

I.Notes Memories of the years 1920-1924

I spent the years 1920-1922 as a full-time student in the Faculty of Arts, graduating in 1923. In 1923 and 1924 I attended lectures in 'Education I' and 'Education II' respectively with Mr. J. A. Johnson, Principal of the Teachers' College. He was a great educator and a most inspiring lecturer, loved and respected by all. On one occasion looking out of an upstairs window he saw walking below the gifted, though worldly, Professor Flynn, Professor of Biology, and Father of Errol, the rather stout Professor of Classics, R. L. Dumbabin, and the amoral Ramsden, Lecturer in French and German. He commented, "There they go, the world, the flesh and the Devil."

In 1923 I began reading for my master's degree in History which I virtually had to abandon ~~when asked~~ when asked, owing to the sudden illness of the teacher concerned, to accept a senior history position at Hobart High School.

Professor Flynn We all knew Professor Flynn as he used to attend the Students' Dances held in the University Library. My introduction to him was when he found me in a state of consternation on Commemoration Day in 1920 as my new gown, (undergraduate's naturally), had been "borrowed". He at once found his master's gown, green with age, which I wore to Commem. that evening in the Town Hall.

Professor Dumbabin, the Professor of Classics, both Greek and Latin. We understood he had lectured

on several subjects in the early days and had won a scholarship to Oxford which later was replaced by the Rhodes Scholarship. He had a tremendous fund of knowledge and was another fine educator. I have always thought of him and Professor W. H. Williams as among the founding fathers of the University. The Professor and his family were friends of my family as we had lived next door to them at Bream Creek while my father was engineer-in-charge of the East Bay Tack band at Dunally (officially opened in 1905). The Professor and his two sisters lived on their property, "Sedbury", employing a manager. Through his interests were growing tulips and raising pigs. In the vacation he enjoyed walking holidays and also overseas travel where he indulged his taste for music and art.

Professor W. H. Williams <sup>Professor of English Literature and Classics</sup> had been at "Cano Bridge with J.P. Postgate", the author of "Latin Primer" an essential tool for Latin students. Postgate made study a consuming occupation and created quite a sensation when he turned out to play cricket. In 1922 Professor, commenting on a text being studied said, "Death always seems so far away." On his way home he was knocked down by a lorry and left lying in Macquarie Street with a broken leg. In spite of his grey hairs he recovered well. <sup>In his spare time</sup> while convalescing he invited the small group of third year English students to his home so that our work would not be further interrupted. normally on a Saturday he could be seen on the Bellerive ferry with his satchel of books on his way to a secluded spot on the beach.

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Professor Alexander Macaulay. The first time I saw Professor Macaulay was during a French lecture when Kaamsdonk suddenly said "how you are going to see a picture of sartorial perfection". The Professor wished to pass through the room on his way. This was in the old University building which had in the earlier days been "The Boys' High School" (the title I had from my eldest uncle, Charles Wherrett, a former pupil.) A loosely woven tweed suit hung on his spare frame, big eyes and pepper and salt hair and beard appeared to be supported by a high celluloid collar with a black tie. His brown boots were nondescript in colour as they had probably never been polished.

He lived in a hut on Mt. Nelson so that he could pursue his research uninterrupted by family life. I understood he was working on Relativity at the same time as Albert Einstein and was regarded as the fifth mathematician in the world. He was very interested in the Tasmanian Hydro-Electric Scheme and my father recalled talking to him about it when they met on the 'Roof' of the Island.

As he walked down Liverpool Street to the University he would sometimes call at Heathorn's for a whisky which was often taken on an empty stomach. Unfortunately this was apt to upset his concentration. On one occasion he confused his handkerchief with the chalk dust, on another he looked round the class despairingly and his gaze fell on Brother Joyce, a teacher at St. Virgils College. He paused momentarily and then said, "Brother Dominis the con-gegation". A friend of ours with was Gordon Brett the clever science and mathematics graduate who later became the Superintendent of Science and Mathematics in the

Education Department. For some time he acted as the Professor's amanuensis and was with him the day the doctor told him he would become blind. His reaction was superb. He sat up all night learning Braille. It was with good reason the student song described him as "Lord of them all."

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