

# Obituary

ALEXANDER HUGH McDONALD

Alexander Hugh McDonald (Honorary Fellow, 1975) died in Western Australia on 10 July 1979. McDonald's personal quality and contributions to scholarship are well known.

Born in Auckland in 1908, he was educated at the Auckland Grammar School, the University of Auckland and at Cambridge University. His record at school and at University had been distinguished by brilliance in the classics. At Cambridge he became a scholar of Clare College and worked in both textual criticism and in ancient history. These foundation studies under B. L. Hallward and N. G. L. Hammond remained the inspiration of his career as a classical scholar. Two semesters at Göttingen under Professor Kahrstedt confirmed his commitment to textual criticism and ancient history, by introducing him to the study of the sources and composition of Livy, Books XXXI-XLV. Back in Cambridge he continued that work under Professor Adcock and gained his PhD for a work on the sources of Livy XXXI-XLV in 1938.

It must have been a wrench for him to leave England, where he had a Lectureship in Ancient History at Nottingham, and return to the antipodes, remote from the sources for his study. But McDonald, a good New Zealander, was anxious to come back to his own part of the world and Sydney gave him the opportunity of doing so. Moreover, he had a missionary zeal as a teacher of ancient history, philosophy and archaeology for which Sydney provided an opening when it appointed him as Reader in Ancient World History in 1939.

The outbreak of the Second World War in 1939 found him ready to take a highly modern view of things. During the war he was a major figure in the ARP services of the University, took an active part in Army education programmes, was Supervisor of Studies for the Burma Civil Service Probationers, assisted British and Australian Government Departments in a variety of ways and also kept alive the good work that he had started as a University teacher.

Before the War ended McDonald had been appointed Acting Professor of Latin, following the death in harness of Frederick Augustus Todd. On 6 November 1944 Senate, on the motion of the Vice-Chancellor, appointed McDonald as Professor of Ancient World History (a personal Chair) and also Acting Professor of Latin. McDonald did work in the Latin Department, encouraging young scholars, revising the curriculum and teaching methods of the Department, and obtaining University recognition of the superb achievements of George P. Shipp who was appointed Reader in Comparative Philology and later Professor of Greek.

McDonald continued as Acting Professor of Latin until 1947 when another ancient historian, R. E. Smith, was appointed to the Chair.

The War turned McDonald's interest to contemporary affairs, an easy transition in a Department of History presided over by Stephen H. Roberts. McDonald wrote articles, made broadcast speeches, wrote a pamphlet called *Fact and Fiction in Japanese Imperialism* and became prominent in the Australian Institute of International Affairs. Later he was to be founding editor of the Institute's journal, *The Australian Outlook*, and to be editor of a book published under the auspices of the Institute (and the Institute of Pacific Relations). Entitled *Trusteeship in the Pacific* (Sydney 1949), the book had chapters by McDonald himself, as well as by the late J. P. McAuley and three other contributors.

In the post-war years McDonald had an active partnership with Arthur Dale Trendall who was then Professor of Greek and Professor of Archaeology. They shared public lecture courses, given under the auspices of the University Extension Board, on classical archaeology, to raise funds for the Nicholson Museum.

Late in 1951 McDonald accepted an invitation to return to Cambridge as a University Lecturer and Official Fellow of Clare College. His twenty years and more in Cambridge were productive in scholarship. Books XXXI-XXXV of Livy were published as Volume V of the Oxford Classical Texts in 1965. A book on *Republican Rome* appeared the next year. McDonald contributed to a number of books and wrote some major articles in the *Journal of Roman Studies* with considerable regularity from 1937 to 1944 and again from 1952 to 1975. He was President of the Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies from 1971 to 1972 and from 1973 to 1974. He had many times been a member of the Society's Council and editorial committee. He was made an Honorary Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities in 1975.

In retirement McDonald settled in Western Australia at Crawley and became an Honorary Research Fellow of the University of Western Australia.

*John M. Ward*