GEORGE SAMUEL SALE AND OTHER STORIES

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Abstract. George Samuel Sale was a remarkable man. He was educated in England at Rugby School and at Trinity College, Cambridge before coming to New Zealand out of a sense of adventure. He was successively sheep-farmer, newspaper editor, provincial treasurer and goldfields commissioner before being appointed to the Classics Chair at the newly founded University of Otago in 1871. He had an immense influence on the development of the fledgling university until his retirement in 1907.

We have a large framed photograph of George Sale at home in our sitting room, a formidable figure with a full grey beard, a stern look, and piercing blue eyes (it’s actually a black and white photo but I’m sure his eyes were a piercing blue or perhaps a steely grey).\(^1\) When I explain to visitors that this was the first Professor of Classics at Otago University and I am the sixth (I’m now of course having to get used to saying ‘I was the sixth’), I often find myself remarking that I have grave difficulty in living up to the image. Sale was actually aged seventy-five at the time of this photograph, which gives me a few years to develop the beard, but I don’t think I’m going to make it.\(^2\)

I fully realised what a remarkable man Sale was when I undertook to write up his career for the new Dictionary of New Zealand Biography.\(^3\) He was born in May 1831 at Rugby in the English West Midlands, and at the age of eight went to Rugby School, where his father, John Sale, was Writing Master under the great headmaster Thomas Arnold. It was Arnold who established the nineteenth century public school ideals, sometimes summed up in the phrase ‘muscular Christianity’, including moral principle, gentlemanly conduct, intellectual achievement, and manly sporting prowess. In fact Arnold left Rugby for Oxford soon after George Sale became a pupil there, and Sale’s schooldays were largely spent under another formidable headmaster, Archibald Tait, who later became Archbishop of Canterbury.

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\(^1\) This article originated as a talk given to the Classical Association of Otago and the Association of Friends of the Otago Museum on 13 June 2002. It is here reproduced with only minor changes and the addition of footnotes.

\(^2\) For this photograph see figure 1.

We don’t have much documentary evidence of Sale’s schooldays. He will certainly have learned Latin from the age of eight (if not before) and probably Greek soon afterwards. He will have taken part in the kind of activities immortalised in *Tom Brown’s Schooldays*, written by Thomas Hughes, who was a boy at Rugby just before Sale’s time, including of course the cricket match described there, which bears a reasonable resemblance to the modern game, and the Rugby Football match, which bears very little resemblance at all to rugby as we know it today.

From Rugby Sale went up in March 1850 to Oxford, to University College, thus making the first big mistake of his life, which to his credit he was quick to rectify, transferring after only six months to Cambridge, where he became an undergraduate at Trinity College. In those days one went up to Oxford to read Classics and to Cambridge to read Mathematics with Classics as a second choice (there wasn’t much else on offer, though the Natural Sciences Tripos and the Moral Sciences Tripos were in the process of being introduced). Sale in fact did both Classics and Mathematics, graduating with first class honours in Classics in 1853 and second class in Mathematics in 1854.

One of Sale’s achievements as a Classics undergraduate was to win the Members’ Prize for Latin Composition in 1853, and I have recently acquired from his sole surviving grandson (about whom more later) the original copy of his prizewinning essay. It consists of fourteen pages of elegant hand-written Latin, of which part of the first page is here reproduced. The title (to translate it into English) is ‘Whether it is from a desire for glory or from an honorable zeal for the republic that great and heroic deeds for the most part arise’, and, if the non-Latinists will excuse me just for a moment, there’s a fascinating bit of textual criticism which can be practised on the first sentence. Sale begins by referring to the recent death of a great man which, he says, has grieved not only his friends and relatives, including the most humble and obscure. For ‘humble and obscure’, the Latin as corrected reads *humillimo atque ignotissimo*: the question is, what did Sale originally write in the erasure? I have no doubt that the answer is *humilissimo*. Sale was, I’m sure, tempted by the assonance with *ignotissimo* and had momentarily forgotten the rule which all schoolboys are taught, by which the superlatives of adjectives in *-lis* don’t end in *-issimus* like most of the others but in the less resonant *-illisimus*.

In 1856, two years after graduating, Sale became a Fellow of Trinity, and remained there for four years as an assistant tutor in Classics. In 1860, however, at the age of twenty-nine, he decided to emigrate to New Zealand, leaving on the *Minerva* in November 1860 and arriving at Lyttelton in February 1861. His

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4 See figure 2.
reason for emigrating is variously given in the biographies as ill health or
overwork, neither of which I find particularly credible. In fact a different
motivation is suggested by the story related some years afterwards by his
daughter Margaret that on their arrival Sale and his companions burned their
top-hats and tail-coats on a bonfire on the beach to signify their rejection of the
stuffy English conventions which they had left behind.⁵

Sale’s first job was as manager of the Lake Coleridge sheep station in
Canterbury owned by Charles Harper, where an archdeacon visiting his hut
found ‘a tall well-built man, in very rough clothes, which do not disguise the
fact that sheep-farming was not his original vocation’, to say nothing of the row
of Greek and Latin classics on his bookshelf.⁶ Sale was by no means the only
Cambridge graduate who was sheep-farming in the area at the time. Among
others were Samuel Butler of Erewhon fame, who is recorded as having visited
Sale at Lake Coleridge during his five years in New Zealand; and William
Rolleston, who had previously himself worked at Lake Coleridge, and had now
bought the neighbouring Rakaia Forks station, which, being a good classicist,
had renamed Mount Algidus after a well-known ode of Horace’s.⁷

The world of the Canterbury settlers was evidently a small one, and after
only three months as a sheep-farmer Sale was invited (May 1861) to become
the first editor of the Christchurch Press. The proprietor was James Edward
Fitzgerald, who used his newspaper to conduct a furious campaign against the
extravagant borrowing schemes of the Canterbury Provincial Government;
Sale’s main contribution was to write elegant and well informed articles on
European affairs.⁸

Sale’s newspaper editing phase lasted a little longer than his sheep
farming one, but not by much. Before the end of the year (December 1861), his
sense of adventure led him to resign from the Press in order to join the Otago
gold rush at Blue Spur above Gabriel’s Gully outside Lawrence, where he was
to stay for nine months or so, though we have no documentary record of his
doings there.⁹

⁵ W. D. Stewart, William Rolleston: A New Zealand Statesman (Christchurch 1940) 10.
⁹ For a reconstruction see A. M. Davie, George Sale 1831-1922 (unpublished honours
So that was Sale’s first year in New Zealand: station manager, newspaper editor and gold miner. Not a bad first year for a man allegedly of poor health or suffering from overwork!

Sale’s next move brought him back to Canterbury. Here his friendship with Rolleston was an important factor. Rolleston was now the Canterbury Provincial Secretary, and it was on his nomination that in 1864 Sale became Canterbury Provincial Treasurer, obviously an important position. Next year, when gold was found on the west coast, Sale was appointed Goldfields Commissioner there, again at Rolleston’s instigation. Before he left, though, Sale played cricket for Canterbury in its first-ever provincial game (which was against Otago in January 1864) and played twice against George Parr’s first-ever All England XI to tour New Zealand in February of that year, once for a Canterbury XXII and once for a combined Otago-Canterbury XXII (it was customary in those days for the locals to field teams of twenty-two players against visiting England XIs).¹⁰

But back to the west coast. It was a considerable task to establish an orderly community among the rough mining population. Sale was given almost autocratic powers, and he seems to have behaved almost autocratically, which earned him the nickname ‘King Sale’ among the miners; at the same time he took care to make himself accessible, and once received a deputation in his bathtub in his tent.¹¹ Inevitably Sale made enemies, among them the proprietor of the West Coast Times, who made several attacks upon him. But when Westland was separated from Canterbury in 1868 Sale was appointed County Secretary, and, when the first Westland County Council was set up in 1869, he was elected by the Hokitika community as one of their representatives. In general he seems to have been held in high regard: when he left Westland in 1869 to return to England, the local newspaper The Tomahawk paid him high praise, declaring that ‘a man of more business capacity, purer disinterestedness and sternest integrity never trod the shores of Westland’.¹²

The reason for Sale’s return to England was apparently the ill health of his father, who in fact died in June 1869. Sale then entered Lincoln’s Inn with the intention of being called to the Bar. But meanwhile the newly founded University of Otago advertised for its first professors, and from a list of sixty-two applicants Sale was selected for the Chair of Classics and English Language and Literature, naming both Fitzgerald and Rolleston among his

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¹⁰ T. W. Reese, New Zealand Cricket 1841-1914 (Christchurch 1927) 149-55.
¹¹ Otago Daily Times (30 October 1907) 3.
¹² The Tomahawk 21 May 1870, quoted in G. O. Preshaw, Banking Under Difficulties, or Life on the Goldfields of Victoria, New South Wales and New Zealand (Melbourne 1888) 141.
referees. He thus arrived back in New Zealand two years after having left, in fact in June 1871, in time for the official opening of the university on 5 July.

All of that sounds very straightforward, but there are in fact one or two puzzles about the sequence of events. Consider the following dates:

19 March 1870: Chair advertisements forwarded to Britain.\textsuperscript{13}
31 March 1870: Sale writes application from Rugby.\textsuperscript{14}
30 September 1870: Sale appointed to Chair of Classics.\textsuperscript{15}
21 November 1870: Sale enters Lincoln’s Inn.\textsuperscript{16}
20 March 1871. Sale sets sail for New Zealand.

The first pair of dates suggest that post from New Zealand in 1870 could arrive in England in time for Sale to see the advertisement and write a reply in only twelve days, which would be good going even by today’s standards. The second pair suggest (on the assumption that Sale would not have entered Lincoln’s Inn once he had been appointed to the Chair) that mail took something like two months to arrive, as it certainly would if it had travelled by sea. It is remarkable that Sale’s letter of application was written so soon after the advertisement, and this has given rise to the speculation that he had inside knowledge, that he was in fact invited to apply and even unofficially offered the job rather than winning it in open competition. As for entering Lincoln’s Inn, I leave you to devise your own scenarios: maybe Sale, having been offered the Chair, was hedging his bets.

Before we go on, Willy Morrell’s Centennial History of the University has a photograph of Sale taken at the time of his application in 1870 at the age of thirty-nine. Morrell gives no attribution:\textsuperscript{17} I like to think that it is the photo which Sale submitted with his application.\textsuperscript{18}

Sale held the chair of Classics at Otago for thirty-seven years to his retirement in 1907, relinquishing English Language and Literature on the creation of a separate chair in 1877. He was a member of the Professorial Board for thirty-four years and of the Council for fourteen, and was a towering influence on the development of the fledgling university. He took a leading part

\textsuperscript{13} G. E. Thompson, A History of the University of Otago 1869-1919 (Dunedin 1920) 26.
\textsuperscript{14} G. J. Griffiths, Sale, Bradshaw, Manning, Wills and the ‘Little Enemy’ (Dunedin 1971) 4 (quoting Otago University Letters Received 1869-70).
\textsuperscript{16} J. A. Venn, Alumni Cantabrigienses 1: 1752-1900 5 (Cambridge 1953) 402.
\textsuperscript{17} Morrell [15] facing p. 19.
\textsuperscript{18} For this photograph see figure 3.
in the often acrimonious negotiations which led to the setting up of the University of New Zealand and to Otago becoming an affiliated institution in 1874; and he was a member of the Senate of the University of New Zealand all the time from its inception to his own retirement. Sale also sat on the important Royal Commission on Universities and Schools of 1878-80, which sought to impose and maintain the distinction between school and university education. Seamless education was not then the name of the game.

One very clear thing about Sale is concern for the highest standards, which is evident in the causes for which he fought on these various bodies. Among these were his opposition to the affiliation of secondary schools to the University of New Zealand (Auckland Grammar was at one time affiliated to the University of New Zealand, as were Wellington College and Nelson College), his concern for the level of the matriculation examination, and his insistence that university examination scripts should be marked by examiners in Britain.

Sale’s teaching was informed by a belief both in the civilising effect of a classical education and in the benefits of a close study of the classical languages and literatures. His great love was for Latin literature, especially Lucretius, though his published articles reveal also an interest in the subtleties of language, both Greek and Latin. He demanded high standards from his students, and was evidently a bit of a disciplinarian. On one occasion he reportedly reduced a female student to tears and was reprimanded by her boyfriend (brave fellow!), on another he was taken to task in print by the Otago University Review for his lack of sympathy with weaker students.

One story that I rather like concerns a student in Sale’s very last class in 1907, in which the final examination included a passage from Tacitus’ Annals for translation. As often happens in passages excerpted for examination purposes, it was not clear without the surrounding context who the subject of the first Latin sentence was, and Sale had helpfully written on the examination paper in brackets ‘Tiberius’. The student however had worked out that the subject must in fact be Tiberius’ mother Livia and had been bold enough to write ‘Livia?’ on his answer. At the end of the examination, as he handed in his

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script, the student had stutteringly ventured to try to explain to Sale what he had done and had been waved away: ‘Yes, Mr Wild, the subject was suppressed, so I supplied it.’ ‘Yes, Professor, I understood that but . . .’ and the student withdrew in some confusion. However, later that evening he found a note from Sale in the letter rack which read: ‘Dear Mr Wild, You were quite right in changing “Tiberius” into “Livia”. I apologise for contradicting you. Yours truly, G. S. Sale. Tuesday evening.’ Sixty-one years later the aforesaid Mr Wild, living at Otaki and presumably now in his eighties, sent Sale’s letter to the Hocken Library, saying that he had treasured the letter but could keep it no longer, with a covering letter of his own which I have just summarised describing the circumstances. Mr Wild’s final verdict on Sale was that he was ‘a very grim forbidding man, but as this incident showed, also a gentle one.’

As I have already hinted, Sale was something of a sportsman, and he played a major part in the development of both cricket and rugby at the University. In September of 1871, three months after his arrival, Sale and a Scot named George Thomson, the resident tutor of Otago Boys’ High School, arranged the first ever rugby match in Dunedin, to be played between the students of the two institutions. There had been some sort of football game in Dunedin in the previous year, but this had apparently been played under a mixture of rugby, association (soccer) and Australian football rules. The match lasted for three and a half hours, after which the score was one goal to nil, and it was decided to continue it on the following Saturday (it seems that rugby games in those days were played for the best of three goals). Interest was further increased by an announcement in the Otago Daily Times that both Professor Sale (now aged forty) and the OBHS Rector, a man called Stuart Hawthorn, would play in the game. On this occasion the match lasted until 5 p.m., by which time the scores were drawn at one goal each, and the ODT announced that that was enough of that, and the match would not be further continued.22

Sale continued to play a major part in the development of rugby football in Otago. In the following year, 1872, when Dunedin’s first rugby club, called the Dunedin Football Club, was founded, Sale was unanimously elected President, though he must have been somewhat disappointed when in both 1875 and 1876 the Club elected to play under association football rules rather than the rugby rules which Sale himself had recently drafted.23 Meanwhile Sale had been fostering rugby at the university, and became the first president of the

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University Football Club when that was eventually founded some years later in 1884. He remained President for the next fourteen years until 1898. The Hocken Library has a photograph of the University team of 1896, with Sale (now aged sixty-five) standing on the far right.\textsuperscript{24} It is interesting that his two sons were in the team, John, third from left in the back row, who was to die tending war veterans in the influenza epidemic of 1918 and thus predeceased his father, and Geoffrey, sitting second from the right in the middle row, who, after a distinguished military career in World War I, became a mining engineer in South Africa and was killed in an accident there in 1930.

But back to 1871, Sale’s first year. In October, a month after he had taken part in the epic rugby match which I have described, Sale was playing cricket for the University in its first-ever cricket match, against the local club team which was known as the Citizens. Sale opened the batting for the University, and the scorecard reads: Sale b Lambert 3. The University team in fact only amassed twenty-nine runs between them against the Citizens’ sixty, with Sale picking up two wickets at the end of the innings. In a return match played in November the scores were very similar: University 30, Citizens 69: this time, however, Sale starred with the ball, taking eight of the Citizens’ wickets.\textsuperscript{25}

Sale lived and taught in the Professorial House on campus which still bears his name and which continued to be the home of the Classics Department right up to 1969. But the family also had a house at Sawyer’s Bay, which I haven’t been able to trace and is probably now destroyed, though I have in my possession a photograph, discovered quite recently by his grandson among his mother’s (Sale’s daughter Margaret’s) effects. Sale incidentally conducted his own choir at Sawyer’s Bay; he was apparently a talented musician with a good bass voice. He was also Vice-President of the Dunedin Philharmonic Society for a number of years.

The ‘other stories’ of my title were going to be about some of Sale’s successors in the Chair, but I’ve decided instead to talk about Sale’s family, in particular his wife and his two daughters, who were very interesting women in their own right. I hope, though, to have a couple of minutes at the end to say a few words about Sale’s successor in the Chair of Classics, Thomas Dagger Adams, who was another very impressive figure.

It may be helpful to have in mind this simplified family tree of Sale’s family.

\textsuperscript{24} See figure 4.

\textsuperscript{25} G. Griffiths, \textit{Otago University at Cricket} (Dunedin 1978) 6.
GEORGE SAMUEL SALE = MARGARET FORTUNE

MOLLY
(Covey)

JOHN

GEOFFREY

MARGARET
(Orri)

MARGARET
(Chisholm)

LAIRD

GEOFFREY

ALAN

DAVID

ROBERT

ELEANOR

My most recent visitor was Sale’s great-great-granddaughter Eleanor Chisholm, who was here in 2000 on a blind honeymoon, if that’s the right phrase for a situation where her newly wedded husband had whisked her away on an aeroplane to an unknown destination, which turned out to be the home of her great-great-grandfather. Eleanor knew a lot about the whole family and was a great help in filling out the family tree. In addition I was in email correspondence last year with one of Eleanor’s uncles, Sale’s great-grandson David Chisholm, now a professor in Arizona, who had some good stories about his Aunty Marg, Sale’s daughter Margaret. But my most significant contact has been with Sale’s sole surviving grandson, whom I’ve mentioned several times already, Geoffrey Orr, a retired lawyer now living near Twickenham in England, who came over to Dunedin with his wife in 1998. I showed them around the campus and gave them a copy of the longer version of my article for the Dictionary of New Zealand Biography, and on their return home he wrote me a nice letter, which included the following:

It was for me the completion of a circle. From day one, GSS was held up to me [by my mother] as the living example, and I guess I got fed up with his reputation. However, he was indeed an outstanding character, as I now see clearly. . . .

Geoffrey Orr has since been a generous source of information, including documents as well as anecdotes, and I have had a flurry of email exchanges with him while preparing this talk.

Sale was still a bachelor when he arrived back in Dunedin in 1871, but within three years he had married; this was in 1874 when he was aged forty-
five. His bride was Margaret Fortune,\(^{26}\) daughter of James Bonwell Fortune, of Coburg, Ontario, Canada, and I have long wondered how Sale came to marry a Canadian woman. The answer, which I found out from Geoffrey Orr last week, is that her father, James Bonwell Fortune, was an Irishman who emigrated to Canada. He had two daughters, known as Minnie and Maggie, of which the older (Minnie) was evidently a rather masterful lady and Maggie was very much the meek younger sister. Minnie married a man called James Davidson, who proposed that they should go to New Zealand after the wedding to make their fortune, and Minnie replied very firmly that she was not going unless her younger sister came with them. Thus it was that Maggie was available in New Zealand to marry George Sale; they were actually married at Kaitangata, where Minnie and her husband were living. Maggie was only twenty-two years old at the time, twenty-one years younger than Sale, and I have it on good authority that for several months after they were married she continued to call him ‘Mr Sale’.

Sale and Maggie had two sons and two daughters. I’ve said a little about the sons; there is quite a lot to say about the daughters. The older daughter, Mollie, born in 1880, was a talented artist, and you can still see a portrait which she did of her father in 1902, hanging on the wall upstairs in the Pictures Collection of the Hocken Library. Last year we had a query from the Brinkman Gallery in Nelson, which possesses another of her paintings, which prompted some research into her artistic activity, and we unearthed the catalogues of her entries in the Otago Art Society’s Exhibitions from 1902 to 1907. They are all watercolours except for one solitary oil painting, for which the asking price was seven guineas; the going price for the others seems to have been three guineas. The list is chiefly interesting in that the paintings tell the story of Molly’s travels: there are scenes in Normandy (1902 and 1903), Bruges (1906) and Yorkshire (1907).

More interesting still is her friendship with the famous New Zealand artist Frances Hodgkins,\(^{27}\) who was eleven years her senior. Frances Hodgkins went on her first visit to Europe in 1901, and there is a letter from her to her mother, written from Caudebec outside Paris, in August of that year, in which she says:

Our sketching party has increased this month and we now number nearly 40. There are some nice girls, no one particularly clever. Molly Sale is here for a

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\(^{26}\) See figure 5 for a photograph of Margaret Fortune.

\(^{27}\) Orange [3] 219-23
month. I am proud of my two countrywomen [the other was her good friend Dorothy Richmond], they are both so nice looking.28

In another letter, sent to her sister Isabel Field from Paris a month later, Frances Hodgkins writes:

Molly and I have now been here for 10 days and had a glorious time and yesterday morning I saw Molly off for England.

She goes on to describe going to the Opera with Molly and sitting up in the gods, and to confess that, truth be told, their happiest moments were spent in the cafés. And I can’t resist quoting a revealing little snippet from later in the letter:

Molly and I stood for quite a long time the other day in front of what they call a ‘shocking machine’ which undertakes for the price of 1d. to shock any person disposed to put a penny in the slot. As Molly was about to succumb I dragged her away & have regretted it ever since. . . .29

This is Frances Hodgkins at the age of thirty-two and Molly Sale at twenty-one. I think the phrase is ‘innocents abroad’.

Molly subsequently married an American muralist named Arthur Covey, whom she met when both were studying in London under Frank Brangwyn, who was born in Bruges and apparently took his students on study trips to his birthplace (hence Molly’s watercolours of Bruges scenes). Molly and Arthur went to live in America, and had two children there, though, sadly, Molly died in 1917 (at the age of thirty-seven) giving birth to the second. Sale’s second daughter Margaret, who was born in 1884, four years after her sister, was a talented amateur violinist, and there are pleasant stories of her playing at home accompanied by Molly on the piano. As a young woman in Dunedin Margaret played in the orchestra of the Dunedin Philharmonic Society under its long-time Italian-born conductor Raffaello Squarisi.30 In 1906 (at the age of twenty-two) she travelled to England to study at the Royal College of Music, where her teacher nearly put her off the violin for life, and she abandoned plans to study in Brussels under the great Belgian violinist Ysaye. She then switched to painting and studied art in Paris. She continued to live in London, and in 1924 at the age of forty after a whirlwind courtship she married a fifty-one-year-old

widowed doctor, Vivian Orr, who was actually a third-generation Australian whose family had moved to London at the beginning of the century. They had one son, Geoffrey, who is the grandson to whom I have been referring, and lived in Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire to a ripe old age, Vivian dying in 1957 aged eighty-four and Margaret in 1974 aged nearly ninety.

By all accounts Margaret was a grand old lady, and, apart from contacts with her son Geoffrey, I have a picture of her in an email from her great-nephew, David Chisholm, who describes a visit to her in 1961 as follows:

Auntie Marg was very proper: we had breakfast separately at pre-arranged times, and I always found The London Times on the breakfast table next to the silverware and toast. She insisted that I have a ‘proper’ English tweed suit made by her tailor in London (which lasted long after I outgrew it), and the following year she sent me a World Atlas for Christmas with a note saying that I didn’t know the map of Europe well enough. I always enjoyed the books she sent for Christmas, Sherlock Holmes, Buchan’s ‘The Thirty-Nine Steps and Other Stories’, and ‘The Man Who Never Was’... Auntie Marg was a delightful, very well-educated person, and I greatly enjoyed corresponding with her and visiting her.

On his retirement in 1907, Sale returned to England and lived in London until his death on Christmas Day 1922 at the age of ninety-one. I have two accounts of his last years, which were in some ways a sad end. The first is a restrained formal one taken from the final lines of his obituary in the London Times of 27 December 1922:

After his retirement and return to England his house in Bedford Park, W., was for years a favourite resort of visiting and retired New Zealanders, until ill-health compelled his withdrawal even from all social activities. For the last few years of his life he had been confined to bed, but free from pain of any kind.

The second is an anecdote sent to me last week by Geoffrey Orr:

After his retirement, in Chiswick, West London, Grandfather had a stroke and was rather immobile. His faithful wife looked after him and brought him tea in a rather nasty little teapot, which he disliked. One day she was out and returned. He announced: ‘Maggie, I’ve broken that little teapot.’ ‘Oh, George, I am sorry, how did you do it?’ ‘With a hammer.’

At the time Sale of course was getting on for ninety and his ‘faithful wife’ was approaching seventy. Maggie Sale was another long-lived lady: she survived her husband by eleven years and died at Poole in Dorset in 1933, aged eighty-one.
So that was Otago’s first Professor of Classics, who was indeed an outstanding character. His successor, T. D. Adams was another remarkable and admirable man, about whom I have time for only a brief postscript.  

Adams was born of Anglo-Scottish parentage in Dunedin in 1884. He went to George St School and then to Otago Boys’ High School, where among other things he was captain of cricket. After that, he attended Otago University where he obtained an MA with first class honours in Latin and French. When Sale retired in 1907, the University could not afford to pay both Sale’s pension and a new Professor, and the Chair went into abeyance; instead Adams as a young man of twenty-three was appointed Lecturer in Latin and a Mr Dunbar Lecturer in Greek. Ten years later, in 1917, when the university’s finances had improved, Adams was promoted to Professor and promptly went off to fight in the Great War. On his return he continued to hold the Chair for thirty-one years until his retirement through ill health in 1948 at the age of sixty-four.

Adams made a huge contribution to all aspects of life in the University and the city. He was much loved by his students, who called him ‘Tommy’ whereas to everyone else he was known as ‘T. D.’; I think I would rather have been taught by Adams than by Sale. On the academic side of things he held the usual offices, being Chairman of the Professorial Board and Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Music. He was also Conductor of the Music Society, President of the Dramatic Society, Vice-President of the Cricket Club, first Secretary/Treasurer of the Classical Association (which was founded in 1922 with the historian Willy Morrell as President and the collector and philanthropist Willi Fels as Vice-President), a loyal and respected member of the First Church congregation, a proficient organist on various occasions including the Sunday evening services of the Otago University Women’s Association, representative cricketer for Otago and member of the Carisbrook Cricket Club, golfer, bowler, committee member of the Fernhill Club, where he and colleagues would indulge in elegant conversations over leisurely Friday lunches, and above all broadcaster on the 4YA radio programme, where he gave no fewer than 378 talks over ten years, including readings from the Bible and the whole range of English literature, in what was described as the most pleasant radio reading voice that one could hope to hear.

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31 For a photograph of Adams see figure 6.
Adams met his wife to be, Lucy Morton, when he was nine and she was seven. They married fifty-five years later, in 1948, when Adams had just retired: he had been a bachelor all his life, living with his parents for much of that time. Lucy, who taught at Otago Girls’ High School, had also remained unmarried. Adams was now in poor health, and was to die five years later in 1953. There is a very moving seventy-page memoir of Adams written by his wife\textsuperscript{34} which reveals the happiness of their brief years of marriage in spite of his increasing frailty. It also includes many other tributes paid to him from within the university and without. The picture emerges of a talented, civilised, genuine, decent, and modest man.

I said before that I had difficulty living up to the image. Those were very different times and the university was a very different place. All I can say is that it is a privilege to have followed, however remotely, in footsteps of men such as these.

Figure 1. George Samuel Sale 1906.
(Hocken Library, Uare Taoka o Hakena, University of Otago, Dunedin S03-2/8)

\textsuperscript{34} L. S. Adams, \textit{Thomas Dagger Adams: Professor of Classics at the University of Otago} (Wellington 1954).
Utrum ex gloria cupiditatis an ex honesto
erga rempublicam studio magna plerunque
et heroica facta orientur.

In universo illo reipublica lutea quem super vire
illustrissimi gravissimique moro non propinquus tantum
que necessario sed unicum nostrum humillimum
atque ignorantium attulit, haud minimum doloris leni-
mentum videbatur indolem viri ac virtutis eximias
celeberr; quum vero ut amicum eti quisque et
quae patrem patriae amissum deflet illud solatum
quarum at ingenium illius praebatur miraretur et
pro exemplo eili propositionem tenere, ut quamvis imp.
gressus pro virili quisque parte imitando sequeretur,
ita ut etiam motione ante ornare pofet, et
memoria ejus quotidie magis emittecerat. Non equidem
hoc loco virtutis ejus praebat nec se gravissimi quis
vir in summa doctrina summa dicendi cepit instructi.
Figure 3. Sale 1871. (Morrell, *The University of Otago: A Centennial History* [Dunedin 1969] facing p. 19)

Figure 4. Otago University Football Club First Fifteen 1896.  
(Hocken Library, Uare Taoka o Hakena, University of Otago, Dunedin S02/358a)
Figure 5. Margaret Maria Fortune, wife of George Samuel Sale.
(Hocken Library, Uare Taoka o Hakena, University of Otago, Dunedin S02/358b)

Figure 6. Thomas Dagger Adams 1933. From Lucy S. Adams, Thomas Dagger Adams: Professor of Classics at the University of Otago (Wellington 1954) frontispiece.
(Hocken Library, Uare Taoka o Hakena, University of Otago, Dunedin S03-164)