

FROM THE ARCHIVES

SPEECH DAY - 1910

The Speech Day was held in the afternoon and took place on the lawn in front of the Headmaster's residence. At that time the house occupied the ground where the Middle School now stands. It was a grandiose old Queenslander with high set, wide verandahs and a sweeping, majestic staircase leading up to the verandah. The Headmaster, Mr P.F. Rowland, and invited guests sat on the verandah while parents, friends and students were seated on the lawn below. Space would not have been a problem as there were only eighty-six students in attendance, thirty-eight being boarders.

After speeches by the Chairman of the Board of Trustees and the Headmaster afternoon tea was served and the parents and friends had the opportunity to see the additions and improvements that had been made to the School facilities. Afternoon tea was followed by the Senior School gymnastic competition and then everyone returned to the Headmaster's house and lawn area where a cultural programme had been arranged. The cultural programme opened with a poem *Pompeius before Pharsalia* recited in Latin by a young student, R. Grant, and this was followed by extracts from various plays. The extracts were from Molière's *Les Précieuses Ridicules* [in French], Aristophanes' *Frogs* [in Greek] and Sheridan's *The Critic*. It is interesting to note that the leading role in all the above extracts was played by a Lower Sixth student, **A.R. Brookes**. Mr Rowland always believed that Brookes would be Grammar's second Rhodes Scholar after George Hall but Brookes was tragically drowned during a University vacation while rescuing three girls from the surf at Southport.

Mr Rowland's speech was probably the most important one he had made up to this stage in his long tenure as the Headmaster. Much of the speech revolved around the opening of the new university in Brisbane in 1911 and that in 1910 schools in Queensland had to face a new examination system. Prior to 1910 students had to write examinations set by the University of Sydney. Of major concern to Mr Rowland was that the Form IV and Form VI examinations set in Brisbane were to be written at the same time. The Sydney examinations for Form IV were written in mid-year and the Form VI examinations at the end of the year. As Mr Rowland noted Grammar had a small staff and thus they could concentrate on the mid-year examinations before turning their attention to the end of year examinations. Furthermore, the examinations set in Brisbane went well into December and as pointed out in his speech most students had to write examinations until the week before Christmas before they could finish school for the year. Another aspect he found annoying was in the setting of the questions. An example he used was in the French examination where a compulsory question was for students to write an essay in French describing the Brisbane River.

Mr Rowland then went on to criticize the altering of the curriculum and the marking structure instigated by the University of Queensland. In the University of Sydney examinations Latin and Greek were allocated 250 marks while all the other subjects were allocated 150 marks. This meant that students studying the classics had a marked advantage over non-classical students. In the newly enacted University of Queensland regulations English, Chemistry, Physics, Latin and Greek were allocated 150 marks and all other subjects 100 marks. Much to the annoyance of Mr Rowland, students were only allowed to take three of the subjects allocated 150 marks. Mr Rowland's concern centred on the fact that most students would no longer study the classics much to the detriment of the Grammar School ethos that he had as a core of his educational philosophy.



Miss McKenzie

On a happier note, Mr Rowland was particularly gushing about the academic progress of two girl students. One was **Miss McKenzie** who was to become the first Grammar girl student to attend university. She was later to join the Grammar staff as a teacher. The other was Miss Tuffley who had a remarkable education. During the day she worked as a teacher in her father's school and then she attended Grammar in the late afternoon for tutorials. As Mr Rowland pointed out she did very well in her Form IV Junior Examinations passing in ten subjects and gaining honours in three of the subjects. Two other prominent students in Form IV were **A.P. Dodd** who went on to a distinguished career as an entomologist being awarded the MBE and OBE for his services to agriculture and **L. Wackett** who was later to become the father of the Australian aviation industry and was knighted for his services to that industry. Dux of the School in 1910 was **J.A. Reye** who became the first Grammar student to be awarded a Queensland Open University Scholarship.

Grammar had a successful year in sport, particularly cricket where the School played in the Senior Men's Competition. In summing up Mr Rowland stated that the School had had a successful year especially as it had been inspected by Mr Roe, the Chief Superintendent of the Queensland Education Department who had found very little to criticize. In conclusion Mr Rowland farewelled two prominent staff members in **M. Moyes** who was a few years later to be a member of Mawson's first expedition to the Antarctica and **D. MacGregor** who was tragically killed during the first landing at Gallipoli on April 25, 1915.



J.A. Reye

MR BILL MULLER
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