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***Audacious Beginnings:  
the establishment of universities in  
Australasia 1850-1900***

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*Between 1850 and 1900, in what can only be described as distant and raw outposts of empire, no less than eight universities or university colleges were established in Australasia. In chronological sequence they comprised the universities of Sydney (1850), Melbourne (1853) and Otago (1869), Canterbury University College (1873), the University of Adelaide (1874), Auckland University College (1882), the University of Tasmania (1890) and Victoria University College, Wellington (1899). In 1870 the University of New Zealand was created based on the London model. The University of Otago was allowed to retain its name but along with Canterbury, and subsequently Auckland and Wellington, it became a constituent college of the University of New Zealand. While it is true that the second half of the nineteenth century also saw the growth of a variety of civic university colleges in Britain, by 1900 only Manchester (1880), the University of Wales (1893), and Birmingham (1900) had become new universities in their own right. In hindsight the growth of university education in nineteenth century Australasia seems quite remarkable and worthy of closer study as a phenomenon in its own right.*

*There have been various published histories of Australasian universities but none as rich as the two most recent relating to the universities of Sydney (1991) and Melbourne (2003). The latter, in particular, was the catalyst for this exploratory study. How was it that at a time when many major British cities lacked a university institution, towns (one can hardly describe them as cities) in the remote corners of empire were establishing universities? What were the driving motives for the founding of such institutions at a time when most colonies were barely providing even a basic primary schooling for most children? Were there underlying socio-economic and/or cultural pressures at work or was each university a unique case study of individual initiative as was the case of Wentworth in Sydney and MacAndrew at Otago, or group effort as was the case with the Oxford inspired Anglican 'Pilgrims' in Christchurch, New Zealand. Whatever the cause, one cannot fail to be impressed by the sheer*

*audacity of those who found both the time and energy to transplant the roots of Britain's intellectual heritage in alien lands far from home. This paper examines the origins of the first university institutions established in nineteenth century Australasia. At first sight it would seem that the founding of each institution was a unique story in its own right – a response by an individual or a small group to a felt need generated by a unique set of circumstances – but it was surely more than that. Many of the founding professors were outstanding British academics. What prompted them to give up the chance of a comfortable existence at home in order to make what often proved to be a long one way sea voyage to the back of beyond? This paper argues that it was not just distance from home, the practical problems of educating the young, or the need for professional expertise in fields like law, medicine, engineering or accountancy that gave rise to Australasian universities but rather a deeply ingrained desire to reproduce British culture which was itself an expression of the Victorians' confidence in their ability to shape the future. Those who founded universities in the Antipodes seemingly had few, if any, doubts about the superiority of their European culture, the need to transplant it in distant lands, and their capacity to do so. The similarity to the Christian missionaries is unmistakable. The professors recruited to staff the universities were rarely overtly Christian but they were, nevertheless, the nineteenth century evangelists of what might be called 'high culture'. The issues raised here are an invitation to further debate. The comparative history of tertiary education in Australasia is a sub-discipline yet to be defined.*

### **Introduction**

No fewer than eight Australasian universities had their origins in the second half of the nineteenth Century: Sydney (1850) came first, followed by Melbourne (1853), Otago (1869), Canterbury (1873) and Adelaide (1874). Auckland (1883), Tasmania (1890) and Victoria (Wellington) (1898) made up the second wave.<sup>2</sup> In the same period a variety of civic university colleges were founded in Britain but by 1900 only Manchester (1880), the University of Wales (1893), and Birmingham (1900) had become new universities in their own right. The relatively cautious expansion of university education in the United Kingdom, which was linked to the industrial revolution and the introduction of science into higher education, serves only to make developments in the antipodes the more remarkable. There is no such general explanation to account for the blossoming of university institutions in Australia and New Zealand at the time. Cultural betterment was the last thing on the minds of the vast majority of

colonists; their primary concerns were more to do with scraping a living in the hinterland and on the rude streets of the small, unsanitary market towns where the antipodean universities were established. Indeed, many colonists resented the very possibility of a state-funded university in their midst.

What was it then that motivated some colonists in Australia and New Zealand to found universities, especially when anti-intellectual attitudes were uppermost and there were precious few secondary schools to provide matriculants? Was it simply a matter of chance? Was it no more than a pragmatic response to the ever growing need for professionally trained men in areas such as law, medicine, engineering etc? Or was it in the first instance social reproduction, a desire by some rich first generation settlers to make their own early cultural experiences available for the benefit of the next, without the risks attendant in sending them 'home' for education?

Contrary to twentieth century perceptions which viewed the emergence of state education at all levels as part of the development of an inclusive democracy,<sup>3</sup> the nineteenth century antipodean universities were originally agents of an exclusive cultural elite that was determined to maintain its hold on government in the colonies. To suggest that the foundation of the University of Sydney was designed to further colonial democracy, one would have to claim that dyed-in-the-wool oligarchs like William Wentworth and Robert Lowe were democrats! These men and the future champions of colonial universities were afraid that the values of the majority would flow upwards and contaminate the children of the ruling elite. In essence, it was fear of democracy rather than any democratic impulse that motivated these men.

While the desire to establish universities was common, the circumstances in which each antipodean university was founded were unique. The University of Sydney grew out of a fortuitous set of circumstances which were neither planned nor widely supported. The University of Melbourne was established ostensibly to protect middle-class youths from exposure to the 'common' low class culture of the goldfields. A government awash with revenue derived from the gold rush and the fact that Sydney had recently established a university were undoubtedly factors that also played a part. The University of Otago had its origins in Scottish Presbyterian culture and gold revenues, but it too was only for those who had the time, the money and the motivation to study. The University of Adelaide owed its origins to a combination of non-conformist religious zeal, mineral wealth and generous

benefactors. By contrast, the origins of Canterbury's university were unashamedly Anglican, aristocratic, and a reaction to Dunedin's ambitions to host the University of New Zealand. The universities of Auckland, Tasmania and Victoria (Wellington) were founded mainly on the pragmatic grounds of geography and population growth, but by the latter part of the nineteenth century the dual concept of a university as the provider of an education that would mould the minds of a cultural elite and simultaneously provide professional training in law, medicine and perhaps engineering to complement the basic faculties of arts and science, was firmly established in the antipodes.

Whatever the circumstances of the foundation of these universities, one cannot but be impressed by the sheer audacity of the colonial champions of higher education who gave of their time and energy to plant the idea of British university education in Australasia. Most of them looked forward to an uncertain future in an alien land and back to the security of late adolescence and young manhood spent in one of the early nineteenth century universities. Included among these institutions were the medieval collegiate universities of Oxford and Cambridge, the fifteenth century Scottish universities of St Andrew's, Glasgow and Aberdeen, the sixteenth century Universities of Edinburgh and Trinity College Dublin and, perhaps for some, the more recent University of London – that Godless Institution in Gower Street, or its Anglican rival King's College, in the Strand.

Equally impressive were the foundation professors, those nineteenth century missionaries of high culture who sailed into the unknown with little more to sustain them than their scholarship. Some of them could almost certainly have enjoyed illustrious careers in august institutions in their homeland but they chose instead to go to the other side of the world. Many of them were brilliant fresh-faced Oxford and Cambridge graduates with new wives in tow, full of enthusiasm for the chairs they had won so early in their careers. Herein lies the most likely answer for their coming, for such early preferment was unusual, but not unheard of, in the universities and colleges of Great Britain in the nineteenth century. Most of those who took up the Australasian foundation chairs devoted the rest of their lives to the establishment of higher education in antipodean societies that were at best ambivalent if not downright unresponsive to their ideals.

Sheldon Rothblatt describes the history of universities as 'something of an institutional orphan'.<sup>4</sup> This certainly applies to the history of Australasian universities. Separate institutional histories, which have

been published regularly since 1902 when Sydney celebrated its golden jubilee, have reinforced the notion of exclusivity. Yet as far back as 1979, W.J.Gardner, the Canterbury historian, contended that the pursuit of uniqueness had obscured the autochthony of these institutions and called for comparative studies.<sup>5</sup> Gascoigne raised the possibility again in 1996, finding the cultural origins of the University of Sydney and the University of Melbourne in the Scottish universities.<sup>6</sup> This, however, does not detract from the worth of good institutional histories. The richest, most comprehensive, and most recent of these relate to the universities of Sydney and Melbourne respectively. Indeed, the latter, *The Shop*,<sup>7</sup> was the catalyst for this exploratory study which examines the origins of the antipodean universities.

Using published university histories as the primary source, it is argued in this paper that the antipodean universities owe their existence to the unshakeable confidence of a settler elite from Victorian Britain in their ability to shape the future of the Australasian colonies. They acted directly in the case of the universities of Sydney, Melbourne, Otago and Adelaide when chance events occurred. Canterbury, by contrast, was born as a consequence of inter-provincial rivalry when a local intellectual elite successfully fought off the University of Otago's attempt to become the University of New Zealand. It is also argued that Auckland and Victoria owe their existence largely to the persistence of individual politicians, while Tasmania, which finally emerged from the ashes of the colony's long established Council of Education after almost forty years of tedious political infighting also had its champions.

### ***Opportunistic responses***

In the 1840s transportation ended, the cost of labour rose and falling wool prices slowed the economy in New South Wales.<sup>8</sup> The resultant recession all but destroyed early attempts to develop corporate secondary schooling in the colony. Established while New South Wales was still a penal colony, these schools mirrored local religious and social divisions. The dissenting Presbyterian divine Dr John Dunmore Lang's Australian College, which opened in 1831, closed and reopened twice before finally collapsing. The exclusive Anglican King's School, which opened in Parramatta in 1832 with support from the colony's pastoralist elite, was also forced to close for a time but ultimately survived. The emancipist and secular Sydney College, which did not open until 1835, was unable to compete with its rivals or with the cheaper private-venture schools to which many students retreated in hard economic

times.<sup>9</sup> In 1849 the school trustees petitioned the Legislative Council, stating that they would hand over the college buildings to anybody able to convert them into a university.<sup>10</sup>

The idea of a colonial university was not new. In a dispatch to Lord Bathurst in 1824, Thomas Hobbes Scott, the architect of the Church and Schools Corporation which was the proposed instrument for the Anglican domination of education in New South Wales, noted that a university had been ‘alluded to’. He suggested that ‘until that time shall arrive, I take the liberty of suggesting that one of the Academies may be so organized, as to lay the foundation for this important object, and to which it may hereafter be easily extended’.<sup>11</sup> Lang, the founders of the King’s School and the trustees of Sydney College, who included William Wentworth among their number, acquiesced in this organic model, which it was envisaged would see ‘the gradual introduction of the higher branches of education’.<sup>12</sup> The Christ’s Colleges in both Hobart and Canterbury, Dunedin Boys’ High School and Lyttelton Grammar School were conceived in like manner. Colonial higher education was to be the organic outcome of an upward expansion of secondary schooling. Even the University of New Zealand in its earliest manifestation supported this policy, initially affiliating secondary schools that prepared students for its examinations.<sup>13</sup>

### ***The University of Sydney***

William Charles Wentworth was the improbable father of The University of Sydney. The bastard son of D’arcy Wentworth, an assumed highwayman who emigrated as a free man to become New South Wales’s principal surgeon, and Catherine Crowley, a convict, he was born in 1790 during the passage to the notorious penal colony of Norfolk Island where he spent his early years. At the age of 12 Wentworth was sent home with his brothers to be educated at the Rev. Midgeley’s school at Bletchley Park and then at the Greenwich School. He returned to New South Wales in 1810 and three years later crossed the Blue Mountains with Blaxland and Lawson to open up the interior of the continent. After some involvement in farming he returned to England in 1816 where he read law at the Inner Temple for five years. Once admitted to the Bar he elected to spend the 1823-24 academic year at Peterhouse College, Cambridge, before returning to New South Wales.<sup>14</sup>

In 1838 Wentworth, an avowed opponent of the Church and Schools Corporation, called unsuccessfully on the government to use the funds

from the sale of the old military barracks in the heart of Sydney to establish a university. A decade later the Sydney physician Henry Douglass rekindled the idea. Why he did so is not clear, but by that time the medical and legal professions and the churches had begun to consider the prospect of local training.<sup>15</sup> The matter was timely. With the Sydney College trustees' petition to the Legislative Council in hand, Wentworth seized the opportunity. Within a few weeks the select committee that he chaired recommended that the government should endow at public expense 'a university for the promotion of literature and science'.

The clauses of *A Bill to Incorporate and Endow a University to be called 'The University of Sydney'* set out the structure for a centrally governed secular teaching and examining university from which all clergy were excluded. Undergraduate education was to be the responsibility of affiliated colleges and professional education the responsibility of the university itself. The Legislative Council was to appoint twelve Fellows to the university's governing Senate, who would be elected by the graduates once they numbered fifty. Robert Lowe who, twelve years later in the House of Commons remarked of the 1862 Revised Code that if the new system of elementary education was not cheap, it would be efficient and if not efficient it would be cheap,<sup>16</sup> objected to the appointment of emancipists to the Senate. In particular he objected to the presence in the Senate of William Bland, a surgeon, an ex-convict and an associate of Wentworth. For Lowe it was a matter of principle that emancipists should be excluded. He also took exception to the proposal that graduates should elect the members of the Senate. He and James Macarther moved that the Bill be stayed for three months, at which point the parliamentary session terminated.<sup>17</sup>

Wentworth had based his university bill on the Charter of the University of London. The exclusion of the clergy was, however, his own idea and in order to get the second Bill passed, he compromised, increasing membership of the Senate from twelve to sixteen, four of whom could be clergy. He also had to compromise on the structure of the university. The poor state of secondary education in the colony meant that there was no hope of affiliated sectarian undergraduate teaching colleges springing up. Accordingly Wentworth proposed that the University should have a secular college in which the professors would teach. To ameliorate expected sectarian opposition to this change, the Senate was empowered to use its endowment funds to support affiliated colleges, including those run by religious organizations. The Bill passed its second reading 'without dissent' and the committee stage



and third reading with little demur, and was assented to in October 1850.<sup>18</sup>

The university that the politicians created was not a teaching university, as were the Scottish universities, or an examining university, as was London, or a collegiate university, as in the case of Oxford or Cambridge. Turney *et al.* describe it as an hybrid.<sup>19</sup> The inaugural professors, who were to be professors of the college but teach non-residential students, recognised the hybrid model as impractical and subsequently persuaded the Senate to designate them as professors of the university. The centrality of the teaching and examining role of the professors secured, the Senate was left to reconcile the churches and define the role of residential colleges. The first antipodean university thus became a non-collegiate, non-residential, urban, teaching and degree granting institution with centralised government, a model that was subsequently unchallenged in Australia.

The establishment of Sydney University was purely fortuitous, there being no evidence of any popular or growing demand from the populace for its creation. If Wentworth, at first sight a most unlikely proponent, had not championed the cause, it is conceivable that Sydney would have waited many more years before establishing a university. Moreover, if the New South Wales government had not acted as it did in 1850, it is highly unlikely that the University of Melbourne would have been created two years later.

### ***The University of Melbourne***

When gold was discovered in the new colony of Victoria, known until 1850 as the Port Phillip Bay district of New South Wales, the sudden influx of prospectors rapidly generated alarm in the upper circles of Melbourne society which led, late in 1852, to a group of concerned citizens presenting a petition to the governor, Sir Charles La Trobe, asking for the establishment of a university. The petitioners hoped that the prospect of university education would keep young men at their books and away from the material and moral temptations of the rapidly growing city of Melbourne and the diggings around Ballarat and Bendigo. The colony's young Attorney General, Hugh Childers,<sup>20</sup> seized the opportunity, for the State's coffers were awash with funds. In November 1852 he placed £10,000 on the Estimates for a university and in the ensuing debate appealed to the Legislative Councillors' sense of inter-colonial rivalry. If it was good enough for Sydney to have a university, surely it was incumbent on the citizens of Melbourne to act

likewise. The Council responded by establishing a select committee with Childers in the chair, to investigate the ways and means by which a university might be established. By December 1852 the committee had recommended a university for Victoria and prepared the necessary legislation.<sup>21</sup>

Hindsight suggests that this was an extraordinary response given the nature of the times. The gold rush was at its height. La Trobe and his Legislative Council were demoralised. Ships clogged the harbour as whole crews abandoned them and headed for the diggings. Almost 100,000 people passed through the port of Melbourne in 1852, more than the new colony's total pre-gold rush population. Newly arrived families were living and dying on the banks of the Yarra river, in the streets in the city and along the tracks to the gold fields. Available water and food supplies could not sustain the influx of people and typhoid and cholera were rampant. In short, organized society in the colony of Victoria was fast crumbling and yet, in the midst of the social chaos, the government decided to found a university because revenue from gold excise and licence fees made the project affordable!

The act of parliament establishing the University of Melbourne followed the pattern of the University of Sydney legislation, but without attempting to assuage sectarian sensibilities. Australia's second university was, from its inception, 'a state university, urban, secular, professorial, non-residential and non-collegiate, centralised in government, controlled by the laity, and possessing the power to teach and to examine'.<sup>22</sup> No more than one fifth of the members of the Council were to be clergymen and none of the professors were to be in holy orders. The university bill, which Childers wrote, went through the Legislative Council largely unchallenged at the beginning of 1853. By the time the burghers of Melbourne returned from their summer break Victoria had its university legislation and the generous finance to make it a reality.<sup>23</sup> Childers clearly played a pivotal role in establishing the new university, but whether it would have eventuated if there had been no gold rush and the financial bonanza that it generated, or a rival university in Sydney to prick local pride, is problematic. There was certainly no widespread public support for a university. As in Sydney, the circumstances surrounding the birth of Melbourne's university appear to have been fortuitous at best.

### ***The University of Adelaide***

In 1872, twenty years after the foundation of the University of Melbourne and thirty-eight years after the establishment of Australia's only Wakefield settlement,<sup>24</sup> South Australia's Baptist, Congregational and Presbyterian communities united in 1872 to establish Union College, a Non-conformist seminary. Before it could provide theological studies, however, the College had to provide candidates with a general education, for there were only four boys' secondary schools in the colony at the time.<sup>25</sup> The demand for general education in the non-conformist community was overwhelming and it was soon obvious that more accommodation was required. An unlikely benefactor emerged in the ex-whaler, opium trader and copper miner William Hughes, who offered the Union College Council £20,000 to enlarge its facilities and add to its staff. In what was a truly magnanimous gesture, the Rev. James Jefferis,<sup>26</sup> a Congregational minister, member of the Council and a College lecturer, recognised the significance of Hughes' endowment and suggested that the money should be used instead to found a university for the benefit of all South Australians. Theology, Jefferis contended, could be taught in associated denominational colleges. The Union College council accepted his advice and set up the University Association with Hughes as president and the Bishop of Adelaide, the Right Rev. Dr Augustus Short, as vice president.<sup>27</sup>

Hughes believed that others would follow his example and further endow the proposed university. When it became apparent that no one would match his generosity he left the colony in disgust never to return.<sup>28</sup> The University Association then had no option but to approach the government for help, but the latter was dominated by agriculturalists and businessmen who expressed little interest in a university.<sup>29</sup> The Association eventually persuaded the government to grant land for a university on North Terrace in the heart of the city and introduce an incorporating bill modelled on the Sydney and Melbourne universities' acts. With the government on side, the Association decided not to cancel Hughes' deed of gift. Fortuitously, when the University Bill received royal assent in November 1874, the pastoralist Thomas Elder undertook to provide £20,000 for the new university's senators to invest for general purposes.<sup>30</sup>

The University of Adelaide is unique in Australasia because its principal champions were both churchmen, but the circumstances surrounding the founding of the university were as equally fortuitous as those relating to Sydney and Melbourne. Popular support for a

university in non-conformist Adelaide may have been more evident than in Sydney and Melbourne but it took an unlikely benefactor like Hughes to make it ultimately possible. Moreover, there is scant evidence to suggest that the South Australian government was initially overly keen to finance a university.

### ***The University of Otago***

The fortuitous nature of early university development in Australia also extended to Otago and Canterbury, the two earliest universities to be created in neighbouring New Zealand. There were three main reasons for the creation of the University of Otago in Dunedin in 1869. The first was the Scottish nature of the settlement and the high esteem accorded to education by the Presbyterian hierarchy. The second and perhaps the principal reason was the discovery of gold which rapidly established Dunedin as the financial capital of New Zealand in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Without gold revenues it is highly unlikely that the Otago Provincial Council would have agreed to establish a university so early in the colony's history. Finally, Presbyterian support and gold revenues might have both proved insufficient impetus for the creation of a university if it had not been for the foresight and rank political opportunism of James MacAndrew, the Otago Provincial Superintendent who, like Wentworth, appeared to be a most unlikely proponent of a university.

In their plans for the Dunedin settlement, the leaders of the Otago Association – William Cargill, George Rennie, Edward Gibbon Wakefield and the Reverend Thomas Burns - sought to plant the Scottish class structure, the Presbyterian faith and Caledonian social values, including a strong belief in the value of education, in the fertile soil of the South Island of New Zealand. From the outset, therefore, one eighth of the revenue from the 400,000 acres purchased from the Maori by the New Zealand Company for the Otago Association was to be devoted to religion and education.<sup>31</sup> Given the esteem the Scots bestowed on their universities, it was only a matter of time before some of Otago's more prominent citizens began to consider higher education for their children.

In 1865, a year after he arrived in the colony, the second rector of the Dunedin Boys' High School, the Rev. Frank Simmons suggested to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church that the Otago province should endow scholarships to allow able local students to study abroad. Two years later he presented his idea to the New Zealand House of

Representatives in Wellington and to a public meeting in Dunedin. The latter rejected his plan, preferring instead a resolution in favour of a university or college for New Zealand. However, the select committee that examined the matter for the New Zealand parliament regarded the establishment of a university as premature. Consideration of the issue might have rested there but for the Presbyterian Church of Otago. It had a standing trust fund policy that marked one third of the fund's revenues for the endowment of a literary chair at the university when it was established. In 1868, Cargill, who was a member of the Synod, led a deputation of church elders to wait on the Provincial Superintendent, James MacAndrew.

Like Wentworth before him, MacAndrew recognised the prospective university as a significant political opportunity and acted immediately. At his behest the Provincial Council established a select committee that reported in December recommending an endowment of 100,000 acres of wasteland for a university. In January 1869 the Otago Synod endowed a Chair of Moral Theology and shortly thereafter the Council set aside the recommended endowment lands and made provision for the establishment of a university in the *University of Otago Ordinance, 1869*. The expressed hope of those most concerned with the university was that it should become the University of New Zealand.<sup>32</sup> At this point it should be stressed that the move to establish a university was not backed by any evidence of popular or even market demand for university education in the first two decades of Dunedin's history.

If the University of Otago had a special champion, it was clearly James MacAndrew, the political opportunist *par excellence*. The son of an Aberdeen merchant, he was baptised in 1819, but from this point his early life is obscure. By 1845, however, he was in London where he joined the London branch of the Lay Association of the Free Church of Scotland, later called the Otago Association. He married Eliza Hunter Reynolds, the daughter of a London merchant, three years later, and then went into partnership with her brother, purchasing the iron-hulled sloop *Titan* and a cargo of trading goods, and set sail for New Zealand. Thereafter, MacAndrew's business ventures thrived as did his political career. He won an Otago Provincial Council seat in 1853, a General Assembly seat the following year, and in 1860 he succeeded Cargill as Provincial Superintendent.<sup>33</sup>

At this point MacAndrew should have been at the height of his powers, but by the end of the year he had lost interest in politics and his business acumen had deserted him. When he filed for bankruptcy in

December 1860 the Provincial Council appointed a select committee to investigate the public accounts. The committee found that public funds had been used for private purposes while Macandrew was in office, that accounting procedures in the provincial treasury were lax and that they had been so for some time. In January 1861 he was arrested and imprisoned as a debtor. Two months later he was stripped of the superintendency,<sup>34</sup> however his desire for a political career did not desert him. In 1865, he was returned to the House of Representatives. Two years later he defeated the incumbent provincial superintendent, Thomas Dick, for the position, but the central government refused to delegate the powers, including control of the goldfields, normally exercised by the superintendent. The province united behind MacAndrew and the central government was forced to withdraw its objection. MacAndrew was once more placed in the position that allowed him to exercise a commanding role in the foundation of the University of Otago.<sup>35</sup>

When Simmons petitioned the New Zealand General Assembly to create scholarships for New Zealand students tenable at universities in Great Britain or Australia, a joint committee of both Houses was set up to examine university education.<sup>36</sup> Most of the sixty university graduates consulted by the committee thought a New Zealand university was premature, including Mr Justice Chapman, who had been in Melbourne when the university was established there, but opinion was far from unanimous. George Macfarlane, a Canterbury MHR, thought the creation of a New Zealand university was 'absurd'. C.W. Richmond, a prominent judge, also opposed the idea claiming 'that it was better to remain a healthy branch than to become a stunted tree'. The view was also expressed that there was not an adequate number of students in the colony to support a university and that the cost would be prohibitive. Students were free to attend the universities in Sydney and Melbourne but there was little or no demand. It was also felt that the geography of New Zealand made any one location for a university almost an insoluble problem. At the same time there were others like Henry Tancred, another Canterbury politician, and J.V.C. Veel, who thought a university would be of great advantage to the colony.

The negative response of the select committee towards a New Zealand university did not deter those who supported the idea in Dunedin. In April 1868, with the support of the highly influential Presbyterian Synod, Macandrew proposed the establishment of a New Zealand university, to be housed in the new Post Office building in Dunedin, with an endowment of a hundred thousand acres of pastoral

land. The Provincial Council then appointed a committee to consider the proposal which, in turn, reported unanimously that the time had come to establish a College in Dunedin as the largest centre of a settled population in the wealthiest and most advanced province in the colony of New Zealand.<sup>37</sup> The report of the committee has long been neglected which is regrettable because it offers a unique insight into the progressive thought of Otago's intellectual elite in the 1860s. With a population of 200,000 which was rapidly increasing, it was believed that Dunedin could confidently expect a steady increase in wealth, and social and intellectual progress. It was also claimed, perhaps over-optimistically that Dunedin's climate was better than that in Australia and would therefore attract students from there. The presence of a university would also create a healthy stimulus to Dunedin's high schools and provincial district schools, and encourage men of culture to settle in Dunedin. Amidst the optimism there was also a note of caution. If Otago's Provincial Council did not take the initiative now another province (Canterbury!) might upstage them. The details of what form the university should take etc. remained unresolved when the Provincial Council endorsed the committee's report in June 1868. Further discussion took place in the House of Representatives which showed a swing in favour of establishing a university rather than the award of scholarships. When the Otago Provincial Council met in April 1869, MacAndrew announced that an ordinance would be submitted giving effect to the creation of a university in Dunedin. He was as good as his word and the bill became law in June 1869.

The five champions of these early antipodean universities shared few common characteristics. On the one hand Wentworth and MacAndrew were not naturally part of the ruling elite. Years of campaigning for the cessation of transportation, the introduction of trial by jury and political representation for property owners who paid taxation and his considerable personal wealth made Wentworth an influential figure despite his questionable birth. MacAndrew's bankruptcy and imprisonment isolated him from what he called 'the scions of respectability'<sup>38</sup> and only his appeal to the enfranchised working class allowed him to return to the political fray. Childers, by contrast, did not have to prove himself to any constituency: his breeding was impeccable. He stepped ashore in 1850 straight into the arms of an exclusive elite. In South Australia, the status of Jefferis and Short as men of the cloth endowed them with respectability and opened the doors of the colonial establishment. Like Childers, their university education also marked them as estimable men. Arguably, the only characteristics that all five

men shared were political acuity and the capacity to realise on opportunities that advanced their own and their community's interests. In short, they were all opportunists of one sort or another.

That these champions of the cause of higher education believed they could establish universities on the periphery of empire where avarice drove the primary instinct for survival beggars belief. How was it that they were able to move their projected universities from concepts on the floors of their various legislatures to the reality of working institutions. An answer may lie in the perception of a threat to the ruling class given the circumstances of the time. In Sydney, the certainties of pastoralism were threatened by the demands of the growing urban middle and working classes for state services and participation in government.<sup>39</sup> In Melbourne the many thousands of gold seekers passing through the port of Melbourne every year simply overwhelmed the ruling class to the point where they conceived of a university as part of the solution to the chaos that surrounded them. Even in staid Adelaide the demands of agriculture were beginning to threaten pastoral interests, while in Dunedin the Provincial Council was desperate to retain the benefits of Otago's gold rush.

Another answer lies in the nature of colonisation in the antipodes. Many thousands of settlers came to plant what they perceived to be the best characteristics of British life in virgin soil at a time when no one would again have this privilege. The university was an integral part of the educational structure in England and Scotland and an essential mechanism in the reproduction of social class and professional expertise. In South Australia altruism was part of the answer, for Jefferis and Short saw the provision of higher learning as part of their Christian mission. For the most part, however, the exercise of pure egotism is perhaps the most convincing answer. Each of the five grasped the opportunity to found a university with almost indecent haste. The universities of Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Otago are nothing if not demonstrations of the political influence these men exercised in their respective communities. They were successful because the governments of the day were essentially oligarchies dominated by the rich and powerful. In the nineteenth century universities were, by definition, institutions for the promotion of 'high culture' and professional expertise, both of which separated graduates from the '*hoi polloi*' of society.



***Canterbury enters the lists***

Canterbury was another Wakefield class settlement in the South Island but unlike Otago, its origins were English and Anglican. As the ordinance establishing the University of Otago passed through the Otago Provincial Council, some two hundred miles to the north in Christchurch, the main centre of the Province of Canterbury, a small group of intellectuals set themselves two tasks: to deny Dunedin's ambition to host the University of New Zealand and to establish their own provincial university. The hostile reaction of the Canterbury social and intellectual elite to Otago's ambitions was to be expected as the Canterbury Association had always intended that their province should have a university. Lyttelton Collegiate Grammar School, with its upper department, and Christ's College, with its elected Fellows, the Hulsean-Chichele Chair of Modern History, and the Watts-Russell Chair in Divinity, kept the idea alive in the early stages of colonisation but events in Dunedin were a rude wakeup call.

The joust between the Otago and Canterbury elites began in the colonial parliament. The William Fox government, which came to power in May 1870, set up a select committee to examine 'means to improve and better the status of the Otago University, and to extend its usefulness in the cause of general education'. Otago's parliamentary members were subsequently defeated because constitutionally the province could not control a colonial institution: their university could not be the University of New Zealand. To counter the constitutional obstacle, the Otago members moved that a colonial institution be established to absorb the provincial university. At this point it appeared that the Canterbury parliamentarians Hugh Carleton and Henry Tancred, and William Rolleston, the Canterbury Provincial Superintendent, had no counter to this measure, however, the seeds of their eventual victory were to be incorporated in the statutes of the University of New Zealand.

***The University of New Zealand***

The New Zealand University Act was passed on 12 September 1870. The new university was to receive £3,000 annually from consolidated revenue and have the power to teach, to affiliate schools and colleges, and to confer degrees. The Act also made provision for the dissolution of the University of Otago and the transfer of its endowments to the parent institution within six months. In return for this sacrifice the University of New Zealand would be established in Dunedin. The

University of Otago's Council concluded that it was under-represented on the proposed University of New Zealand Senate and recognised the threat this represented to their university's generous land endowments. As a consequence Otago's support was never forthcoming and the University of New Zealand was left without a permanent home.<sup>40</sup>

The itinerant members of the University of New Zealand Senate, who were appointed by the colonial government until such time as there were 30 graduates to elect them, then met in Dunedin. They chose Henry Tancred as Chancellor and Hugh Carleton, another Canterbury man, as Vice Chancellor. During the same series of meetings the Anglican Bishop of Canterbury, Henry Harper, successfully moved a motion that 'one University should exist in New Zealand, with affiliated Colleges'. Harper also chaired the Senate subcommittee that drew up the conditions for the registration of scholastic and collegiate institutions. The colonial university was now in a position to offer degrees but not teaching. In 1871 the University of New Zealand invited organisations interested in affiliation to apply, which indirectly fulfilled the teaching role of the institution.<sup>41</sup>

The absurdity of the homeless University of New Zealand as the second degree granting institution in the colony continued until a conference was held in Wellington in 1874. There it was agreed that the University of New Zealand should be reconstituted as an examining institute and the only degree granting authority in New Zealand. All final examinations would be set and marked in Great Britain to protect standards and to maintain fairness for candidates. Furthermore, the University of Otago would affiliate with the University of New Zealand but retain its title rather than become a university college. A second University of New Zealand Act incorporating these conditions was passed in 1874. One year later an amending act aligned the degrees that could be granted by the university to those granted by the universities of Melbourne and Sydney. Accordingly, the Royal Charter of the University of New Zealand, granted in 1876, recognised bachelors and masters degrees in arts, law, medicine and music. Thus it was that Canterbury's Anglican elite stalled Otago's Presbyterian ambitions.

### ***Canterbury University College***

The establishment of Canterbury University College was an integral part of the inter-provincial power play that established the University of New Zealand. When applicants were invited by the University of New Zealand to apply for affiliation and subsidies in 1871, applications from

the Canterbury Museum and Christ's College were rejected. William Rolleston, with the support of Carleton and Tancred, then established the Canterbury Collegiate Union, which was affiliated in April 1872. The Union received subsidies of £300 from the University of New Zealand and £350 from the Canterbury Provincial Council. This capital was used to recruit local lecturers and draw up timetables. Tancred, as the Chancellor of the University of New Zealand, delivered the Union's inaugural address at Christ's College in July 1872. Classes were held after hours and at easily accessible venues, and the public response was such that the Union quickly became a viable and popular institution preparing students for the examinations of the University of New Zealand. The success of the Union in attracting students is in direct contrast to the earlier gloomy forecasts about the lack of students to justify the creation of university institutions. The explanation is probably to be found in the emergence of part-time students attending university classes on the back of professional training. Teachers' College and law students were examples of this. Indeed, one authority has suggested that it was the teachers college students that kept the early staff at the University of Otago in business.<sup>42</sup> The preponderance of part-time students was to be an integral feature of all Australasian universities in the nineteenth century.

In 1872 the Canterbury Provincial Council set aside land reserves for higher education but the tight-fisted politicians were reluctant to vote funds for the establishment of a university college. Commonsense and the desire not to be outdone by the Presbyterians in Otago eventually prevailed and in 1873 a Bill 'to control the affairs, property, staff and discipline of the university institution, The Canterbury College' was passed. The College had a board of 23 governors, the majority of whom were at one time or another provincial or colonial politicians. Initially, there was little that the Board of Governors could do other than make proposals to the government, which remained reluctant to loosen its purse strings. By May 1874, however, the Canterbury Collegiate Union had been dissolved and Canterbury College began teaching in its own right at the start of the Trinity term.

Like Childers in Melbourne, their education and social position in English society made Tancred, Rolleston and Carlton part of the colonial establishment. Tancred, the younger son of the sixth baronet Sir Thomas Tancred of the Isle of Man, was educated at Rugby School when Thomas Arnold was the headmaster. Thereafter, he followed family tradition and obtained a commission in the Austrian army. While involved in the suppression of the 1848 revolutionary movement

Tancred suffered a badly broken jaw and returned to England to recuperate. In London with little to do, he became interested in the Canterbury Association, disposed of his commission and bought land in the projected settlement. He arrived at Lyttelton as a Canterbury pilgrim with his eldest brother in December 1850, took over Malvern Hills station in 1852 and Ashburton station in the following year. As a landowner, Tancred quickly involved himself in politics, serving on provincial and colonial parliamentary executives. However, his major interest in the new colony was education. He was elected a fellow and appointed Hulsean Chichele Professor of Modern History at Christ's College, chaired the Canterbury Provincial Council's 1863 Commission on Education, and was a member of the governing council of Canterbury University College until 1884. As Chancellor of the University of New Zealand Tancred advocated the university's external examining role, believing that teaching should be left to affiliated colleges.<sup>43</sup>

Tancred's colleague William Rolleston was born in Yorkshire in 1831, the ninth child and youngest son of the Rev. George Rolleston. He was educated at the Rossal School when John Woolley, later the first Provost of the University of Sydney, was headmaster, and at Emmanuel College, Cambridge. In 1855, much to his chagrin he obtained a second in the classical tripos and took up tutoring to acquire the capital necessary to emigrate. Rolleston believed that his family circumstances had denied him his rightful place in English society, but he did not renounce the culture and ideals of the gentry. He landed at Lyttelton in 1858 and served for a time as a cadet on the Lake Coleridge station before buying Rakaia Forks station. There he had time to read and study and is reputed to have exercised his Greek and Latin on bullock teams and the Sixth Form at Christ's College where he taught with Tancred. Rolleston sold Rakaia Forks in 1865 for some £5,000 by which time he had launched a public career. He served on the 1863 Education Commission with Tancred and on the Canterbury Education Board. However, he made his name as an administrator after he took over the provincial superintendency in November 1863 in a period of economic crisis. He held the position until he resigned in 1865, by which time the provincial accounts were in a much healthier state. Rolleston was a liberal, believing that an enlightened elite should govern in the interest of small holders and keep vested interests in check. It was in this spirit that he and Tancred supported the foundation of the University of New Zealand and Canterbury University College.<sup>44</sup>

The third number of the Canterbury triumvirate, Hugh Carleton was educated at Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge, before studying law

at the Middle Temple in London. Rather than practise, he travelled extensively before arriving in Auckland in 1845. He began his political career in the General Assembly in 1853 and in the Auckland Provincial Council in 1855, where he attacked the concept of regional government until the provincial councils were abolished in 1875. His main interest was higher education. As early as 1851, and again in 1854, he backed the idea of a colonial university to provide learned leaders capable of exercising a moral influence over the people.<sup>45</sup>

Aristocratic and gentile, Tancred, Rolleston and Carleton were of the type born and raised to rule Britain's far-flung empire. That they should find their way to the antipodes and involve themselves in colonial government was a rational response to their early life experiences. To them a university was an important part of the infrastructure necessary to build and maintain a Wakefield class settlement. Put simply, a university was an agency for the transfer of English upper-class social and cultural capital to the next generation. Accepting Otago as the University of New Zealand would have meant the acceptance of Scottish standards. Resistance from the Christchurch elite was inevitable in the circumstances and the men of Canterbury initially had geography on their side. Practical realities would ultimately dictate that the Scottish model of civic universities, with its large body of part-time students and broad based rather than narrow specialist degree structures would predominate in nineteenth century Australasian universities but in the 1870s the Anglican social elite in the colonies still subscribed to a hierarchy of Oxbridge, the Scottish universities, London, and the universities of Sydney and Melbourne in descending order.

### ***Three late comers***

The Canterbury University College legislation was passed in the nick of time. The 'grand go-ahead policy' of Julius Vogel, the colonial treasurer in the Fox government, elected in 1869, met with provincial resistance. The situation was complicated by falling commodity prices. Beginning in 1872, New Zealand wool and wheat prices dropped. The colonial government responded by abolishing the provincial councils and restricting its borrowing but its actions were not enough to save the economy. By the end of the decade earlier extravagant borrowing at the provincial and colonial levels, a poorly directed public works policy, bad financial administration and quixotic bank lending practices led the colony into a depression from which the economy was slow to recover.<sup>46</sup>

***Auckland University College***

The Auckland University College was the first university to be established under the auspices of the colonial government. In 1878, the Royal Commission into Grammar Schools and the University of New Zealand recommended that university colleges be established in the North Island at Auckland and Wellington. It was suggested that the government should select suitable sites, allocate £12,500 to each institution for buildings and establishment costs, and set aside land endowments sufficient to provide for annual incomes of £4,000. Sir Maurice O'Rorke, who chaired the Commission, advocated the cause of a university for Auckland throughout the course of the hearings, and introduced legislation to this end in the House of Representatives when he was the Speaker in 1880. It failed primarily because of clauses that would have repealed the University of New Zealand legislation, something that was anathema to those on the Senate from the South Island who now saw the national institution as the protector of university standards.<sup>47</sup>

In 1881 O'Rorke introduced a second bill without the offensive clauses. By then, the University of New Zealand Senate had agreed that colleges should be started in Auckland and Wellington in rented premises as soon as possible. O'Rorke's legislation thus became a request for funds to establish the college, with himself acting as an agent of the University of New Zealand on whose Senate he served. Even so, because of the hostility of lower-house members to yet another university, the bill did not proceed to a final reading. In 1882 Thomas Dick, the Minister for Education, introduced new legislation to provide for an annual grant of £4,000 from consolidated revenue to be paid to Auckland University College as an alternative to a land endowment. The Bill passed through both houses in September 1882 and the North Island had its first university college.<sup>48</sup>

O'Rorke was clearly the champion of the new college. Born into the Irish ascendancy in 1830, as a young man he entered Trinity College, Dublin, on an Exhibition and graduated in 1852 with honours in classics. He emigrated to Australia almost immediately and worked there as a stockman before spending time on the Victorian goldfields. In 1854 he moved to the North Island of New Zealand and farmed in partnership with a college friend Henry Taylor. O'Rorke married into politics when he wed the daughter of the first colonial treasurer, Alexander Shepherd, in 1857. Four years later he was elected to the House of Representatives and shortly after that, to the Auckland

Provincial Council. O'Rorke combined politics with his interest in education and a law practice. In the Council he campaigned for the establishment of Auckland Grammar School, which opened in 1869. As well as chairing the 1878 royal commission, he also served on the University of New Zealand Senate from 1879 until his death. The establishment of the Auckland University College in 1883 was his outstanding educational achievement and.<sup>49</sup>

### ***Victoria University College***

By the time that Victoria University College was inaugurated in Wellington at the end of the nineteenth century, government parsimony was habitual, despite the prosperity brought about by the overseas trade in refrigerated lamb. That Victoria University College in Wellington was the last institution of higher learning to be established in nineteenth century New Zealand is not surprising. Although the New Zealand Company's settlement at Wellington in the North Island predated the settlements in Otago and Canterbury, poor management, the absence of an educational trust fund as in Otago and Canterbury, and the Maori wars slowed development. Furthermore, because the land allocated to agriculture had to be cleared of forest, unlike the fertile grassed plains of the South Island, settlers struggled to survive until they harvested their first few crops. The tiny Wellington intellectual elite who wanted higher education for their children delivered within the province, long relied upon secondary schools that were affiliated with the University of New Zealand or sent their children 'home' to universities in the United Kingdom. Thus it was not until 1887 that Sir Robert Stout, an ex-Shetland Islands pupil teacher, introduced the Wellington University College Bill into the House of Representatives. In his second reading speech, Sir Robert claimed that the colony could afford a grant of only £1,500 annually for seven years and an endowment of 14,000 acres. Even so, the House threw out the Bill as overly generous.<sup>50</sup>

By 1893, when Stout was again in parliament after time spent in his legal practice in Dunedin, the country had emerged from the long depression of the 1880s and the economy was, in Beaglehole's words, 'solidly based on refrigeration'.<sup>51</sup> Although the situation seemed favourable, Stout was still unable to generate sufficient support for a university college in Wellington. In 1894 the New Zealand University Senate pressured the government for additional university education in the North Island, but made no headway until four years later when the Premier, Richard Seddon, who had always opposed the college, appeared

to have a Damascus-road like conversion. On his return from England, where he had attended Queen Victoria's jubilee celebrations, a new university bill was introduced into the House. Despite his support the ensuing debate was bitter. The proposed college was portrayed by its opponents as a waste of money while there were still children outside Wellington who had to walk long distances to access elementary schooling. Some Members argued that if the college went ahead, such children should have direct access to it by means of Queen's Scholarships. The Bill was eventually passed in early 1899 with scholarships attached and the last nineteenth century antipodean university became a reality. John McKenzie, the brother of Hugh McKenzie, Victoria College's first Professor of English Language and Literature and a determined opponent of the institution, told the Speaker: 'I ... hope, sir, that for the next twenty years we shall hear no more about universities.'<sup>52</sup> McKenzie was a strong supporter of public schools but he worried about the dangers of 'over education'. He felt that too much education encouraged people to leave their small farms and flee to the cities.

Robert Stout, rather than Richard Seddon, was the person responsible for the Victoria University College. This redoubtable Scotsman had arrived in Dunedin in 1864, shortly before his twentieth birthday, bringing with him little more than his Scottish teaching and surveying qualifications. When he couldn't find work as a surveyor, he taught and when he didn't get the headmastership he desired in 1867, he articulated himself to a legal firm, completing his articles in three rather than the customary five years. He was called to the Bar in 1871, the same year that he enrolled at the University of Otago. He lectured in law at the university between 1873 and 1875 while continuing his studies and legal practice. At the same time he entered public life and was elected to the Otago Provincial Council in 1872 and to the House of Representatives in 1875, where he was premier from 1884 until he lost his seat in 1887. He was returned in a by-election in 1893 and offered the position of Chief Justice of the Supreme Court by Richard Seddon in 1899. Stout, by then an eminent barrister, could not refuse such a position, but there is little doubt that as Premier, Seddon felt threatened by Stout's presence in the parliament. Stout maintained an interest in education throughout his life. He served as a member of the Otago Education Board and the University of Otago Council and as Minister for Education in the colonial government. He was also a member of the Senate of the University of New Zealand from 1885 until his death in 1930. Hamer suggests that Stout was that rarity in antipodean political



life: a well-read intellectual.<sup>53</sup> He was that, and very boring. Well-versed in utilitarian philosophy, he was once portrayed by the *Otago Daily Times* in an electioneering speech as giving an exhaustive and exhausting address. He was not the fastest wit off the block but his heart was in the right place. He described the state school playground as 'the great engine of democracy'. He was also highly regarded by the Presbyterian power group in Otago even though he was an atheist and ran a secular Sunday school in Dunedin for many years.<sup>54</sup>

Apart from their university and legal training, Stout and O'Rorke had in common an overweening political ambition. Stout, in particular, was also an idealist. The establishment of the university colleges in the North Island obviously enhanced their personal reputations but hindsight also suggests that without their drive and determination it is doubtful whether the colonial parliament would have established university colleges in the North Island before the turn of the century.

### ***The University of Tasmania***

The birth of the University of Tasmania was more torturous than the birth of any other nineteenth century antipodean university. In 1858, one of the promoters of Hobart High School, Dr William Croke, chanced his luck and asked the Legislative Council for £20,000 for a university. Maxwell Miller, an Oxford graduate and editor of the *Tasmanian Daily News* considered the request ridiculous and said so. What was needed in his opinion was a cheap institution, an examining body that would cost no more than £2,000 annually.<sup>55</sup> The university issue was dropped in the next year when the Tasmanian Council of Education Bill was successfully introduced into the Legislative Council. The members of the Council of Education were chosen originally by the Attorney General, Francis Smith, who attempted to balance competing religious and secular interests. The Council, however, quickly developed into a closed oligarchy 'with an Anglican Church and Tasmanian club majority' who filled subsequent vacancies to please themselves.<sup>56</sup> The Council functioned as an examining body. It offered an Associate of Arts examination, which led to the highly competitive scholarship examination, for two four-year scholarships valued at £200 *per annum* and two minor scholarships valued at £40 *per annum*. The Council also offered five exhibitions valued at £20 *per annum* for competition among students who wished to study for the Associate examination.<sup>57</sup>

A second attempt to establish a university was made in 1875, but a bill for an examining institution was introduced too late to pass through

both houses in the session and was dropped. The Bill's sponsors hoped that once established a cheap examining university would gain public support, private endowments and government grants. A third attempt in 1882, proposed that funding for the Council of Education be increased so that the institution could grant degrees. In 1885, the end of state aid to schools resulted in elementary and tertiary education competing for scarce funds and seemingly further reduced the chance of the government establishing a university in Tasmania.<sup>58</sup>

It was new blood on the Council, particularly James Blackhouse Walker, which finally brought the matter to a head, while the Fyshe government of 1887 provided the opportunity. The new Minister for Education was determined to abolish the scholarship system while a minority of council members believed that the funds released would allow for the establishment of a teaching university. Initially, the majority of council members would not countenance the change, but in 1889 the squabbling finally abated and shortly thereafter the University of Tasmania Act passed through the parliament. It gave the new institution an annual grant of £3,000 once it was operational, but no land endowment; two teaching locations – Hobart and Launceston – and a council of 18, half of whom would be elected by parliament and half by Convocation. By July 1890 the old examination system had been transformed into Junior and Senior Certificate examinations and a year later the new university had office holders. It had to wait until 1892, however, for the final Council of Education scholarships to run out so that it could fund teaching stipends.<sup>59</sup>

Two people are conspicuous among the many who played a part in the establishment of the University of Tasmania. Davis suggests that the Reverend James Scott's 'gadfly role ... forced the issue ... ensuring a university presence in an otherwise isolated state'.<sup>60</sup> Scott was the third son of a Glasgow bootmaker. He studied Arts at the University of Glasgow and then theology at the United Presbyterian Hall. He emigrated to Victoria in 1860 and was ordained after the offer of a living. Hobart called him shortly thereafter and he became the pastor of St Andrew's Church, in which role he worked to establish Officer College, a boys' secondary school. Largely because of his school, he was anxious to see a teaching institution established in Tasmania, to replace the scholarship system.<sup>61</sup> Alexander Macaulay, the University of Tasmania's first science lecturer, said of the second person, James Blackhouse Walker, that 'had it not been for his efforts the University of Tasmania would never have been born'.<sup>62</sup> Walker's contribution was in keeping with his profession. He had been admitted to the Bar in 1876

and later managed the development of the legislation and regulations that were essential to the university's operation. Despite his interest in higher education, Walker was not a graduate. He was educated at the High School in Hobart and the Friends' School in York. Walker was also Vice Chancellor of the University of Tasmania from 1889 until 1899, a crucial decade in its development.<sup>63</sup>

Two reasons can be advanced to explain why Auckland, Victoria and Tasmania developed so late. Graham suggests the most likely reason when she points out that in New Zealand, 'as the immigrant proportion of the population decreased ... the number of more cultured individuals declined ... [and] the new leaders of colonial society generally lacked a cultural awareness'.<sup>64</sup> There is nothing to suggest that circumstances were any different on the other side of the Tasman Sea. A second reason is the change in the colonial economies in the latter part of the century. By 1899 all had shifted from predominantly pastoral to predominantly agricultural economies supported by minor manufacturing. This economic change was reflected in the politics of self-government. Agricultural gerrymanders and something approaching manhood suffrage gave rise to the practical man. With little education himself, he wanted a government elementary school for his children and perhaps access to a technical or agricultural school but these schools were expensive to maintain. Universities, therefore, had to compete for funds with the ubiquitous one- and two-teacher state schools that were scattered across the countryside.

There is little, if any, evidence in the establishment of the universities in Auckland, Wellington, and Tasmania, of the influence of a social and cultural elite anxious to protect its traditional role and status in society. Instead, sound practical reasons provided the basis for an expansion of higher education. The widespread growth of state schooling generated a rising demand for school teachers while the increasing role of government in social welfare generally generated an expanded public service based on credentials obtained through higher education. The legal, medical, and accountancy professions also expanded rapidly generating further demand for professional training traditionally based in universities. Finally, geography and civic pride contributed to the creation of universities in Auckland, Wellington and Tasmania, and later still in Western Australia and Queensland.

***Foundation Professors***

The founders of the first eight antipodean universities sought out the best staff that they could afford. The University of Sydney offered generous salaries by the standards of the day but no one outdid the University of Melbourne, which offered permanent tenure, accommodation and £1,000 annual salaries. By the time the University of Tasmania came to appoint staff, however, the political climate had changed and the penurious Education Council was reduced to appointing lecturers on three-year contracts at £250 *per annum*.

The quality of the antipodean professors reflected the instructions given to the London Agents General of the various colonies. In the case of Sydney the university's agent was told to seek out a 'first class' man from either Oxford or Cambridge for classics and one of the first ten wranglers from Cambridge for mathematics. The sciences were problematic: the fledgling universities had to look to Scotland and to the English polytechnics for possible recruits. All three professors were to be men of ability capable of inducing New South Wales' youth to accept the discipline of education for its own sake.<sup>65</sup> With the convict taint so close at hand, neither of the universities of Sydney or recruited locally. Nineteen years later, however, the University Council of Otago saw fit to advertise both locally and in Britain, a practice widely followed thereafter. Indeed, by the time the University of Tasmania was in a position to recruit lecturers it didn't look beyond the antipodes. Despite changing circumstances, the quality of professorial staff recruited remained high throughout the late nineteenth century. Emigration from Britain and the scholarships made available to antipodean students to pursue graduate studies in the United Kingdom ensured that suitably qualified local candidates were often available to fill the growing number of chairs in the new universities. The job market in the United Kingdom was also severely limited, even for outstanding graduates, because of the slow expansion of university education

***Classics***

In every nineteenth century Australasian university someone was appointed to teach classics, albeit in conjunction with related subjects, including ancient history and English. University senates and their equivalents invariably sought out multi-skilled men who could turn their hand to teaching in a range of subjects in both university and extension classes, design secondary school syllabuses, and set and mark public examinations. Both John Woolley, the first Provost of Sydney

University and Professor of Classics, and Henry Rowe, Melbourne's first classicist, brought with them firsts in *Literae Humaniores*. Woolley, who was in his late thirties, had already spent some time as a moderately successful secondary school headmaster in the 1840s. Rowe, by contrast, was in his early twenties. Unfortunately he died within days of disembarking in Melbourne, leaving his employers not only out of pocket but also with the welfare of his widow on their hands. His replacement, Martin Irving, also had a First in *Literae Humaniores* and was just 25 years of age. He was also in rude good health and likely to render long service to the university council.<sup>66</sup>

George Sale, the University of Otago's classics professor, was the same age as Irving but came to academic life by a different route. He went up to Trinity College, Cambridge from Rugby and took a first in classics and a second in mathematics, remaining at the college as a tutor and sub-lecturer until 1860 when he emigrated to New Zealand. He worked as a station manager, gold miner, newspaper editor and public administrator before returning home in 1868 for unspecified family reasons. In 1870, aged 29, he was about to enter Lincoln's Inn, but was encouraged to apply for the New Zealand chair.<sup>67</sup> John Macmillan Brown, Canterbury's first Professor of Classics and English Literature, shared little in common with the sophisticated Sale. He supported himself while studying at Edinburgh and Glasgow universities before rejecting a scholarship to Balliol to study mathematics, opting instead for a Snell exhibition in classics and philosophy. He left with a second rather than the expected first because he was too ill to sit his final examination. He worked for the Geological Survey of England in Scotland before accepting the Canterbury chair. Like Sale he was 29 years old at the time of his appointment.<sup>68</sup> Later in life he dabbled successfully in the stock market and retired early. His grandson, James K. Baxter, was one of New Zealand's greatest poets.

Henry Read, the first Hughes Professor of Classics at the University of Adelaide, was born in 1831. Educated at Manchester Grammar School, Huddersfield College and St John's College Cambridge, he graduated in 1855 as seventh Smith's Prizeman. Read was ordained in the Church of England that same year before crossing the Atlantic Ocean to serve as curate at St Phillip's Church and classics tutor at the Bishop's College in Georgetown, British Guiana. Later he served at All Saints' Church in Berbice as a missionary for the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel and then at St Mary's church in Antigua. Read was appointed Inspector of Schools for British Guiana and St Kits in 1866, but ill health forced him home, thus ended a promising career in

the West Indies. Once his health was restored, the Bishop of South Australia, Augustus Short, appointed him rector of Holy Trinity Church at Lyndoch. By 1869, Read was rector of St Michael's at Mitcham, and in 1872 he began to tutor in classics at Union College.<sup>69</sup>

Thomas Tucker, who professed classics and English at Auckland University College, was appointed to his chair at 24 years of age. He had graduated equal first in the classical tripos at St John's College Cambridge in 1882.<sup>70</sup> By contrast, John Rankine Brown, who occupied the first chair of which classics was a part at Victoria University College, was almost 40 years of age at the time of his appointment. He came to the antipodes from the University of Glasgow where he was a senior lecturer in Latin. In his case the appointment to a chair was clearly a promotion. With a second in *Literae Humaniores* he had gone as far as he could in Scotland.<sup>71</sup> The University of Tasmania's classics lecturer William Williams was a graduate of Trinity College Cambridge. Like John Woolley, at the time of his appointment he was the headmaster of a boys' secondary school – Newington College – which was one of New South Wales' more notable public schools.<sup>72</sup> Brown undoubtedly saw the classics chair at Victoria College as promotion, but why Williams relinquished the headship of Newington College for a lectureship with an uncertain future in Tasmania remains a mystery.

### ***Mathematics***

As with the classicists, the majority of the foundation professors of mathematics were remarkably well qualified and young. William Wilson and Maurice Birkbeck Pell were born within a year of each other in 1826 and 1927 respectively. Both entered St John's College, Cambridge as sizars. Wilson came down as Senior Wrangler and first Smith's Prizeman in 1847. He accepted the Chair of Mathematics at Queen's College Belfast before transferring his allegiance to the University of Melbourne. Pell followed Wilson down in 1849 as Senior Wrangler and was appointed almost immediately to the Chair of Mathematics at the University of Sydney.<sup>73</sup>

Horace Lamb, first Elder Professor of Mathematics at the University of Adelaide, graduated from Trinity College, Cambridge in 1872 as second wrangler. Charles Cooke was the first 'colonial' to be appointed to a chair in an antipodean university. He migrated to Melbourne with his parents as a child and later graduated from the University of Melbourne with a BA, an LLB and an exhibition that took him to St

John's College, Cambridge, where he was sixth wrangler in 1872. He then worked towards entrance to the Bar but accepted the Chair of Mathematics at Canterbury before he could be called.<sup>74</sup>

It is difficult to understand why William Aldis, who replaced the 26 year old George Walker in the Chair of Mathematics at Auckland University College after the latter drowned while fishing with Tucker within a month of arriving, came to the antipodes. He had graduated as Senior Wrangler and 1<sup>st</sup> Smith's Prizeman from Trinity College, Cambridge in 1861, five years before his contemporary at Victoria University College, Wellington, Thomas Easterfield, was born. Despite his academic pre-eminence Aldis was ineligible for a fellowship, that necessary prerequisite to further an academic career in the ancient universities, because he was a Non-conformist. At the time of his appointment to Auckland, he was 44 years of age and had risen to be Principal of Newcastle College of Physical Science and Professor of Mathematics. As one would expect from someone so able, he had a history of publications to support his position.<sup>75</sup> In contrast, Easterfield had no such experience to offer his new university. He had entered Clare College, Cambridge on a scholarship from Yorkshire College in Leeds. He gained a first in the Natural Science Tripos in 1886 and then studied in Germany for a doctorate which he completed in 1894. In 1898, when he accepted the Victoria appointment, he was lecturing at Cambridge in chemistry, sanitary science, pharmaceutical chemistry and physics.<sup>76</sup> Easterfield seemed to have built the foundation for a secure academic career in the motherland without the need to cross the world to accept a chair but like Aldis, he too, opted to leave his homeland.

The University of Otago's foundation mathematics professor, John Shand, was the only appointee without English qualifications. He graduated from the University of Aberdeen with an MA in 1854 and accepted a tutorship at the Glasgow Academy. He taught mathematics at the Royal Academy in Gosport and at the Ayr Academy in Aberdeen before accepting the position at Otago.<sup>77</sup> Alexander McAulay, the first mathematics lecturer, who also taught physics, at the University of Tasmania had studied engineering at Owens College before entering Caius College Cambridge where he was 19<sup>th</sup> Wrangler and passed with a second in the Tripos. He tutored at Ormond College in Melbourne from 1888 until 1892 when he crossed Bass Strait to Hobart and the lectureship in mathematics.<sup>78</sup>

Richard Maclaurin was the second 'colonial' appointed to a chair in one of the eight original antipodean universities. He went to New

Zealand as a four-year old, later graduating from the Auckland University College with a first in mathematics and a scholarship that took him to St John's College Cambridge. In 1896 he was Senior Wrangler and 1<sup>st</sup> Smith's Prizeman. He was elected a fellow the following year and entered Lincoln's Inn in 1898 with a studentship. After qualifying he went to Strasburg to study philosophy. Maclaurin found that on arrival in Wellington he was required to teach law as well as mathematics, without additional salary. The parsimony of the New Zealand government had no attraction for such a brilliant scholar and accordingly in 1907 he accepted the chair of mathematical physics at Columbia University in New York.<sup>79</sup>

### ***Science***

If there was any popular justification for the nineteenth century antipodean universities it was science because science offered the possibility of an economic return. Research had the potential to demystify the problems of farming on foreign soil and that knowledge so gained would be preserved and handed on from one generation to another. Mining too needed skilled professionals - geologists, assayers, engineers and chemists - who understood the peculiarities of Australia's old landscape. Science was in its infancy in English universities in the middle of the nineteenth century and those interested in the subject gathered their vocational qualifications on the job, on the European continent, north of the border in, and in the university colleges of the English midlands. It was only in the second half of the century that scientific education found its way into the regular university curriculum.<sup>80</sup>

John Smith, who was appointed to the Chair of Chemistry and Experimental Physics at the University of Sydney, was educated at Aberdeen University where he graduated with an MA in 1843 and an MD in 1844. He visited New South Wales in 1847 as a ship's surgeon and at the time of his appointment he was lecturing in chemistry at Marishal College in Glasgow.<sup>81</sup> When Frederick McCoy was appointed as Professor of Natural Science at the University of Melbourne, he was teaching geology and mineralogy at Queen's College, Belfast. He worked for the Geological Society of Dublin after leaving school and then for the Geological Society of Great Britain and the Woodwardian Museum at Cambridge.<sup>82</sup> Ralph Tate, the first occupant of the Elder Chair of Natural Science, had a similarly diverse career before accepting his antipodean appointment. He was educated at the Royal School of



Mines and taught at polytechnics in London, Bristol and Belfast before being appointed assistant curator of the Geological Society of London. He spent 1867-8 in Central America and Venezuela on mining prospects and taught mining before coming to Adelaide.<sup>83</sup>

Auckland was the only one of the eight universities to appoint two science professors. The Professor of Chemistry and Experimental Physics, Frederick Brown studied in France and Germany as well as at the University of London and the Royal School of Mines. He had research experience at the Royal College of Chemistry and in Germany. In 1881 he was appointed Demonstrator in Chemistry at the University Museum, Oxford. He had published some 13 papers in leading German and English journals before moving to Auckland.<sup>84</sup> Algernon Thomas, his confrere and Professor of Natural Science, took a first in the Natural Science Tripos at Cambridge, the first of the antipodean professors to do so. At the time of his appointment he was biology demonstrator at the University Museum in Cambridge, where he worked under the supervision of George Rolleston, an older brother of William Rolleston, the Canterbury politician.<sup>85</sup>

### *Arts*

One can understand why people interested in the natural sciences would find Australia and New Zealand attractive because in the second half of the nineteenth century both countries were still virtually unexplored. For those professing classics, the arts and mathematics, however, the antipodes were the cultural antithesis of the motherland and Europe. The 29 year old polymath William Hearn came to Melbourne to teach modern history, English literature, political economy and logic from the classics chair at Queen's College Galway.<sup>86</sup> Duncan Macgregor, who accepted the philosophy chair at the University of Otago, was the second antipodean professor to have had wholly Scottish qualifications. He graduated from the University of Aberdeen with an MS in 1866. With a Ferguson Scholarship to support himself, he then completed an MB and CM at the University of Edinburgh. With his dual qualifications in hand he arrived in Dunedin, still only 28 years of age. He taught at the university until 1885.<sup>87</sup> At that point the Presbyterian Church dismissed him from his Chair in philosophy when it was brought to light that he was a follower of Charles Darwin.<sup>88</sup>

John Davidson, the first Hughes Professor of English Language and Literature and Mental and Moral Philosophy at the University of Adelaide was granted his chair under the conditions of the Hughes'

endowment. Davidson was educated at the universities of St Andrews and Edinburgh without taking a degree. He was granted a Licentiate of the Free Church Presbytery of Kinross in 1864 and ordained in the same year. He was called to Adelaide in 1869, and held the chair until he died of a liver complaint in 1881 at the age of 47 years.<sup>89</sup> William Jethro Brown stands in stark contrast to the ungraduated Rev. Davidson. He was the only native-born antipodean appointed. He was educated at Stanley Grammar School, a private venture institution in South Australia. He taught in the state's schools for a time before entering St John's College, Cambridge, from where he graduated with a double first in the law tripos. He was called to the bar of the Middle Temple in 1891. Work was scarce so he returned home to lecture in law and modern history at the University of Tasmania. He relinquished his Tasmanian contract in 1900 and left Australia to become professor of constitutional law and history at University College, London. He held several British appointments before returning to Australia in 1910, to the chair of law at the University of Adelaide.<sup>90</sup> Hugh MacKenzie, the first Professor of English Language and Literature at the Victoria University College Wellington was another without an English degree. He took the eight-year arts and theology course at St Andrew's University but did not seek ordination, perhaps put off by the Robertson Smith heresy hunt.<sup>91</sup> MacKenzie tutored privately for a time after graduation before taking up his chair in the city where his older brother John had been one of the opponents of the establishment of the college.<sup>92</sup>

One can only surmise why these men came to the antipodes. David Jones has suggested that they came primarily for reasons of 'sex (marriage), money, and power'.<sup>93</sup> A fellowship at one of the Oxbridge colleges was the most attractive means of access to an academic career but the competition was strong and celibacy and religious orthodoxy (Anglicanism) were requirements for most appointments. Fellowships in science were also rare and generally offered poor career prospects. Exclusion from Oxbridge, for whatever reasons, therefore, drastically limited opportunities for academic employment. At a time when Britain was increasingly producing more academics than jobs, nineteenth century Australasian universities were able to pick and choose when making academic appointments. The salaries offered in Australasian universities were also highly attractive when compared with those offered in the United Kingdom. A professorial appointment in nineteenth century Australia or New Zealand also brought with it 'an offer of power', often at an early age. The 'God-like' image of professors who ran their departments and the universities in an autocratic manner

remained firmly entrenched in Australasian academic life throughout the nineteenth and much of the twentieth century. The ambitions of youth, a sense of adventure and curiosity, and career promotion also drove some men to seek a new life in the colonies. Antipodeans like the brilliant Richard Maclaurin may also have felt that they owed something to the communities that had given them their education. Ultimately one also assumes that many academics who emigrated to the antipodes did so out of a sense of duty to the empire. Few thought that coming to Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Otago, or Canterbury would make them rich or bring them personal fame. Indeed, given that so few of the first professors moved on to other university appointments, coming to the antipodes seemingly left most of them with no alternative but to remain at their posts.

### ***Conclusion***

There was no popular movement to establish universities in the nineteenth century antipodean settlements. Nothing in the colonisation of Australia or New Zealand suggests that such a movement should have arisen. The cultural origins of colonial society are to be found in the social problems associated with Britain's industrial revolution and Irish disaffection: rural dislocation and rapid urbanisation. Rack-rents, overcrowding and abject poverty drove many residents in the working-class ghettos of the great manufacturing cities to crime. Of those caught and convicted, some were transported to New South Wales. Their guards, recruited from labourers in smaller towns and villages into the army, were of a similar class. The New South Wales Corp was, in fact, little more than a collection of military offenders and others to whom membership was offered as an alternative to courts martial. Why would such people and their immediate descendants want a university? Why would the officers who commanded them want a university for their children when they could send them home to relatives to be educated?

In New Zealand, the situation was different. Wakefield and his followers made the conscious decision to create an extension of Britain in settlements in both the South and North islands. Emigrants were chosen in such a way as to replicate the class structure of English county society, not by the vagaries of the judiciary or the military authorities as was the case in New South Wales. The equilibrium between labour and capital was set by the price of land. A sufficient price was deemed to be one that was low enough to attract farmers and others with capital, but high enough to discourage labourers from acquiring it

too easily. Each settlement was to have a land owning rural gentry, an adequate supply of motivated labour, and the necessary professionals and artisans to support them. Maintenance and replication of the social classes required British institutions of which the university was one, hence the intent to establish higher education was there from the outset. However, neither transportation nor the romantic Wakefieldian notion of a fragment of British society transposed to the antipodes can explain the sudden appearance of the University of Sydney.

Part of the answer lies in changes in the post-penal political climate of New South Wales between 1840 and 1850. The British government continued to look to emigration to resolve some of the social problems of its industrial cities. The poor were encouraged to leave their motherland and seek a new life elsewhere. Many of those who found their way to Sydney brought with them Chartist ideals, including manhood suffrage. This democratic prospect drove wealthy emancipists and the exclusives in the Legislative Council to find common interest in maintaining their control of the state. As a consequence, Wentworth led moves to frame a new constitution for the colony which became law in 1853. It maintained the squatters' powerful political position. Similar constitutions were introduced in each of the colonies in the 1850s.

The opportunity to establish a university in Sydney came at a time when the wealthy and conservative landowners were reinforcing their power in New South Wales. The Council's understanding of the matter was simply that a university was essential for the maintenance of high culture in the colony which distinguished the ruling elite from the masses. Wentworth jumped at the opportunity to provide an instrument that would assist in the maintenance of a colonial social elite.<sup>94</sup> The Senate of the University of Sydney, drawn from that elite, decided that if they were to have a university its staff at least should be the best the motherland could provide. Only men with firsts from Oxford and the top wranglers from Cambridge would meet their requirements. What seems amazing a century and a half later is their assumption that they could attract such men and the fact that they did so.

The University of Sydney's foundation professors - Woolley, Pell and Smith - were typical of subsequent appointments made by each of the early antipodean universities. These men were agents of British intellectual culture as propounded in England's ancient universities and they came to Sydney knowing that they would have to devise ways and means for the transmission of this culture in an alien environment. Woolley was a good scholar but an indifferent schoolmaster for whom

Sydney may have been an escape. Pell was a brilliant young mathematician, born in the USA, who may have felt an affinity for the colonies, but only Smith had any knowledge of the population and the physical conditions that the trio might face in Sydney. Despite a buyer's market it does seem, in hindsight, remarkable that the quality of those who came to the antipodes to occupy chairs was so consistently high. One must ask why such men continued to come to an alien environment where practical rather than intellectual skills were held in the highest esteem. Seemingly they came to serve the few, the growing intellectual elite, who valued education and who could afford to educate their children beyond the rudiments of primary schooling.

For the most part the Australian universities trusted the professors they recruited to establish, teach and examine the curricula they devised, derived no doubt from the courses they taught or were taught themselves as students. The development and maintenance of academic standards were, of course, the responsibility of the various professorial boards. There was no such trust in New Zealand, except at the time of the establishment of the University of Otago. In response to the attempt by the University of Otago to become the University of New Zealand, the men of Canterbury insisted that the University of New Zealand appoint external examining authorities. By external they meant English authorities. It was a strange arrangement. Every year for more than half a century examination scripts were parcelled up and sent to the other side of the world for marking because the suspicious University of New Zealand authorities did not trust their well-qualified professors to examine their own students. It may be an artefact of the New Zealand psyche that it needed to impose such controls on its professors. The small size of New Zealand's population may have been the reason but presumably the practice would have been discontinued if New Zealand had joined the Australian federation in 1901. Sending examination scripts to Britain ensured that academic standards were comparable to those 'at home' but it can also be argued that it was a classic example of colonial 'cringe' or the fear of going it alone. Australian universities, by contrast, coped without the annual stamp of approval from the motherland. Ultimately, the practice was destroyed by Adolf Hitler's navy when the ship carrying the examination papers was sunk off the coast of South America.<sup>95</sup>

A variety of reasons contributed to the establishment of the early universities in Australasia. Mineral discoveries were significant in the founding of the universities of Melbourne, Otago and Adelaide. The Victorian gold rush provided the funds to set salaries and conditions

that attracted professors from the fledgling Queen's Colleges in Ireland to the University of Melbourne. Revenue from the Otago gold rush also made it possible to establish the University of Otago, while the University of Adelaide, was made possible by the wealth derived from copper mines in the Mt Lofty Ranges and the generosity of its benefactors. Gold was also important in the subsequent development of these universities because the rushes attracted the professionals and skilled artisans who made up the majority of the students who enrolled in them in the early years.

Canterbury University College was the only institution born out of religious and inter-provincial rivalry. The possibility of a single teaching university based in Dunedin - that Scots, and Presbyterians to boot, should have the exclusive right to educate New Zealand's youth - was too much for the Anglicans in Canterbury to countenance. The religious factor also figured in the establishment of Sydney University but it quickly became apparent that the elite which would support the university was too small to sustain a collegiate organisation. The alternative - a secular teaching institution, which the various religious groupings were forced to accept - subsequently became the norm for all universities in the Australian colonies.

Pragmatism drove the establishment of Auckland University College, the University of Tasmania and Victoria University College in Wellington. It was inevitable, based on population growth in Auckland and Wellington, and the increasing number of students being prepared for both matriculation and the degree examinations of the University of New Zealand, that the North Island would eventually have its own university colleges. Similarly in Tasmania, the number of students sitting for Council of Education examinations indicated a small but growing clientele of potential university students.

Arguably, the most important single factor in the origins of all eight universities was the individuals who championed their cause; men who had little in common except their initiative and foresight. Wentworth, O'Rorke, Stout, and Blackhouse were lawyers, Scott, Jefferis and Short were clergymen, and all had degrees from institutions as diverse as Oxford, London and Glasgow. Carleton and Rolleston were English gentry and colonial property owners with Cambridge degrees. Their aristocratic colleague Tancred, seemingly did not attend university after leaving Rugby to join the Austrian army, but he too was a wealthy member of Canterbury's landowning class. MacAndrew stands out in this group. He came to New Zealand comparatively uneducated and

established himself by wit alone. The group also had diverse religious affiliations: Stout, Scott and MacAndrew were Prebyterians, Jefferis was a Congregationalist, Blackhouse was a Quaker, and the rest were members of the Church of England.

What this group did have in common was their ability to recognise the role of a university in building and maintaining a social class structure reminiscent of 'home'. For them this was the main purpose of higher education. Its economic role was secondary. Any portrayal that they may have made of a university as a democratic institution needs to be treated with caution. University degrees were available only to students who could afford to matriculate at a time when there were few secondary schools. Once matriculated, they had to be able to afford university fees, find transport to lectures and the money to buy their textbooks. In every colony the number of people initially able to meet these conditions and maintain the motivation to study in the colonial environment was few. Only in later years as the demand for school teachers and other miscellaneous public servants grew did the number of students increase and their social backgrounds diversify.

### ENDNOTES

1. An initial draft of this paper was first presented at the annual conference of the Australia New Zealand History of Education Society, Brisbane, Dec. 2004.
2. For the purpose of this paper, the university colleges of the University of New Zealand are treated as universities in their own right. They were established in nineteenth century colonies whose economies were predominantly pastoral. Moreover, they were geographically isolated from each other and also precursors of both systemic elementary and secondary education. The English, Welsh and Scottish university colleges that were established in the latter part of the nineteenth century could also be treated as universities in their own right; they also had their own administrations and professorial chairs, but they were fundamentally different because they were a direct response to industrial development in Britain and also integrated with already established school systems.
3. This democratic idealisation underpins Barcan's *A History of Australian Education*, Melbourne, OUP, 1980. See in particular pp.403-410. See also Marginson's first component of the democratic tradition 'there is an egalitarian assumption that every student is a citizen with equal rights, entitled to an education as good as that received by any other student.'

- S. Marginson, *Education and Public Policy in Australia*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 20
4. S. Rothblatt, The writing of university history at the end of another century, *Oxford Review of Education*, Jun 97, Vol. 23, No. 2, p 1.
  5. W.J. Gardner, *Colonial cap and gown: studies in the mid-Victorian universities of Australasia*. Christchurch, University of Canterbury, 1979, p. 10.
  6. J. Gascoigne, The Cultural Origins of Australian Universities, *Journal of Australian Studies*, Nos 50-51, 1996, pp.18-27.
  7. R.J.W. Selleck *The Shop: The University of Melbourne, 1850-1939*, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 2003.
  8. M. Roe, 1830-1850, in Frank Crowley, (Ed.) *A New History of Australia*, Melbourne, William Heinemann, 1980, pp. 95-96.
  9. A. Barcan, *A History of Australian Education*, Melbourne, Oxford University Press, 191980, pp. 47-48. The 'exclusives' were free settlers in Australia while the 'emancipists' had come to the colony as convicts.
  10. Barff, *op. cit.*, p.3.
  11. Scott to Bathurst, 30 March 1824. Governors' Despatches, Vol. 5, 1823-4, A 1194, pp. 709-60. (M.L.), in A.G. Austin, *Select Documents in Australian Education 1788-1900*, Melbourne: Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons Ltd, 1963, p. 7.
  12. Barff, *op. cit.*, p.2.
  13. J.C. Beaglehole, *The University of New Zealand: an historical study*, Auckland, New Zealand Council for Educational Research, 1937, pp. 54-58, 85, and 94-5.
  14. J. Ritchie, *The Wentworths: father and son*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1999, pp. 51-52.
  15. C. Turney, U. Bygott and P. Chippendale, *Australia's First: a history of the University of Sydney*, Sydney: Hale and Iremonger, 1991, pp. 29-38.
  16. H.C. Barnard, *A history of English education from 1760*, London, London University Press, 1971, p112.
  17. *Ibid.*, pp. 40-44.
  18. *Ibid.*, pp. 47-52.
  19. *Ibid.*, p.53
  20. Like many young Englishmen Hugh Culling Eardley Childers came to the antipodes to secure his financial future. He arrived in October 1850, within months of coming down from Cambridge, with a letter of introduction to La Trobe from the Secretary of State for the Colonies Earl Grey in his pocket and a new wife on his arm. Childers acted as the Inspector of Denominational Schools for a short period before La Trobe appointed him to the post of Attorney General, a position that gave him a seat on the Victorian Legislative Council. Childers was subsequently elected as the first Vice Chancellor and retained the post until he returned to Britain in 1857.



21. *Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.
22. R. J. W. Selleck, *The Shop: The University of Melbourne 1850-1939*, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 2003, p.27
23. E. Scott, *A History of The University of Melbourne*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1936, pp. 1-11.
24. Wakefield contended that by making colonial lands available at 'a sufficient price' and controlling the quality of labourers permitted to emigrate the class integrity of British society could be maintained in new settlements. See A. J. Harrop, *The amazing career of Edward Gibbon Wakefield*, London, George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1928, pp. 64-82.
25. The schools included St Peter's (Church of England), St Aloysius' (Roman Catholic), Prince Alfred College (Methodist) and the newly opened St Francis Xavier's Seminary (Roman Catholic).
26. James Jefferis was born in Bristol in 1833 and educated at Bristol Grammar School before entering the family cabinet-making and undertaking business. He refused an offer from a family member to support him through Cambridge or Oxford on condition that he join the Church of England because he felt the call to dissent. In 1855 he completed a BA at the University of London and an LLB a year later. He refused an invitation from the London Missionary Society to serve in India, preferring instead to serve at Saltaire, the model village built by Sir Titus Salt for the workers in his mill near Shipley in West Yorkshire. Shortly afterwards Jefferis was found to have tuberculosis and accepted the call to Adelaide. He was ordained in December 1858 in the Congregational Chapel in Westminster and left soon after with his new wife. Once settled in North Adelaide his health improved and he became a charismatic pastor who took an active role in federation politics as well as education. *ADB*, Vol.4, 1851-1890 D-J, pp. 473-4.
27. W. G. K. Duncan and Roger Ashley Leonard, *The University of Adelaide 1874-1974*, Adelaide, Rigby, 1973, p. 2. See also Sir William Watson Hughes 1803-1887, *Australian Dictionary of Biography (ADB), Vol 4, 1851-1890*, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1972, p. 440 and Rev. James Jefferis, *A D B Vol. 4, 1851-1890, D-J*, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1972, p. 473.

Augustus Short was a child of the English establishment. Born in 1802, he was educated at Westminster School and Christ Church College,, Oxford, where he was influenced by the Tractarian movement. He was ordained in 1827 and arrived in South Australia twenty years later. He soon expressed an interest in education by transforming the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge school, that existed in conjunction with Trinity Church, into the Collegiate School of St Peter, the foundation stone of which he laid in May 1849. St Peter's, which attracted boys from as far afield as Western Australia and the inland pastoral country of central Australia, was well established when the

opportunity to establish the University of Adelaide presented itself.<sup>27</sup> Short's involvement in the establishment of the University of Adelaide was the logical extension of his earlier educational activity.

28. *ADB, op. cit.*
29. G. L. Buxton, 1850-1870, in Crowley, *op.cit.*, p. 176.
30. Duncan and Leonard, *op. cit.*, pp. 3-5.
31. W. P. Morrell, *The University of Otago: a centennial history*, Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 1969, pp 1-2. Subsequent details of the founding of the University of Otago are largely derived from Morrell.
32. *Ibid.*, pp. 5-7.
33. Erik Olssen, MacAndrew, James 1819(?), *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, updated 16 December 2003. <http://www.dnzb.govt.nz>
34. McLintock, *op. cit.*, pp. 434-435.
35. Olssen, *op.cit.*
36. Report of the Select committee on the establishment of University Scholarships, *Appendices to the Journals of the NZ House of Representatives (1867)*, F.1, pp.3-72
37. Select Committees III- College, *Otago: Votes and Proceedings Session XXIV (1968)* pp.9-20.
38. McLintoch, *op. cit.*, p. 506.
39. The Constitution Act of 1842 granted NSW a 36 member Legislative Council, 24 members elected on a £20 franchise and 12 nominated by the governor. Candidates for election had to own substantial wealth and electorates favoured the squatters. Roe, 1830-1850, in Crowley, *op. cit.*, p. 90.
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47. K. Sinclair, *A History of the University of Auckland 1883-1983*, Auckland, Auckland University Press, 1983, pp. 14-20.

48. *Ibid.*
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50. J. C. Beaglehole, *Victoria University College: an essay towards a history*, Wellington, New Zealand University Press, 1949, pp.11-14.
51. *Ibid.*, p.10.
52. *Ibid.* p. 21.
53. D. Hamer, Stout, Robert 1844-1930, *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, updated 16 December 2003, [.http://www.dnzb.govt.nz](http://www.dnzb.govt.nz)
54. McKenzie, private correspondence.
55. R. Davis, *Open to Talent: the centenary history of The University of Tasmania 1890-1900*, Hobart, University of Tasmania, 1990, pp. 5-6.
56. *Ibid.*
57. *Ibid.*
58. *Ibid.*, p,10.
59. *Ibid.*, pp. 18-20
60. *Ibid.*, p.23
61. *ADB*,
62. Cited in Davis, *op. cit.*, p. 27.
63. <http://guttengerg.net.au/dictbiog/O-dict-biogWa.html>
64. J. Graham, Settler Society, in Oliver and Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 131.
65. Turney *et al.*, *op. cit.*, p. 61.
66. *Ibid.* pp. 69-70 and Sellick, *op. cit.*, p.32 and p. 50. Irving left to become headmaster of Wesley College in 1871 to become headmaster of Wesley College. <http://gutenburge.net.au/dictbiog/O-dict-biogI-K.html>
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69. J. Trevaskis, Henry Read 1831-1888, *ADB*
70. K. Sinclair, *A History of the University of Auckland 1883-1983*, Auckland, Auckland University Press, 1983, p. 20.
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73. Turney *et al.*, *op. cit.*, p. 65 and Scott, *op. cit.*, pp. 23-4.
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75. Sinclair, *op. cit.*, pp 22-23.

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URL:<http://www.dnzb.govt.nz>
80. See Thomas Huxley, Universities: actual and ideal, 1874, in Thomas Huxley, *Science and Education*, New York: The Citadel press, 1964, pp. 165-207.
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<http://www.dnzb.govt.nz>
86. <http://www.unimelb.edu.au/150/150people/hearn.html>
87. M. Tennant, MacGregor, Duncan 1843-1906. *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, updated 16 December 2003 :<http://www.dnzb.govt.nz>
88. McKenzie, private correspondence
89. In 1875 the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* published an article 'Bible ' written by William Robertson Smith, the Professor of Hebrew at the Aberdeen Free Church College. In it the author challenged the assumed divine revelation of the prophetic writings. The General Assembly of the Free Kirk initiated an inquiry or heresy hunt that concluded five years later. Robertson Smith escaped with an admonition, but when another volume of the *Encyclopaedia* appeared with Roberston Smith's latest article, 'Hebrew Language and Literature', which was equally offensive, he was dismissed. Robertson Smith's dismissal did not affect his career unduly. He took over the editorship of the *Encyclopaedia* and saw it to its completion in 1889. Prior to this, in 1883 he was appointed Lord Almoner's Reader in Arabic at Cambridge University, two years later he became the University Librarian and in 1889 he won the Chair of Arabic. 'Robert Louis Stevenson and William Robertson Smith: A Study in Contrast', <http://www.gkbenterprises.fsnet.co.uk/papers/rlswrs.htm>
90. <http://gutenberg.net.au/dictbiog/0-dict-biogBr-By.html#home>

91. 'Robert Louis Stevenson and William Robertson Smith: A Study in Contrast', <http://www.gkbenterprises>.
92. Beaglehole, *op. cit.*
93. David R. Jones, Antecedents: The Origins of the Australasian Professoriate, paper presented at the annual conference of the Australia New Zealand History of Education Society, Hamilton, New Zealand, August 1983. Typescript.
94. The first matriculant on the roll in 1852 was 19 year old Fitzwilliam Wentworth, who resided with his father. G.L. Fischer, *the University of Sydney 1850-1975: some history in pictures to mark the 125th year of its incorporation*, Sydney: The University of Sydney, 1975, p. 15.
95. McKenzie, private correspondence