known as the infamous Sandakan Death Marches. The Japanese authorities forced the remaining prisoners at Sandakan to march in a westerly direction over mountainous terrain to a camp at Ranau some 265 kilometres away. This was to avoid the Allied forces then approaching Sandakan. It is understood that the reason for the movement of the Prisoners of War was to prevent them from falling into Allied hands where their physical condition would have become apparent to their liberators.

The men who had been imprisoned in the camp at Sandakan, considered to be the worst of all Far East camps, were in no state to make the journey. The



Japanese authorities were considered responsible, one way or another, for the deaths of all but 33 who were alive at Ranau on 1st August 1945. When it became clear that the Japanese position would be overrun all but six of the survivors of the march were massacred. The six who survived were Australians who had made their escape.

Lieut. Roberts' report in making reference to the B Force Officers in camp at Kuching states: "These men were recovered on the 11th September. By orders since discovered they were to have been slaughtered to a man on the 15th September 1945'.

Keith Jones  
March 1997

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# Summary List of Records Accessioned in the University Archives, July 1996 to June 1997

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

<u>Accession Number</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Creator/Donor</u>
1339	Personal Archives of Ida Allison Browne	Ida Allison Browne
1340	Plans of McMaster Laboratories	Commonwealth Department of Works
1341	Sydney Cae Principal's Correspondence	Sydney Cae, Office of the Principal
1342	Minutes of the Research Committee	Research and Scholarships Office
1343	Correspondence Registers	Office of the Vice Chancellor
1344	Appointments Diaries	Office of the Vice Chancellor
1345	Additional Records of the Arts Association	Arts Association
1346	Faculty Minutes	Faculty of Law
1347	Conjoint Board Minutes - Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children	Faculty of Medicine
1348	Conjoint Board Minutes - Royal North Shore Hospital	Faculty of Medicine
1349	Conjoint Board Minutes - Women's Hospital	Faculty of Medicine
1350	Miscellaneous Photographic Images	Various
1351	Examination Papers	Examinations and Exclusions
1352	Miscellaneous Papers of G.D.Osborne	George Davenport Osborne
1353	Additional Papers of T.W.E.David	Tannatt William Edgeworth David
1354	Additional Records of Ida Allison Browne	Ida Allison Browne
1355	Law Extension Committee Minutes	Law Extension Committee
1356	Personal Archives of Thomas George Vallance	Thomas George Vallance
1357	Aerial Views of the University	Department of Photography
1358	Photograph of New Education Building	Vice-Chancellor's Office
1359	Examination Papers 1995	Student Centre - Examinations Unit
1360	Sydney University Television Service Productions	Sydney University Television Service
1361	Amalgamated But the Same: A Brief History of the First 25 Years of the University of Sydney Union	University of Sydney Union
1362	Norman Scott Noble - Certificates and Testamurs	Norman Scott Noble
1363	Alexander Oliver Papers Alexander Oliver	
1364	Committee Minutes	Sydney University Women's Sports Association
1365	General Meetings Minutes	Sydney University Women's Athletics Club
1366	Student Files	NSW State Conservatorium of Music
1367	Unpublished Papers	Bruce Rodda Williams
1368	Photographic Prints	Publications Unit
1369	Archives Finding Aids	University Archives
1370	Records of the Sydney University Company	Sydney University Company
1371	Photographic Prints Not Known	
1372	File Relating To the Creation of the Chair of Australian Literature	Professor R.J.Milgate, Department of English
1373	Minutes	Board of Studies For Degree of Master of Psychology
1374	Minutes of the Faculty	Office of the Registrar
1375	Minutes of Council and Annual Meetings	Frederick May Foundation For Italian Studies
1376	Faculty of Arts Review Papers	Office of the Vice Chancellor