

CHAPTER 7

1860 AND AFTER

With the arrival of Dr. Joseph Hea in the autumn of 1860, the University of New Brunswick should have settled into its new role as provincial institution, to fulfil the precepts of its charter. But those who had hoped for this reckoned without the indomitable will of the erstwhile Dr. Jacob, now demoted to the status of Professor, and his coterie of Tory students. Jacob defied Senate, the Legislature and even the Lieutenant-Governor in his refusal to conform. He would not recognize the new President. And very rapidly, Hea found himself embroiled in controversy, and in the unfortunate position of having no secure lodgings since Jacob refused to vacate the principal's apartments at the College. Hea was a stern disciplinarian, a man of very strong will, and unaccustomed to the disrespect shown him in several quarters by both Jacob and a small group of students alike. The students, for their part, were of the old guard, part of the aristocracy. Ritchie and I. Allen Jack, neither of whom took kindly to the usurper, as Hea was seen to be, led the challenge to Hea's authority. I. Allen Jack had entered the College in 1859 and, as an older student, was looked up to by some of the younger students.

Jack (no relation to Brydone Jack) left a diary¹ chronicling the events of that chaotic session. He began by noting that: "During all the time that I came in contact with Dr. Jacob I could recount many instances when he made everybody around him fully sensible of his (dignity and of the reverence due to himself

as an individual or as a functionary."

Almost immediately after Hea had arrived, he came into conflict with Jack's group: Hea was much more an authoritarian than Jacob and chose not to indulge Jack's high-jinks, some of which are chronicled in the diary. Jack early formed a dislike for Hea, reporting at the beginning of the following term: "I arose this morning with the dismal knowledge that I had to return to the University; not on account of a renewal of studies, but rather because I will again be under the power of a man who so far as I know of him is ungentlemanly, tyrannical and to a great extent devoid of truth."

Over the Christmas recess, Hea committed a "faux pas" which probably cemented his failure in the University. He moved Jack out his room without prior notice and attempted to install him with another student, all to provide Hea with a study room. As a senior student, and coming from one of the better families, neither Jack nor his father were about to accept that without protest. To resolve the problem, Hea attempted to placate Jack by giving Jack one of Jacob's rooms. On January 22nd, the matter came to a head between Jacob and Hea. Jacob wrote: "To the person calling himself President of the University of New Brunswick" to the effect that Jacob would hold no further conference with a man who seemed to have no feelings of honour or honesty. Jacob even appealed to the aging Sir Howard Douglas in the matter. But in the interim, Hea gave in and Jack was allowed to occupy one of the rooms of Hea's suite. As one of the elite, it should be remembered that Jack's acquaintances included the Registrar, Charles Fisher, and his daughter, the Lieutenant-Governor and his son, Graham Manners Sutton, who was also a student, the Partelows, and indeed, all of the disenfranchised group who had previously controlled the College. It was injudicious at the very least for Hea to openly challenge this group, as he was shortly to find out².

On February 19th, Hea toured visitors through the rooms of the students, meeting stiff opposition from them. Ritchie and Jack wrote immediately to their fathers to protest this intrusion on their privacy. The matter led to a general review by eighteen students of the wrongs, real or imagined, by Hea against them. They petitioned their parents and the Senate to consider the case. Jack's father, a prominent Saint John lawyer, and Judge Ritchie reviewed the matter and decided to act, requesting the Lieutenant-Governor to preside in the case. They met at Government House on March 1st, the same date Jacob was requested by Senate to retire from the College in view of his continuing refusal to cooperate either actually or in spirit with the new regime.

Hea was called March 8th to appear before the Lieutenant-Governor to answer to a list of twenty-six charges instigated principally by eight students from Saint John, Ritchie and Jack among them. It was, in effect, a trial and Hea was allowed counsel. The court continued to hear evidence in the case for several days, not concluding until March 16th. Jack insisted throughout that Hea had perjured himself in giving evidence. Jacob gave his last lecture before retiring on March 27th. The following day, the last day of term, Hea called the students together, and in an address to them on the recent disturbances, forgave them, claiming that he did not regard Ritchie and Jack with enmity although he did not feel overly friendly towards them.

The unfortunate university suffered yet another blow that year. The much respected and loved Dr. Robb died April 3rd. Allen Jack wrote in his diary that day: "I hardly keep from shedding tears when I heard of his death, and his loss to the province as to the University will be irreparable." Perhaps this was the final blow for many of the students as well. For several of them determined

to complete their schooling at King's College, Windsor. Although many left that last term, the number of students who had come to the new University more than made up for the loss. Hea was dismissed at the end of the year, to seek his fortunes as an insurance adjuster in Toronto.

Throughout the turmoil, Hea's public face had given no cause for alarm. He did his utmost to increase the popularity of the University, writing extensively on its behalf and speaking whenever the occasion demanded. His report³ to the legislature likewise dealt with the University in glowing terms: "The Professors who had charge of the several Departments of instruction under the Reverend Principal of King's College, continue to devote themselves with the greatest zeal and energy to the performance of their duties in the University; their high attainments, and great skill and experience in educating, leave almost nothing to be desired in their respective departments; while I cannot allow to pass the present opportunity of placing on record my high appreciation of the frank and cordial manner in which these gentlemen have co-operated with me from the beginning, in giving effect to all the arrangements introduced by the Senate, and my acknowledgement of the very efficient aid which I have always received from them, in season and out of season, by council or otherwise, in carrying on the practical work of the Institution amid the difficulties necessarily incident to its reorganization.

"The attention of the Senate will be directed immediately to the Department of Ancient Languages and Literature, in the mode of conducting which, important modifications are required.

"The students belonged to the Church of England, Church of Scotland, Wesleyan Methodist, Roman Catholic, Free Presbyterian, Congregational, and Baptist Churches; their attention to College Regulations, and their diligence in pursuing their studies, have been worthy of the highest commendation, and their general deportment has been such that no case has occurred calling for the exercise of discipline since I entered upon the duties of my office."

There is certainly evidence here that the school had achieved the secularization so long sought. In addition, for that first session, there were 37 students in attendance, of whom twenty were resident.

In view of Hea's public appearance, the popular press were ready to take up the cudgels in his defence, but not, in view of the lack of publicity given to the disturbance, until after his departure. They did see the matter for what it was, a parting shaft from the aristocracy⁴:

"There is a feeling abroad that Dr. Hea, though not free from certain grave errors, has been severely dealt with, and that class and party feelings have stimulated the accusations preferred against him if he did not bear himself with sufficient dignity, under provocations of the most insolent character, there are but few men who would have (maintained entire equanimity under similar circumstances."

Robb, the most logical choice as president, was gone, leaving only one safe candidate, a man who had earned the respect of the populace, and the enmity of few, Dr. William Brydone Jack. He was a known figure, well liked and respected. It was he who was chosen to guide the fortunes of

the University over the next quarter century. He was appointed June 26, 1861, as the second President of the University.

Brydone Jack believed strongly in teaching a relatively practical curriculum. He included in his courses, over the next several years, much of the material given in the experimental course of 1854. Equally he argued, as he did in his letter to the Commissioners in 1853:

"I cannot therefore, think it advisable to curtail to any extent our already too-stinted scientific curriculum; but it is clearly of importance that we should try to engraft upon this as much of practical application as we possibly can."

It is clear that Brydone Jack did not wish to implement a separate engineering curriculum. When he first took over the office of the President there were four professors, including himself. Sometime thereafter, when provision for another member of faculty was made, Brydone Jack did not attempt to bolster the science and engineering group, but strove instead to include classical literature and history as separate subject matter. At about the same time, Senate enacted a statute to allow for a Bachelor of Science degree with the provision that "No person shall be admitted to the degree of Bachelor of Science until the expiration of six years from the time of his taking the degree of AB, nor until he shall have passed a satisfactory examination ..." So stringent were those requirements that only one student was awarded the degree during its entire history. One should remember that McGill has already implemented a Civil Engineering program as an optional part of the four-year Arts program. Elsewhere, four-year programs in engineering were coming into vogue. At UNB, the arts course itself dealt heavily in science. Notwithstanding Brydone Jack's apparent

reluctance to inaugurate a formal engineering course, there was still the provision for a Diploma in Civil Engineering, although there is only one student on record as having been granted such a diploma, H.G.C. Ketchum.⁵ At the time of the award of the diploma Ketchum was in South America working as a Railroad Engineer. There is no record of this curious document other than the document itself which resides in the University Archives; nor have we any information as to the number of recipients. This is the only one known to date.

"To all to whom these presents shall come - I, William Brydone Jack, Doctor in Civil Law, and President of the University of New Brunswick, testify that Henry George Clopper Ketchum, who as a student in the Special Undergraduate Course of Civil Engineering, in the late King's College, (now the University of New Brunswick) having fulfilled the requirements of the statutes, is on this the fifth day of June, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two, presented with the Diploma, granted to Students in Engineering in the said University. In Testimony Whereof I hereunto sign my name and cause the Seal of the said university to be affixed.

Given in the aforesaid University

this fifth day of June AD1862

E.H. Wilmot

W. Brydone Jack

Registrar

President

Brydone Jack tried to introduce the practical into the classroom, and continued to teach the basic elements of surveying and use of instruments as part of his mathematical courses. Hence with

the appointment of a Professor to the Chair of English Language and Literature in 1867, one who was also willing to take some of the load in the first mathematics course, Jack was able to report that he was left "leisure to form a special class for instruction in Surveying and Engineering..." Dr. Jardine, the Professor in question, left in 1869, to be replaced the following year by Dr. Thomas Harrison, so enabling the continuation of Jack's special course.⁶

Brydone Jack had begun publication of a University Calendar in the first year of his presidency, and so we are able to follow the development of his practical curriculum through succeeding years. With Dr. Loring Woart Bailey, who had arrived in 1861 to assume Dr. Robb's position, a new measure came into the science curriculum. Dr. Bailey continued heat, light and electricity as part of the program, and together with Brydone Jack, ensured that minerology, geology and metallurgy were taught.⁷ The description for mathematics in the calendar for 1870 included: surveying and levelling, navigation and nautical astronomy, strength of materials, forces, etc., and required

texts such as:

The Mechanical Principles of Engineering and Architecture

by Henry Moseley

An Elementary Course of Civil Engineering

by Dennis Hart Mahan

Railway Engineering

by Thomas Baker

Students were still attending the University for the express purpose of taking these courses. Many did so and went on to serve the province as engineers, including Valentine Wetmore (1868), Wallace Broad⁸ (1877), who had a distinguished career as a mining engineer in China and South Africa, Robert M. Raymond (1877) who served as mining engineer in Australia, Africa, and North America and ultimately became Professor of Mining Engineering at Columbia University, Frank McInness (1877), who served with distinction as a Civil Engineer of international reputation, Alexander Duff (1884), who occupied the first Chair of Experimental Science at UNB six years later, a position which led subsequently to the establishment of the electrical engineering department, Alexander McKenzie (1888), who, with many another UNB graduate, began practice in Boston as a Civil Engineer, and William C. Cushing who achieved international scientific distinction as a railroad engineer, and authored several early papers on rail design and the use of steel in railway constructions.

Brydone Jack, throughout most of his presidency, was well-loved and respected by his students and all who knew him. His fortunes had appeared dim in 1858, with the legislation to close King's College, preceded by the death of his beloved wife Marion. By 1859, with the establishment of the new university, his fortunes took a turn for the better. He married his second wife, Caroline Disbrow that year. Caroline was to bear him five children, one of whom, Ernest Edmund Brydone-Jack had the unique distinction of assuming the position as the first Dean of Engineering at two different schools, at the University of New Brunswick and the University of Manitoba.

Ernest⁹ wrote later of his father that: "He was I know very much interested in Astronomy and

Surveying and spent much time in the Old Observatory Building just opposite the President's residence. He also was quite a classical scholar and a great friend of Bishop Medley.

"My Father's nickname was 'Manus' due, I believe, to his Scotch (sic) pronunciation of the word minus in referring to the minus sign as used in mathematics."

In 1878 Dr. Jack suffered a double blow. While driving his buggy towards downtown along St. John Street, Oct. 17, nearly to Queen Street, his horse started galloping at ominous speed for the river. His daughter Mary grabbed the reins from him and tried to pull the horse's head around into Queen Street. But the animal bolted capsizing the wagon, killing Mary in the process, and seriously injuring Dr. Jack. This loss, together with all the years of undue strain and tribulation, had taken their toll. By 1885 it was clear that Dr. Jack no longer had the physical stamina to carry on. The students gradually lost their respect for his authority and the discipline in the college declined acutely. On June 24, senate was moved to act on the basis of various student petitions: the Chief Justice and Mr. McLeod (MPP) were requested by senate¹⁰ "to intimate to him (Dr. Jack) the mind of the Senate with reference to the unsatisfactory state of the discipline of the college and to invite him to retire from his offices in the University, assuring him that the Senate will provide for him a retiring allowance as ample as the funds of the Institution will permit." He (finished his long and distinguished career serving as a senator for the University which he had so long laboured to preserve. Dr. Jack lived only a year more to enjoy his retirement, dying Nov. 23, 1886, on his sixty-sixth birthday.

He had been a rock of stability for the new University, and had, during his lifetime, lent much of himself to its making. But now there are few physical evidences of the changes he wrought, except the University itself and its engineering heritage. But one physical change which is there can be taken to remind student and faculty alike, daily, of his efforts: the renovations to the college building. When the old roof began to deteriorate he successfully convinced the legislature to invest in an additional floor, thus making available necessary new space. The building, which had stood unaltered since 1823 was renovated to its present form in 1876.