

STAFF IN 1909

If Charles Dickens were alive today he would perhaps write about the month of November in the School, with apologies to the *Tale of Two Cities*, as "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times". It could be seen as the best of times as many students are graduating and looking forward to an exciting future, others are preparing to go on a long and hopefully exciting vacation while it could be seen as the worst of times as some staff and students leave the school for a final time while others say goodbye to friends who have, at times, been close over the years.

In the first decade of Mr Rowland's time as Headmaster [1905-1915] it could be argued that the end of each year was the worst of times for the School. It was a period when it was extremely difficult to attract teachers of ability and when he was able to do so they would not stay long. Townsville at that time was a long way from the centres of Australian education: the closest university was in Sydney [until 1911] and the closest school with similar philosophies to Townsville Grammar was in Rockhampton. Travel was difficult as there was no rail line south and the only way to reach Brisbane was by sea. All this, however, did not deter Mr Rowland and when he retired in 1938 he wrote a letter to the Townsville Bulletin in which he said: "I can fairly claim to not have been unsuccessful in my choice of Assistants; of course, there have been failures, but it was not easy in the early days to tempt men to come north. But I made no mistake in appointments of men like T.D. Kay, M. Moyes, D.N. MacGregor, R.G. Lanskey, C.R. McLean, T.B. Whight and so forth." The latter three are all past students of the school but for the final *From the Archives* I would like to write about the first three Assistants mentioned. All three taught at Grammar in the period 1907-1910.

MORTON MOYES [1909-10] joined the staff after graduating in geology at the University of Adelaide. Moyes was a good science teacher, and also a very capable athlete, managing to represent Queensland in the high jump at the Australian Athletics' Championship. While at the University of Adelaide he had encountered Douglas Mawson as a lecturer and consequently joined Mawson's journey to Antarctica in 1911. It was during this expedition that he had to endure nine weeks of solitude at base camp while the rest of the group were exploring the surrounding areas. Returning to Adelaide he studied to be a meteorologist before joining the Aurora, a ship that went in search of six members of Shackleton's Trans-Antarctica Expedition. As a result of his work in the Antarctica he was awarded Polar Medals in 1914 and 1917. He was to win a third Polar Medal in 1934 while working as a Survey Officer in the Antarctica. He was awarded an OBE in 1935 for his work on the BANZ Antarctica Research Expedition.

In between exploring the Antarctica, Moyes served in the navy reaching the rank of Captain as well as becoming Head of the University Coaching College in Sydney. When he retired from the Navy in 1946 Moyes was appointed by the Commonwealth Government to become the Chief Rehabilitation Officer for that body. It is estimated that until his retirement in 1951 he was responsible for retraining 11,000 ex servicemen and women. Townsville Grammar was certainly fortunate to have a teacher of Moyes' ability join the staff albeit for a short period only.

As a side issue it is worth pointing out that Moyes was one of three brothers who achieved success during their lifetime. Moyes' oldest brother became the Anglican Bishop of Armidale in New South Wales and while ambitious to be an archbishop, was regarded as too outspoken to be appointed to such an exalted position. The middle Moyes brother was Johnny Moyes, the New South Wales cricketer but far better known as one of the greatest cricket commentators Australia has ever had. He worked for the ABC for many years in that role.

T.D. KAY [1907-09] and **D.N. MacGREGOR [1908-1911]** were close friends while teaching at the School. Kay was a Mathematics teacher and hailed from Tasmania where he had twice been runner-up to the Rhodes Scholar award in that state. Kay was a talented cricketer and was a stalwart of the School team that played in the local competition. On leaving Grammar he joined the staff of Scots College in Melbourne as Head of Mathematics and had a distinguished teaching career at that school.

Various school magazines of the time describe D.N. MacGregor as one of the most talented sportsmen in North Queensland. A cricketer of some note he was better known as a rugby union player. He taught Science at a senior level and was heavily involved in the setting up of the Cadet Corps at the School. On leaving Grammar he joined the staff of Newington College in Sydney before joining the AIF. Holding the rank of Company Sergeant Major MacGregor was killed during the first landing at Gallipoli on 25 April, 1915.

Both Kay and MacGregor displayed a great sense of adventure and this attitude was reflected when they set out to cycle from Townsville to Sydney during the December break in 1909. The reader should keep in mind that the roads nearly one hundred years ago were not very good while towns were few and far between. Furthermore, the quality of bicycles at the time would also be of a sub standard compared to those of the modern era. MacGregor reached Rockhampton before catching a train to Brisbane while Kay continued as far south as Newcastle in NSW before his bicycle fell apart!

MR BILL MULLER
School Archivist