Chapter II

The Portraits

(The Great Hall) ... had not, as in the great old Universities ... pictorial forms of their own universities' sons, of those who have done so much to build up England's great renown. But we have adorning these walls, portrait paintings of Professors, benefactors and others ...

On its completion, the Great Hall was seen as an ideal place in which to hang portraits of university notables. The grandeur and size of the Gothic hall could accommodate large, formal portraits, statues and busts, and the imposition upon the university of an instant heritage, as discussed in the previous chapter, could be expanded by a portrait collection which would emulate the portrait traditions of English universities and public institutions. More than ever before, in the nineteenth century it was fashionable in England for institutions to honour important individuals with an official portrait hung in a public building. In Sydney, other public institutions besides the university were also establishing collections of portraits, and certain individuals saw that a portrait collection at the university would serve a variety of purposes, both functional and symbolic, for the university, as indicated above, as well as for individuals for whom such works of art would become accessories to their public positions and signs of their importance in public life as well as their status as gentlemen.

The University Collection acquired, from the 1850s to the early twentieth century, portraits in a variety of styles and genres, including full-length official portraits, three-quarter length portraits, drawings, medallions, miniatures, caricatures, busts and full-length statues. In some instances there are multiple depictions in various media of the same subject. Such a diversity of genres is characteristic of Victorian portraiture in general. Most of the portraits to be discussed are official depictions of people associated with the development of the university, and a number of these official and semi-official portraits were produced outside the colony.
This chapter will concern itself mainly with the painted portraits, and the following will concentrate on sculpture. To support the discussion, only the most representative of the range of portraits in the University Collection will be discussed. How do the nineteenth-century portraits at the university fit into the general context of portrait painting? What difficulties were encountered and what were the final products? And lastly, could the university be seen as a patron of art?

In studying nineteenth-century portraiture, certain difficulties are encountered, and any attempt to interpret the significance of the portraits from the University Collection must be hampered by a lack of secondary analytical material dealing with nineteenth-century portraits in general. Studies of nineteenth-century English portraiture mainly take the form of the catalogue with a short introductory essay, for instance, Richard Ormond's Early Victorian Portraits from the National Portrait Gallery (1973). There is some interpretative material in Sara Stevenson's A Face for any Occasion (1976) but this deals with portrait engravings, not painting. David Piper's The English Face (1957) covers a vast chronological span, and therefore does not go into great detail. The only published articles so far discovered are Marcia Pointon's 'Portrait Painting as a Business Enterprise' in Art History (1984) which deals with eighteenth-century modes of operation, and Mary Cowling's 'The Artist as Anthropologist in mid-Victorian England' in Art History (1983). There is, however, secondary material available on eighteenth-century portraiture, for instance the Reynolds exhibition catalogue (1986) which provides a useful historical context for the precursors of nineteenth-century portrait painters. The lack of any specific study of nineteenth-century portraits is surprising in view of the fact that many Victorian painters, such as Luke Fildes and von Herkomer, made their fortune at this time from portrait painting.

No analytical study of portraiture in Australia has been attempted. The only text on Australian portraits is Eve Buscombe's Artists in Early Australia and their Portraits (1979) which is a valuable catalogue of Australian portraits before 1850. Nothing has been written on non-Australian portraits in Australian collections. Even primary material on nineteenth-century Australian portraiture
is at times elusive. For instance, the portrait painter William Griffith was working in Sydney in the 1850s. He was paid £200 for a full-length portrait, Sir William Westbrook Burton, of 1844 so perhaps could have been considered competent to paint university notables, but whether he was ever considered is impossible to know as nothing at all is known of him after 1854. 3

In view of the above-mentioned lack of a general guideline, the following analysis of the portraits is principally based on primary material. In support of the analysis, an endeavour will be made to place the portraits in social, economic and political as well as art historical contexts and draw conclusions on that basis.

Before the 1850s there was no significant demand for large official portraits in the colony, although the smaller portrait, commissioned by the ambitious middle-class patron and destined for the wall of the domestic villa was relatively popular. 4 Therefore, in searching for a context in which to discuss the university portraits, the colonial status of Australia must be taken into account, and the English attitude to portriature will be considered.

Traditionally, the public portrait was the preserve of rulers, aristocrats, wealthy merchants and illustrious scholars. The public portrait thus represents status, both social and intellectual. Traditionally there have also been certain conventions followed by the portrait painter. The idea of the official portrait and the appropriate mode of representation of the sitter was codified by Alberti in the fifteenth century. He restated Plutarch’s ideas as follows: "When they were painting Kings, the painters of antiquity, if there was some defect in their models, tried to mend it as best they could, keeping the likeness'. 5 This, together with Lomazzo's instruction to keep in mind the 'sign' of the dignity of the subject, and the Petrarchian theme of a series of 'illustrious men', are concepts adhered to, in a modest fashion, in the official portraits in the University Collection. 6 For instance, the inclusion of the silver mace in the H.W. Phillips portrait, Sir Charles Nicholson (1859), exemplifies the 'dignity' of the sitter and of the office, while the cosmetic approach to the

plate 4
huge ears of the first Provost of the university, Edward Hamilton, in George Richmond's drawing of him, follows the directions of Alberti. Such evidence can be drawn from a less flattering photograph of Hamilton in the university archives. As Richard Ormond observed, the variety of images of Victorian personalities is an advantage to the scholar.  

In nineteenth-century England, the expansion of demand for portraits in general was related to the interest in the individual and preoccupations with anthropology, physiognomy and phrenology. Charles Darwin's *Origin of the Species* and the classification of species begun by Linnaeus were also contributing factors to the interest in portraiture. The cult of the individual, which fostered the demand for portraits was further entrenched by the establishment in 1882 of the *Dictionary of National Biography*, which included in its original form biographies of all national notables.' On the other hand, the National Portrait Gallery, which will be discussed later, was a result of the expansion of portrait painting. But it was probably the cult of hero worship and the intense interest in history and biography, developed in the Victorian era, which led to the great popularity of the large public portrait in particular.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, public life in Britain expanded as the country became industrialised, mechanised and urbanised. As a result of the rapid development of industry and commerce, many public, official and business organisations were founded and developed in an era of marked prosperity for the ruling classes. The presentation portrait became a fashionable way of celebrating the contribution of the important figures within these mercantile and public institutions. Board rooms, town halls and universities were transformed into public shrines commemorating the great and famous. By the nineteenth century there were quite extensive portrait collections at Oxford and Cambridge Universities. Since the seventeenth century the portrait of Elias Ashmole has hung in the Ashmolean Museum, and in May to June 1844, the Cambridge Antiquarian Society held the first exhibition of 'University and College Portraits' in the Founders' Building of the Fitzwilliam Museum.
The period under discussion saw the popularisation of photography. The Daguerreotype produced a 'faithful miniature likeness' for the price of 'one guinea exclusive of frame'.\textsuperscript{11} It was only the bottom end of the portrait painting market which was affected and the prestige of the 'live scale public portrait as an object of pomp and circumstance' retained its prestige.\textsuperscript{12} Photography was originally thought to be superior to painting because of its supposed veracity, but its disadvantage was that it could neither flatter nor conceal blemishes. Many portrait painters, however, used the Daguerreotype and other developments of photography as the basis of the portrait. An example of this practice can be seen in the half-length pastel portrait by Myra Felton, John Woolley (no date) showing the subject in academic dress. Because of its size and medium this portrait does not fall into the class of the official portrait, although it has hung for many years in public areas of the university. The Woolley portrait is based feature for feature on the photograph of Woolley by Edward Dalton, of Dalton's Royal Photographic Gallery, 245 George Street, Sydney.\textsuperscript{13} Myra Felton and Edward Dalton both employed photography and the medium of pastel and crayons to produce portraits. Another pastel portrait of Woolley in the University Collection, by an unknown artist is also based on Dalton's photograph. It is likely that both portraits are posthumous as Woolley dramatically drowned and was publicly mourned in the colony.

The Royal Academy in London had always provided exhibition space for portraits since its foundation in 1768. In spite of Sir Joshua Reynolds' hierarchy of genres in which history painting took precedence, a sample analysis of exhibitions at the Royal Academy from 1824 to 1832 shows that there were more portraits exhibited than any other genre (although a proportion of the portraits were miniatures).\textsuperscript{14} The exhibition of a portrait at the Royal Academy proved advantageous to both artist, in terms of reputation, and the sitter, whose social standing was elevated by association with an institution under royal patronage. According to a critic of the Royal Academy exhibition of 1858, the 'portrait ... is still the mainstay of academic art in this country and forms the staple of the display provided annually for the edification of the public in Trafalgar Square.'\textsuperscript{15}
Reviews for the exhibition of 1859, when Sir John Watson Gordon's Sir William Montague Manning and the engraving of H.W. Phillips' Sir Charles Nicholson (both now at the university) were displayed, dealt with portraiture before any of the other genres and although this order of precedence is unusual, it could have been the result of public interest in the portrait. Nevertheless, the standard of portraiture was not considered impressive by this reviewer, who found in the most important East Room of the Royal Academy, seventy 'staring effigies ... of no value or interest except to their owners'. The implication is that any value was social, not artistic. In general the reviewer found the portraits 'stiff, opaque and lifeless ... stolid evidence of human weakness and vanity and of supremacy of money over mind.'

Such acerbic criticism was not limited to this particular critic, yet portrait painting was given the ultimate imprimatur with the opening of the National Portrait Gallery in London in 1856. The priorities of the National Portrait Gallery were different to those of the Royal Academy as Lord Palmerston's speech in support of the Bill for financial support for the National Portrait Gallery indicated. His words could have inspired the founders of the University of Sydney:

> There cannot be a greater incentive to natural exertion, to noble action, to good conduct on the part of the living than to see before them the features of those who have done things which are worthy of our admiration and whose example we are more induced to imitate when they are brought before us in the visible and tangible shape of portraits.

The National Portrait Gallery was not set up as an art gallery, but as a record of individual faces and achievements classified for historical reference. The fashion for honouring famous personages with a portrait was thus firmly established in England by the mid-nineteenth century.

In the colony of New South Wales one sees a similar tradition established following the example of the portrait tradition in Britain. The social, political and economic climate of Sydney in the 1850s and 1860s, which has been alluded to earlier, was one which was well able to support such a portrait tradition. By the 1850s
There were several colonial institutions which owned official portraits; not only vice-regal institutions such as Government House but also commercial bodies, including the Sydney Chamber of Commerce, commissioned portraits. 18

The first to be commissioned were those of colonial governors such as the first official portrait of Governor Lachlan Macquarie by Richard Read Senior, which was commissioned by the residents of Windsor and now hangs at the Court House, Windsor, not at Government House which was not occupied until 1844. The next governor's portrait, Sir Thomas Brisbane, was painted by Augustus Earle (c.1826) in Australia, although it was agitated that the portrait should be painted in London, but we are happy to find Mr. Earl (sic) had had his right', wrote a journalist of the day. 19 Although this portrait and those of all subsequent governors hang at Government House today, portraits of the first four governors, Phillip, Hunter, King and Bligh were not hung at Government House until after 1880. After Earle, the next Australian artist to be commissioned by Government House was George Follingsby who painted Sir Hercules Robinson P.C., G.C.M.G., the fourteenth governor from 1872-1879. The portrait of Sir Richard Bourke (eighth governor 1831-1837) was painted in England by Andrew Morton on the order of James Macarthur, a foundation member of the University of Sydney senate. The portrait was sent to Sydney in 1841. 20 Lieutenant Governor Sir Ralph Darling was also painted by Morton and the portrait was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1838 with the caption 'Painted for the Colony.' 21 Although the Sydney artist Oliver Rose Campbell painted both Sir Charles Fitzroy and Sir William Denison 'life-size' in oils, these portraits were the property of the Exchange Company and were hanging at the Sydney Chamber of Commerce in 1859. 22 The English painter Richard Buckner painted these two governors for Government House. It seems that Buckner did not, however, specialize in the official portrait for he exhibited only portraits of women at the Royal Academy. 23 Besides these portraits, there were at Government House depictions of King George III (1800) and Queen Charlotte (1800) both after Sir Joshua Reynolds, presented by the widow of Governor King in 1843. Therefore, by 1860 there were probably seven or eight portraits at Government House, of which only one was painted in Australia. 24
The High Court of New South Wales has a collection of portraits of which the first two to be acquired were painted in Australia, J.A. Gilfillan's Sir Francis Forbes (Chief Justice 1824-1837) and Joseph Backler's Sir James Dowling (Chief Justice 1837-1844). Although Sir Alfred Stephen (Chief Justice 1844-1873) was also painted by both Gilfillan and Marshall Claxton, the portrait at the High Court is by J.P. Knight R.A. It was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1861 with the citation 'Painted for the Bar and Solicitors of Sydney'. From the time of Stephen, portraits of the Chief Justices of New South Wales were commissioned by the Bar and presented to the Court, but by the 1860s there were only three portraits, and moreover the portraits of the Chief Justices were only displayed together as a collection for the first time in 1977 when the present Court House in Queen's Square was completed.

Another institution which helped to establish this tradition in the colony was the Sydney County Council, founded in 1842 (but which had a chequered existence until 1857). The Town Hall does, however, have portraits of all but four of the Lord Mayors of Sydney, plus other official portraits such as those of Prince Albert and Queen Victoria by F.X. Winterhalter. The Churches, both Roman Catholic and Protestant, have only sporadic representations of their leaders - they may have been more concerned with spiritual than with temporal immortality. The members of the State Government of New South Wales are mainly commemorated by official photographs.

In the colony the display of portraits at exhibitions was also considered of great importance by certain individuals. The ambitious Colonial Secretary, Edward Deas Thomson, whose portrait was shown at the Society for the Promotion of the Fine Arts in Australia exhibition of 1857, wrote to Professor John Woolley, saying, 'I am apprehensive that the change of position of the portrait in the exhibition may lead to unpleasant remarks ... could not another place for it be found without displacing Sir Charles?' The portrait of Sir Charles Nicholson was by O.R. Campbell, and that of Deas Thomson by Capalti of Rome (1855) now owned by the Mitchell Library, (catalogue number 304). Deas Thomson was painted plate 10 again by Capalti for the university.
In summary, in the colony of New South Wales there was an interest in following the English tradition of commissioning portraits of important members of society, and several small groups of portraits had been assembled by the 1850s to 1860s and were hanging in important colonial institutions.

To what extent, then, did the university foster this incipient tradition? As a result of the desire of the founders of the university to have portraits in the Great Hall, by the 1860s there were portraits of Sir Charles Nicholson (1859) by H.W. Phillips, Sir Francis Forbes plate 4 (not dated but before 1854 and signed 'Hart'), Sir William Montague plate 11 Manning (1858) by Sir John Watson Gordon, Sir Edward Deas Thomson plate 8 (1865) by A. Capaldi. These were soon joined by James Macarthur plate 10 Capaldi and W.M. Tweedie's Rev. John Woolley (1866). plate 12 There was also a bust of Sir Edward Deas Thomson (1854), a statue of William Charles Wentworth (1861) and an enormous statue of Captain James Cook. In total there was the same number of portraits at the university as at Government House in the 1860s. By 1885 plate 13 there were twelve portraits in the Great Hall and two over life-size statues, three portraits in the library plus at least two busts. Like the Government House portraits, most of the university portraits were painted overseas, only two or possibly three were executed in the colony. The university, however, owned more portraits than any other institution except Government House, but as I point out later, the university did not commission them.

The founders of the university pursued the idea of a portrait collection right from the inception of the institution. What were the reasons for this great enthusiasm for portraits? As suggested previously, the Great Hall with the English associations inherent in the Gothic-style architecture and stained glass windows representing the great personages of English history was intended to create an instant heritage for the new University of Sydney. One way of expanding this instant history was to 'adorn these walls (with) portrait paintings of professors, benefactors and others' in emulation of the Oxbridge universities and other English institutions. As one commentator put it in 1924, 'the record (of the stained glass) does not cease, rather it is taken up inspiringly by the painted portraits upon the walls and statues which flank the entrance.'
The relationship to Britain would be further reinforced if the portraits were painted by English not colonial portrait painters. This is the real reason for the preference for portraits painted overseas rather than by local artists, although there are a number of other reasons for not commissioning local artists. (This point will be taken up later in the discussion of how the portraits were commissioned.) Although the founders were anxious that portraits should hang in the Great Hall, press reports of its inauguration on 18 July 1859, which was presided over by Sir Charles Nicholson, do not mention any portraits hanging there, but a description of the suite of buildings in an article anticipating the opening of the Great Hall noted that the university library (now the senate room) was 'graced by the well-known, large and much admired portrait of Sir Charles Nicholson.' The portrait was soon moved, for Professor John Woolley wrote to the university senate, pointing out 'that it was the wish of subscribers that the portrait of Sir Charles Nicholson should hang in the University Hall.' Woolley would have been familiar with the portraits at Oxford as he was a graduate of that university, and was keen to establish the link between his alma mater and the University of Sydney. By Commemoration Day of the same year (1859) a Sydney newspaper made it known to the colony that 'the well-known full-length portrait of Sir Charles Nicholson Bart. in his robes as Provost was hanging above the dais in the Great Hall.' Sir Charles kept the newspaper cutting.

plate 4
The Nicholson portrait, with its effect of old-fashioned grandeur was obviously painted to match the Great Hall. Without it the walls would have been bare except for the Gobelin tapestry Joseph and

plate 15
His Brethren, loaned and subsequently given to the university by Nicholson. In the foreground of the portrait the touch of red in the regal carpet which distances and elevates the subject in importance, would have enlivened the sombre walls of the hall, above which were the flashing stained glass windows. The magnificent gold braided chancellor's robe shown in the portrait also contributed to the effect of reinforcing the function of the hall itself as a place of ceremonial occasions and historical associations. Thus an artificial air of history was introduced to the hall by a large official portrait of a person who was associated with the foundation of the
university, so determining a pattern for the establishment of a portrait tradition at the university. And right from the start there was an element of personal satisfaction for the sitter in having a portrait hung in the Great Hall. Both these factors - the emulation of historical English institutions and fashions in an effort to link the university to the Oxbridge tradition, plus the personal advantage to the sitter - were the principal reasons for the creation of a portrait collection at the university.

The founders of the university, whose portraits are included in the University Collection, were leaders in colonial society. Most of them had some familiarity with English universities and other institutions where portraits were on view, for instance Wentworth and Merewether were educated at Cambridge. Nicholson was a graduate of Edinburgh University and he also received honorary degrees from both Oxford and Cambridge. It is possible that as a child he saw the historical portraits at Petworth, as his father was the agent for the Earl of Egremont. 36 James Macarthur, who was a member of the first university senate and a close associate of Sir Charles Nicholson, had been involved in commissioning the portrait of the sixth governor of New South Wales, Sir Richard Bourke, KCB, by Andrew Morton 37 a task assigned to Macarthur because of his reputation as 'a custodian in the colony of the cultural heritage of Europe'. 38 These men and others on the university senate would have been well aware of the significance of the official portraits hanging in English institutions.

In the colony the most prestigious location for portraits was Government House. A portrait collection at the university would help establish its (the university's) position in the colony as one of similar importance to Government House. The wish to create an association between the new university and Government House is demonstrated by the appointment of Edward Hamilton as the first provost of the university. It was not just Hamilton's fine record at Cambridge which prompted his appointment, but the fact that in the colony he moved in vice-regal circles. 39

It seems that the initiative for the portrait collection rested mainly with Nicholson, for even before Woolley wrote to the senate
about his portrait, Nicholson had arranged to borrow a portrait of Deas Thomson from the Sydney Chamber of Commerce to hang on the opposite side of the Oxford window (of which Nicholson was the donor) to his own portrait. In view of Deas Thomson's position of power in the colony, second only to that of the governor, this may have been a diplomatic move by Sir Charles who was by 1860 the provost of the university. The move also indicated that it was already thought more important to have a portrait hanging at the university than at the Chamber of Commerce. It is possible that the portrait borrowed from the Chamber of Commerce is the portrait of Deas Thomson as a young man of which the provenance is unknown except that it has been included in the University Collection for many years. The early arrival at the university of these two portraits, soon to be followed by a depiction of James Macarthur and others, confirms the suggestion that establishment of both a portrait collection celebrating individuals connected with the university, and a historical tradition in emulation of other important colonial and English institutions were important priorities of the founders of the university.

There are other reasons for the desire to install a portrait collection in the Great Hall. One of these concerns the personal advantage to the sitter. The Oxbridge universities had portraits of their founders and famous scholars dating to pre-Elizabethan times as mentioned previously. In the nineteenth century the portraits at the University of Sydney were compared to portraits of historical figures at the 'great old Universities', thus the portraits in the Great Hall placed their subjects in the context of history as founders of a great institution. It could be argued that the sitters placed themselves in the same class as '... our glorious (king) Alfred (who) provided amidst the fens and forests of Oxford a home of union and refuge for the poor scattered scholars' and 'our illustrious sovereign (whose name) will be perpetuated and remembered in connection with that of the University of Sydney.' Portraits of Nicholson, Wooley, Deas Thomson, Merewether and others figured prominently at the university, thereby ensuring that their names were also perpetuated like that of Alfred. Although Woolley's portrait was painted specifically for the students, who held him in great affection, it appears
that there was in some cases an element of self aggrandisement in the commissioning of the university portraits.

A portrait destined for the Great Hall but painted overseas and in some cases exhibited at the Royal Academy not only confirmed the position of the sitter as a person of consequence in the colony but also provided a cachet for those negotiating social circles in the mother country. Most of the founders returned to England to live. The portrait of James Macarthur is a case in point. As noted earlier, Macarthur was aware of the social implications of the official portrait, particularly if painted overseas and hung in a public institution. This form of public recognition of his place in society and history would have been particularly acceptable to Macarthur as he had felt it necessary to reject that other form of public recognition, a knighthood, because of his family history. 43

The personal advantage accruing to Sir Charles Nicholson through his portrait results from a more complex set of circumstances. Although it cannot be denied that Sir Charles' motives in promoting the university were highly altruistic, it must be admitted that an advantageous side-effect was that of personal self advancement.

*plate 4* Henry Wyndham Phillips' portrait, Sir Charles Nicholson (1859) was not exhibited at the Royal Academy, but the engraving of the portrait by J. Richardson Jackson was shown there in 1859. 44 J. Richardson Jackson (1819-1877) was an English engraver of considerable repute. He changed from his initial specialization of line engraving to mezzotint and specialised in portrait work. As long after his death as 1912 his work brought the respectable sum of up to £1,5/5. 45 It is interesting to note the slight variations between the portrait and the engraving, the latter shows a more regal figure with a slightly larger head and a more upright stance. While Nicholson's portrait was much admired in the colony 46 the engraving provided a more effective vehicle for publicity, not only for the university but for Nicholson personally, both in the colony and in England. That the engraving had a wide circulation is evidenced by the known copies which survive at the university (two), the Mitchell Library Sydney, the British Museum and the National Portrait Gallery, London. 47 There are doubtless others in obscure places, one commentator, in reminiscing on the
history of the university recalled his pleasure in encountering the engraving at the end of World War I 'on a stairway of a country inn in England'.

But although the engraving of Nicholson's portrait was shown at the Royal Academy its function was social rather than artistic, as was the case with most Victorian portrait engravings. The social rather than artistic function of engravings was also paramount in the colony, for example, when Professor John Woolley was drowned a commemorative engraving of the 'lamented Dr. Woolley' was published by the Australian Journal. According to Hilary Beck the first criterion for producing an engraving was human interest. She also points out that such reproductions were used for political and personal propaganda. Engraved portraits of national heroes such as the Duke of Wellington, the Prime Minister and of course, Queen Victoria, were popular. The engraving of Nicholson's portrait should also be seen in this context. The overall popularity of engravings and the increased demand for them was fostered by the rising popularity of illustrated periodicals such as the Illustrated London News. These journals were read by the increasingly prosperous nineteenth-century middle class. The periodicals reproduced engravings, some of which related to the colonies, accompanied by articles stressing allegiance to the growing British empire and the Queen. There is no doubt that the engraving of Nicholson's portrait was used to promote both the university and himself. The commentary accompanying the head and shoulders version of Richardson Jackson's engraving of Nicholson which was published in the Illustrated London News referred to Nicholson as '... the first Australian colonist who has been honoured with a baronetcy', which, the writer asserted was in reality 'an honour paid to the colonies at large for their loyalty to the mother country'. The writer also referred to Nicholson's part in producing the 'scheme of a colonial university based on the system of the universities of the mother country' and to the royal charter which Nicholson obtained for the University of Sydney. Attention was also drawn to engravings of the university buildings in an earlier article. In the article stress is continuously laid on the connections between Britain and her colony, New South Wales and on the assumption that all things colonial should follow the example of the 'mother country'.
Yet the engraving also served as a vehicle of self advertisement for Nicholson personally, particularly as it was reproduced in a journal as widely circulated as the Illustrated London News, thus allowing the possibility of his image being viewed not only 'in Royal Palaces throughout Europe ... (but also in) the humblest cottage' as well as in colonial mansions and outback shearsers' huts. 53 This advertisement of Nicholson as an important public figure would have been a great advantage to him on his return to England to live permanently in 1862. He had had such an intention in mind as early as 1856, before his portrait was painted or engraved. 54 Before Nicholson emigrated in 1834 at the age of twenty-six he would scarcely have been a figure in London society, as he was born at Cockermouth in the north and educated at the University of Edinburgh. When he returned to live in England, according to Woolley, 'he aims at no aristocracy but has good literary connections in which, of course, a few social swells are included', but another contemporary stated that Nicholson knew all the literary, social and political figures of the day in London. 55 The engraving of Nicholson's portrait as Provost of the University of Sydney would have added to his fame. Therefore, whilst the portraits (of which the above is just one example) contributed to the historic atmosphere of the Great Hall, in imitation of the ancient universities of the mother country, at the same time they unquestionably enhanced the reputation of the sitters.

Once it was established that portraits should hang at the university, the Great Hall became a desirable location for a portrait. The fashion for public testimonials was followed in the colony and in many cases the money donated was used to commission a portrait to honour the individual. It was not unusual for the donors to direct that a portrait should hang in a specific location, as was the case with Sir John Watson Gordon's Sir William Montague Manning (1858). 56 It was required that this portrait should be hung in the Great Hall of the university, and the direction was implemented after the portrait had been exhibited at the Royal Academy, London in 1859 and listed in the catalogue as 'painted for New South Wales etc.'. 57 The important point is that the portrait was commissioned and arrived at the university at least a year before Montague Manning had any official connection with the institution. He did not become a member of the university senate until 1861. 58
The portrait, though not especially distinguished in the context of English portrait paintings, would nevertheless have created a powerful impression in the colony, mainly because of its dimensions (238 x 148 cm.). The few other portraits of this size in the colony were of leading figures such as Governor Fitzroy. Nicholson's portrait, commissioned a year later in 1859, is smaller. A certain audacity is implied in commissioning such a large-scale work, then requiring it to be hung at the university. No doubt its power added lustre to the university hall, but it is impossible to gauge the advantage gained from this imposing portrait by its subject, Sir William Montague Manning. His distinguished career took him from a middle-class English background and legal education at London University through the colonial political and legal hierarchy to become, amongst other high public offices he held, one of the most outstanding chancellors of the university. Manning's is only one of the many portraits and busts which were the result of public testimonials whose donors directed that the portrait should be placed in the Great Hall. On the other hand, some committees only directed that the portrait should be hung in a public place, for instance the testimonial fund for James Macarthur's portrait directed that it should be 'placed in one of the public buildings in Sydney' so that the portrait was not originally intended for the university specifically. 59 To some sitters, an affection for the university as well as a wish to be remembered as a great man were the primary motives for the desire to see their portrait in the hall. F.L.S. Merewether had retired from public life and lived in seclusion in England by the time his portrait arrived at the university in 1878, but he wrote that 'it will be a great pleasure to ... think of its holding a place in the Hall'. 60

Perhaps one of the incentives to start a portrait collection stemmed from the acquisition of the first portrait in the Collection, Sir Francis Forbes (not dated, signed 'Hart'), which was acquired before the grant of the Grose Farm site for the existing buildings. Its acquisition was casual in the extreme, as it was one of a number of miscellaneous items including 'a clock, a portrait of Sir Francis Forbes, two maps, two blackboards with stands, and a pair of large globes' taken over by the university from the defunct Sydney College in 1852. 61 Although Sir Francis Forbes, who was the first chief justice of the colony,
had no connection with the university (he died in 1841) his elegant portrait was displayed in the Great Hall, perhaps as a reminder of the link between the Sydney College of which Forbes was chairman, and the university, or more likely for convenience. This casual beginning to the portrait collection prefigured the lack of any articulated policy in acquiring portraits. In many cases the portraits were the result of public testimonials and of the sitters' own efforts and personal financial contributions. The testimonial for James Macarthur, for instance, raised only 77 guineas which was inadequate for a portrait, and it seems that Macarthur himself made up the shortfall, for he is listed as the donor. 62

Although Nicholson encouraged the acquisition of portraits, the evidence also indicates that in most cases the impetus for the portraits at the university came from the individual not the university as a body, no matter how important the individual was in the history of the university. The fact that there is no painted portrait at the university of the first provost, Edward Hamilton, is revealing. The only representation of Hamilton in the University Collection is a drawing, a copy after George Richmond (1809-1896) which was given to the university in 1912 by Hamilton's family. 63 Hamilton had no need to bolster his reputation with a portrait, as he held a secure position in society in the colony, (which he left in 1855) and in England. 64 If there had been an official university policy to honour university personalities with a portrait, surely a more imposing representation of Professor John Smith, first professor of chemistry and experimental physics, than the small black bust of him at the university, would have been more appropriate. The only known portrait of Smith, painted by A. Reid (1844-1908) of Aberdeen, c. 1885 was commissioned by the Royal Society and is held by the Mitchell Library. Similarly there was no portrait of Professor Morris B. Pell, first professor of mathematics and natural philosophy, until the omission was rectified by his family as late as 1957. Dr. Henry Grattan Douglass is acknowledged by contemporaries to have initiated the idea for the establishment of the university, but there is no official portrait of him, either, at the university. A small personal keepsake, in the form of an oval miniature painting, is the only known depiction of him. 65
The absence of portraits of Edward Hamilton and other important figures in the development of the university, confirms the argument that it was not the university or senate as a body which was interested in establishing a portrait tradition. Rather, it was individuals who were associated with the university, ambitious to see themselves linked with a major institution. Such individuals were not interested in the aesthetic dimension of the work, but were, in fact anxious to capitalize on the prestige of having their own image in the impressive, and potentially historic Great Hall. Furthermore, some of these individuals hoped to reap the additional social advantage accruing from 'going abroad' to have their portrait painted, thus being identified with the class of person who would have their portrait painted and hung at the Royal Academy in England.

In summary, the reasons for the desire to have a series of portraits at the university are diverse. The most obvious was the desire to reinforce the instant historical tradition bestowed upon the university through the Gothic-style Great Hall. Portraits of great men displayed in the hall were meant to remind viewers of the traditions of the 'great old universities' of the mother country, thus adding one more link in the chain which bound the university to Britain. It was not only the portrait tradition of the mother country which was the model, but also portrait collections of other important public institutions in the colony, for instance Government House, whose collection was rivalled by the collection of portraits at the university after a few years. Because the official portraits represent status and satisfied a desire to be commemorated in history as an important person, public testimonials in the colony sometimes resulted in a portrait, whose donors wished to see the painting placed in the university hall. As a result of this fashion, the burgeoning collection at the university was expanded, but the custom was not without advantage to the sitters as the portraits in the Great Hall provided prestige in the colony and in some cases also in England. The early acquisition of a portrait from the Sydney College may have prompted individuals connected with the university to assemble portraits in the Great Hall. There was no official acquisition policy, however, and most of the portraits were the result of individuals' own efforts and not a consequence of official university initiative.
How were these portraits at the university commissioned and what were the difficulties encountered? The portraits which hung at the university, although given the status of an official public portrait by placement in the Great Hall, were for the most part not commissioned by the university, but by the sitters themselves, sometimes with funds raised by a public testimonial and sometimes paid for out of their own pocket. As mentioned previously, some testimonial fund committees gave specific instructions for hanging the finished work, but they also in some instances specified the nationality of the artist to be commissioned. In 1860, the committee which failed to raise sufficient funds for James Macarthur's portrait, nevertheless directed that the moneys raised from the testimonial to Macarthur be 'employed in obtaining Mr. Macarthur's portrait by some eminent artist in London'.

Apparently similar directions were attached to the public subscription for Sir Charles Nicholson's portrait, over which there was some controversy. The Fine Arts column of the *Sydney Morning Herald* suggested that once Marshall Claxton had departed from Sydney (in 1854) his 'mantle descended on a greater (portrait painter) than himself' one Oswald Rose Campbell, whose portrait of Sir Charles Fitzroy was famous in the colony, although it did not hang at Government House. Therefore, the writer continued, there was 'no necessity of sending to England for an artist to produce a life-like representation' of Sir Charles Nicholson. Public opposition to that idea came from Professor John Woolley, a very close friend as well as colleague of Nicholson's; on the other hand the suggestion of a colonial commission was supported by Thomas Mort, Joseph Cox and others as well as the satirical columnist 'Peter Possum' who wrote that:

The portrait of a colonial statesman to be hung in the theatre of a colonial university ought surely to be painted by a colonial artist – even if only of average talent and attainments a fortiori by a gentleman of Mr. Campbell's genius and skill. 67

Such an argument seems logical and patriotic, but in considering the issue of commissioning the university portraits two aspects of the situation must be borne in mind. The first is that the hidden agenda, that is, the idea of hanging portraits in the Great Hall to further entrench the instant history and tradition imposed upon
the university, to bind it to the English system and to foster allegiance to the mother country, was not designed to assert the independence of the colony or the university. A portrait painted in England would surely serve this underlying purpose more effectively than one painted by even an eminent colonial portraitist.

Secondly, although there was the beginning of a tradition of public portraiture in the colony, the question arises as to whether there were, in fact, portrait painters with the skills necessary to produce the large official portraits required. By the 1850s, although there were a few well-known portrait painters operating in Sydney, in nearly every case there seemed to be some drawback. Charles Rhodius (1802-1860, arrived Sydney 1829, active until 1858) who painted a full-length oil portrait, Robert Campbell (Mitchell Library picture storage 538) and Joseph Backler (1813-1859) who executed many family portraits, were both ex-convicts. William Nicholas (1809-1854) painted a large portrait, Bishop William Grant Broughton (1843) but Nicholas worked only in watercolour. The official full-length portrait, Sir William Westbrooke Burton by William Griffith (arrived Sydney 1838, died 1870, active until 1850) was found to be 'deficient in both (drawing and effect)' by the Sydney Morning Herald critic. 68 Although Richard Noble (arrived Sydney 1847 and left 1865) trained at the Royal Academy Schools, London 69 and painted an official portrait, Robert Johnston (1865) showing the subject in naval uniform with a background of Sydney Heads, and also Mary Stewart (1855), Governor Fitzroy's daughter, which hangs at Government House, Parramatta among others, he left the colony in 1865. He is reputed to have had only one arm (not necessarily a drawback) but his portrait of Johnston is his only known full-length portrait and the portrait of the Hon. Mary is somewhat provocative. 70 James Anderson, who arrived in Sydney in 1854 and who was suggested for the portrait of Governor Sir William Denison but failed to gain the commission, continued to produce portraits in the colony until 1872, but he was a confirmed alcoholic. 71 The accomplished Henry Robinson Smith (active 1847-1854) is unknown after 1854. 72 Conway Hart, (active 1853-1860s) the supposed painter of Sir Francis Forbes (signed only 'Hart') only seems to have worked in Melbourne. Already mentioned is Oliver Rose Campbell (1820-1887).
Little is known of his portrait of Sir Charles Nicholson, although it was not executed for the university. Sir Charles must, however, have been relatively pleased with this portrait, for when he viewed it in the artist's studio he took the well-known owner of a famous picture collection, Mr. A.B. Spark, with him. But by 1859 O.R. Campbell had moved down market, 'he begged to announce that he had lately added photography to his profession'. Nicholson had his portrait for the university painted in England. Marshall Claxton was trained at the Royal Academy Schools and exhibited nine portraits and seventeen fancy pictures at the Royal Academy, London, before his arrival in the colony in 1850, moreover his patron was the Englishwoman, Baroness Coutts. Claxton was closely associated with the university for he had a studio at the Sydney College from 1850-1852. The university operated at the Sydney College from 1852 until 1857. Claxton designed the university's first seal and there is a portrait of a lady, dated c. 1852, in the University Collection, said to have been given by Sir Charles Nicholson. Claxton was a portrait painter of note in the colony, his subjects included Bishop William Grant Broughton (1852), Rev. William Cowper, both owned by St. Paul's College at the University of Sydney, Rev. Robert Forrest (1854) the headmaster of the King's School and the Chief Justice Sir Alfred Stephen (1860) as well as numerous private portraits. But Claxton left the colony in 1854, the year in which Nicholson was elected provost of the university.

The position in general is well illustrated by the controversy over the official portrait of Sir William Denison, finally executed in England by Richard Buckner. The proposed choice of Anderson was supported by Joseph Sheridan Moore, as mentioned above, whose claims were somewhat overstated it must be admitted. 'It makes no matter that we have Mr. James Anderson of a Scotch (sic) Society of Painters, and a student of and exhibitor at the Royal Academy, London, living amongst us. We cannot give him the order because he is here - we must send it "home to England"'. In spite of support from the press for some colonial painters, it seems that the portrait painters working at the mid-century in Sydney were largely unacceptable because of convict origins, peripatetic
habit or lack of training, skill and experience in painting large portraits. All these factors would doubtless have detracted from the prestige of a locally painted portrait. For these and other reason stated earlier, most of the early portraits which were hung in the Great Hall of the university were not painted in the colony.

For a colonial gentleman who aspired to have his portrait painted in England, the selection and commissioning of an artist was an involved business. Either due to a restriction of funds or lack of contacts, the portraits of the founders of the university were generally not painted by Royal Academicians. Neither of these restrictions applied to Sir William Montague Manning, however. He commissioned Sir John Watson Gordon R.A., P.R.S.A. for his portrait which was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1859. Manning had been educated and practised law in London, and therefore may have had some contacts. To date no details of the commission have come to light. Although Watson Gordon was a Royal Academician he was not regarded as an outstanding portrait painter, either in his own lifetime or in retrospect. Richard Ormond remarks that the artist was one of a group of nineteenth-century painters who 'were capable of surprisingly good work, but their portraits lack the sense of grand design and painterly panache characteristic of their ancestors'. The opinion of the critic writing on one of Watson Gordon's portraits exhibited at the Royal Academy at the same time as the Manning portrait, was that 'it did not provide the painter with much to congratulate himself on'.

For a person who had never lived or worked in London, such as Sir Charles Nicholson, finding an artist for his portrait would have had its difficulties. Nicholson could have sought advice from Thomas Woolner, a regular exhibitor at the Royal Academy, and whom he had known well in Sydney. By 1859 Woolner was again in England. So was Marshall Claxton, but during the first few years of the existence of the university (1850-1854) Claxton had not received commissions from the university (the design of the seal was the result of a competition), therefore advice from him would hardly have been forthcoming. If Nicholson had wished to support a colonial artist working in London, he could have
sought out Robert Dowling. He had left Tasmania in 1857 and successfully exhibited at the Royal Academy in the 1860s and 1870s. His fine and imaginative portrait, Francis Ormond (c.1885) hangs at Ormond College, Melbourne University. Nicholson's close friend Adelaide Ironside had also left Sydney for England in 1855. Nicholson pursued a correspondence with Miss Ironside for a time, but her interest lay in the field of history painting and there is no evidence that she was ever consulted about portrait commissions, although through her friendship with Ruskin, Nicholson could have made contact with the art world.  

For his full-length portrait in the robes of chancellor, Nicholson chose to commission Henry Wyndham Phillips R.A. (1820-1868) the younger son and pupil of the eminent Victorian portraitist Thomas Phillips. Although H.W. Phillips' portrait of Sir Colin Campbell (first Baron Clyde, c. 1856, the suppressor of the Indian Mutiny) hangs in Glasgow City Art Gallery and a copy of the engraving by G. Zobel of 1856 is in the National Portrait Gallery, Phillips' work did not receive the acclaim of his father's portraits. His portraits exhibited at the Royal Academy between 1838 and 1868 include Charles Kean and Robert Stevenson. No doubt Nicholson had seen the portrait of Captain Hay by Thomas Phillips which was in Sydney in 1856 and which was described in glowing terms by the Sydney Morning Herald and was said to have cost 300 guineas. But the senior Phillips died in 1845, ten years before Nicholson needed his portrait for the Great Hall. It is likely that it was Sir Charles Nicholson's friend Sir James Clarke, the Court Physician who recommended H.W. Phillips, for Phillips' portrait of Clarke's colleague, the Physician-in-ordinary to Prince Albert and Queen Victoria, Sir Henry Holland, Bart. was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1857, when Nicholson was in England. 

One of the main reasons for difficulty in commissioning portraits was a chronic shortage of money. The members of the university always wanted a first-class result at a bargain price. The commission for the portrait of the first Principal and Professor of Classics, the Rev. John Woolley illustrates the difficulties which Woolley and some others faced, and the trouble taken to obtain the right
results which it was felt could not be obtained in the colony. When John Woolley left Sydney for England on 26 December 1864, he was in a state of depression and concerned with the turn of events at the university. Although Woolley felt threatened by his peers, he was greatly loved by his students and kept up a correspondence with his ex-student William Charles Windeyer. When Woolley was short of money for his portrait, he wrote to Windeyer on 25 September 1865,

I am in a fix about the picture. If Sir A. Denison would give me a small subscription instead of a munificent one on ... (indecipherable) ... I could bring you a far finer work of art for 100 pounds or certainly 120 pounds. [Sir Charles has contributed 10 pounds]. I could get a first class half length. Now A.D. is fig (fixed) on a full length I must do it on the cheap and as a painting it will, I fear, be inferior. I am applying to Woolner to advise me. I hope our men know how truly I thank them.

Woolley's desperation is evident from the fact that he was relying on Sir Alfred Denison for an extra subscription. By 1865 Denison's direct association with the university had ceased although he had been in the colony when his father was governor and had been an original member of the university senate. Alfred and Henry Denison had bestowed £100 for one of the side windows in the Great Hall. Denison was still, however, on friendly terms with former colonial associates such as James Macarthur. Alfred Denison, in encouraging Woolley to have a 'full-length' was conversant with the significance of scale in portraiture, as his father, whilst governor of New South Wales had been painted in the colony by O.R. Campbell and in England by Richard Buckner. Woolley's deference to Alfred Denison's wishes implied that it was Denison whom Woolley hoped would pay for the portrait.

The artist Woolley chose was William Menzies Tweedie, a relatively minor painter, whose work was refused by the Royal Academy after 1874. There is no evidence to suggest that Woolley met Tweedie through Thomas Woolner as he had hoped. Woolley's connection with Tweedie probably came through the son of William Wilberforce, Samuel Wilberforce, Dean of Westminster in 1845 and Bishop of Oxford from 1845-1869, whose portrait by Tweedie was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1863. It is very likely that Woolley saw
this portrait on his return to England, for his great friend at Oxford
had been Dean Arthur Penryn Stanley, a fellow of University College,
Oxford, who was appointed Dean of Westminster in 1863 whilst Samual
Wilberforce was Bishop of Oxford. Therefore it could be surmised
that Woolley received advice regarding his portrait, not from Woolner,
but from his colleagues in the church.

But even after Tweedie had been commissioned, Woolley's troubles
continued. 'My picture is to cost £150/8/- or £157/10/- ', he wrote
to Windeyer, 'I have £150 and ... am willing enough to pay the
£7/10/- balance. But that doesn't include frame and cost of transport
... Nicholson intended to canvas our ... Australian ... but (he
was) now canvassing for Merewether's picture, therefore I cannot
disturb him.' Woolley named seven other men whom he suggested
that Windeyer might canvas for him, but added 'don't do this if
you don't fancy it. The picture would only have to stay, till I can
afford the frame, at the studio'. Nicholson, the driving force
behind the portraits, contributed the balance, even though he was
by then living permanently in England.

The problems encountered by Woolley indicate the parsimonious
attitude of the supporters of the university and of the university
itself in relation to works of art. They wanted the most prestigious -
Sir Arthur Denison was fixed on a full-length and Woolley himself
was anxious that the portrait be considered a 'work of art', but
Woolley could not afford it, and the others were not prepared to
pay for it. The portrait was actually cheap. If Woolner had advised
Woolley he may have suggested his Pre-Raphaelite colleague John
Everett Millais, whose full-length portrait of John Ruskin (1854)
cost £350, more than twice the sum available to Woolley. By
the 1860s, paintings by Millais were selling for as much as £1000.

Other sitters also suffered from insufficiency of funds. The
Plate 12 shortfall in the subscription for James Macarthur's portrait was due
to unrealistic expectations of members of the testimonial committee
and possibly fewer donors contributing than had been expected,
for the committee specified that 'the subscription be limited to one
or two guineas - the latter sum entitling each subscriber to
a proof impression of a steel engraving to be executed from the painting'. 95 Seventy-five donors gave one guinea and two gave two guineas, totalling £82/19/-, an inadequate sum for a portrait, let alone a steel engraving, no evidence of which has been found. The portrait is listed in the University of Sydney Calendar of 1883 as given by the sitter, no mention of public subscription appears. Macarthur did not commission an 'eminent artist in London', but an Italian painter in Rome. There are several possible reasons, the first being that traditionally portraits by Italian artists were cheaper than those by English artists. 96 The price was not insignificant considering the shortage of contributed funds, for although Macarthur was not poor, he was not as rich as he had thought and by 1863 he had decided not to remain in England permanently but to return to Sydney to live, partly because of the high cost of living in the mother country. 97 An indication that price was indeed a consideration can be seen from the fact that Macarthur's portrait is a three-quarter length, which was cheaper than a full-length such as the portraits of the other founders of the university. 98 Secondly, the choice of an Italian painter may have been influenced by Macarthur's youthful tour of Europe which included Italy. 99

The artist whom Macarthur commissioned in 1863 was Alessandro Capalti (1810-1868) of Rome, a history painter who also specialised in portraits of the society matrons of Rome such as La Princesse Gwendoline Borghese, and Adelaide Ristori. He exhibited at the Royal Academy, London, between 1851-1858. Once Macarthur had decided upon an Italian artist he was probably attracted to Capalti because of his impressive three-quarter length portrait of the Colonial Secretary, Edward Deas Thomson of 1855. This portrait, now owned by the Mitchell Library, Sydney, was a great success, not only in New South Wales, but also in Rome, where it was exhibited and described as a portrait 'worthy of van Dyck, a perfect work', but the critic added gratuitously, 'it is a misfortune that this picture should be destined for Australia, a country which up to now has not learned to value fine arts.' 100 Macarthur would doubtless have seen and admired this portrait on its arrival in the colony.
While Macarthur probably chose an Italian for reasons of economy, the Colonial Secretary, Deas Thomson seems to have had no difficulty in commissioning his own portrait for the university. He was one of the most frequently painted members of colonial society, probably due to his high office and the respect in which he was held in the colony. When he became chancellor of the university in 1865, the portrait which had been borrowed from the Sydney Chamber of Commerce by Nicholson must have been thought inadequate. Another portrait was commissioned and paid for by public subscription. \[101\] Again Capalti was the artist commissioned, but this portrait was a full-length, bigger than those of Sir Charles and the Rev. Woolley, but similar in dimensions to Sir William Montague Manning. Although there are a number of portraits of Deas Thomson, this is the only full-length, \[102\] which is an indication of the importance of the hanging site as well as the pretensions of the sitter.

Perhaps because of his public position Deas Thomson did not have any difficulty in raising funds. The first Capalti portrait of 1855 was paid for with a proportion of the testimonial funds raised for him before his departure from the colony on a tour of Europe in 1854. \[103\] In 1857 he was again canvassing for subscriptions for a portrait to be placed in the Legislative Council, although he did not wish it to replace that of Sir Charles Nicholson. Was there some rivalry in the matter of portraits? \[104\] It cannot be argued that Deas Thomson commissioned an Italian because of shortage of funds, but perhaps he had a naturally frugal nature. He did not engage in a lavish life style in Sydney. On his tour of Europe in 1854 he visited Italian art museums, and this may have inspired him to commission an Italian artist for his first portrait. \[105\]

In view of the critical acclaim of the first portrait it is not surprising that the full-length for the university was commissioned from the same artist.

It was the exception rather than the rule when nineteenth-century official portraits in the University Collection were commissioned in New South Wales. This was the case with only two of the official portraits, Rev. Charles Badham D.D. (1875)(the subject was the second professor of classics and logic from 1887-1883) and
plate 19 Rev. Canon Allwood (no date), the vice-chancellor from 1867-1883. Both portraits were painted in Sydney by Giulio Anivitti. In a succession of official nineteenth-century portraits painted overseas, these two portraits interrupted the established tradition, which, however, returned to the overseas pattern with the portrait of

plate 20 William Charles Windeyer (not dated) by the English artist Arthur J. Foster. 106 All the same the tradition of overseas patronage was never subsequently as strong as it had been before the portrait of Badham.

Why did Badham and Allwood break the pattern? Neither of these men appears to have had a strong attachment to the 'mother country', as did Nicholson, Wentworth and Merewether, and although both were Oxbridge graduates, each was partly educated outside England. Both men, like Woolley, were ordained priests of the Church of England, and therefore presumably, had more spiritual than commercial interests. Canon Allwood was born in Jamaica, then a British colony, and after gaining his degree at Cambridge, he returned to Jamaica and later emigrated to Sydney in 1839. Charles Badham was partly educated in Switzerland and after his study at Oxford he worked in Europe, forming life-long associations with European as well as English scholars. Therefore, neither of these men were likely to have a pressing need to present the image of the English gentleman whose residence in the colony was merely an interlude and not a life-long commitment. Nevertheless, both were willing to conform to the portrait tradition, which by the 1870s was well established at the university.

But apart from the loyalties and origins of these two men, there was a more cogent reason for them to have their portraits painted in Sydney. Both were original members of the New South Wales Academy of Art, founded in 1871. At the first conversazione of the academy, held on 7 August 1871, Professor Badham gave the inaugural address. After outlining his ideas of art and beauty, Badham called on the audience to support the academy and not to allow it to 'pine and perish under the shade of their indifference'. 107 Badham's own sincerity would have been in doubt had he not
commissioned Giulio Anivitti, the first teacher of painting at the academy, when a public testimonial collected funds for his portrait.

Giulio Anivitti (1850-1881) was an Italian who trained at the Accademia di san Luca in Rome under Alessandro Capalti, the artist who painted portraits of Deas Thomson and James Macarthur. Anivitti emigrated to Brisbane with the sculptor Simonetti, then came to Sydney in 1874. From 1875 he taught at the New South Wales Academy of Art and acted as curator of the Academy's picture collection. Anivitti's portrait, Charles Badham, won a gold medal at the annual exhibition of the academy in 1875, and this, no doubt was the reason that Canon Allwood also commissioned Anivitti for his portrait. As a pupil of Capalti, Anivitti may have had connections with the university through Deas Thomson, who was chancellor when the portraits of Badham and Allwood were painted. A connection is indicated by the partly indecipherable paper label attached to the verso of the Badham portrait.

The examples of methods and difficulties of commissioning portraits examined so far represents the general trend in portrait commissions at the university. The early rejection of local colonial painters for a variety of reasons left the sitters with the task of finding and commissioning an artist overseas. Often this was difficult, and it was exacerbated in many cases by insufficient funds for a portrait which would meet the expectations of the contributors to the testimonial fund for the sitter. Nevertheless, the prestige of having a portrait painted overseas was some compensation. The parsimonious attitude of both the subscribers and the university may have been due to naivety, but more likely it was a case of on the one hand wanting a temple of worthies but on the other hand not wanting to put up the money, either from ignorance or meanness. The arrival of Giulio Anivitti in the colony provided an opportunity to commission an artist trained overseas in the conventions of the public portrait but working in the colony. The success of Anivitti's portrait of Badham promoted confidence in colonial portrait painters. The practice of 'going abroad' to have a portrait painted was gradually eroded towards the end of the century. It was not until
Sir John Longstaff emerged as a society portrait painter that the
custom of commissioning artists overseas for portraits at the university
became obsolete.

The incidence of Australian commissions for portraits coincided
with the rising nationalism of the 1890s as the colony anticipated
federation. Although Australian artists were commissioned, it still
remained the province of the individual to arrange for portraits
to be painted and presented to the university. Thus Percy Spence's
Mr. Justice R.E. O'Connor (1892) who was a fellow of Senate from
1891-1892 was presented to the university by his wife. Spence's
Sir Philip Sydney Jones (1885), vice-chancellor, was presented to
the university by members of the medical profession. Alfred Paxton
Backhouse (1900), another vice-chancellor, was painted by Sir John
Longstaff, and this portrait, painted at the turn of the century,
introduced an extended period of patronage of Australian portrait
painters of high standing, who were regularly commissioned throughout
the twentieth century. These include many works by Longstaff,
Walter Bowring and Sir William Dargie, as well as portraits by Louis
Kahan, William Dobell, Clifton Pugh and Guy Warren to name only
a few. The first woman to receive a commission for a university
portrait was Ethel Stephens (1880?-1944). She painted her father,
Professor W.J. Stephens (1829-1890), not dated, and others, John
Henry Challis (no date), and Sir Normand MacLaurin (1911). In
the twentieth century the eminent Archibald Prize winner, Judy
Cassab has been commissioned several times.

What were the stylistic conventions followed in the portraits
in the Great Hall? Did they have anything in common with the
accepted conventions of the official public portrait in which likeness
is often subservient to the portrayal of an idealised version of the
sitter, which at times conveys more about the office than the man?
Was the portrait collection really like collections in the old institutions
of the mother country? Should the portraits be considered as works
of art, agents of social advancement or historical documents? And
finally how were they received by the sitters themselves and by
the public?
There is no doubt that Sir Charles Nicholson's portrait was intended for a large public hall, its grandiose scale precludes its display elsewhere. Nicholson's portrait is extremely formal, betraying no element of personal taste or individuality. The full-length side-on pose with drape, chair and table is a stock pattern, but one which is used more often in the eighteenth century than the nineteenth century, for example Sir Joshua Reynolds' Hon. Charles Townsend (1767). In contrast, George Richmond's portrait, Thomas Worsley (c. 1840), vice-chancellor of Cambridge University, is a much more informal presentation of a seven-eighths length seated figure, wearing an academic gown, not vice-chancellor's robes, and casually holding his mortar board at an angle on his knee, quizzically addressing the viewer with a direct gaze. But Nicholson stands, looking down on the viewer, elevated and distanced by a strip of red carpet, with the light falling from right to left upon the gold braid of the chancellor's robes and the silver of the mace.

A subtle contradiction may be found, however, in his resolute but not elegant stance, the proud bearing but the slight inclination of the head, the modest smile, but distanced gaze. For aesthetic reasons the nose is straightened and the large ears disguised, as shown by comparison with the photograph of Nicholson held in University of Sydney archives. There are no accessories which could date this work, the drape, table cloth and chair are subdued and plain to achieve this end, but also to focus attention upon the chancellor's robes. This portrait appears to be a somewhat idealised likeness of Nicholson. It is the chancellor's robe which confronts the viewer rather than the man himself, as the painting essentially portrays the office not the man. In commissioning an English artist whose work was hung at the Royal Academy, Nicholson obviously wanted a result that had a certain credibility as a work of art, but above all the work was intended to bear historical significance for the university.

The portrait of Professor John Woolley also conforms to requirements of official portraiture in scale, although this portrait reveals some of the personal characteristics of the sitter. The most striking feature of Woolley's portrait is the Neo-gothic accessories. Woolley is posed against Gothic panelling which could have been designed.
by Pugin for a pulpit. The distinctly church-like atmosphere created by this 'pointed or Christian' decoration is, however, a domestic interior in which the languidly posed figure casually rests an elbow on a mantelpiece decorated with Gothic carving above a fireplace surrounded by a Gothic fender. The brilliant crimson academic gown which contrasts with the black of the clothes worn by Woolley creates the focal point of the work, and yet in spite of this striking contrast of colour, the figure is inert, as if suffering from an enervating lack of vitality. Although Woolley had, on his departure from Sydney in 1864 been described as having 'eager vivid look, and gracious mien/ The general humanist, the special friend/ The Scholar, Patriot and brave divine', the drooping pose and strained expression indicate the depression from which Woolley suffered whilst he was in England.\footnote{113}{The books shown in the portrait are a standard indication of scholarship, but the Gothic references however, relate directly to Woolley's personal taste, which is apparent from his very long and detailed lecture on Tennyson's Idyls of the King, delivered to the Darling Point Mutual Improvement Association on 18 December, 1860 and probably also to the Sydney Mechanics Institute.\footnote{114}{The iconography of the portrait is also remarkably compatible with the interior of the Great Hall.}}

In the context of public portraiture this portrait is in some ways ambivalent. The dimensions and doctoral robes indicate a formal public portrait which was intended to place Woolley in the historical context of the foundation of the university. Yet the informal pose, in which Woolley gazes directly out, meeting the viewer at eye level, yet awkwardly cut off by the oddly placed chair, and the inclusion of accessories which relate to Woolley's personal preoccupations also reveal a sentient human being.

The public portraits at the university do not always portray the 'office'; some, such as Sir William Montague Manning represent power, indicated through the style of the painting. The main characteristic of this portrait is its immense size, commented upon earlier. The proportions are not life-like, the head is small in comparison to the body, but this adds to the impression of the height of the figure. The height is further accentuated by
the viewpoint from which the work is done, that is, from below
the level of the table. The red panel behind the upper part of
the figure also draws the eye upwards to the face as it is the only
brilliant colour in the work. The implication is that the painting
should be hung high, placing the subject in a commanding position
and enhancing the impression of grandeur. The low viewpoint was
also advantageous to the artist, as the best portraits were hung
high on the wall above head level at the Royal Academy. 115 That
this theatrical effect in the Manning portrait was intentional can
be seen by comparison with another full-length portrait by Watson
Gordon The First Marquis of Dalhousie (c.1835) in which the
viewpoint is level with the subject's shoulder. 116 This figure
stands casually with feet apart and head slightly cocked, a direct
gaze and indicating with his right hand his robes of office. The
effect is one of arrogance, but not of the command and control
exhibited in the Manning portrait. The figure of Manning is shown
with feet modestly and formally together in a position of attention.
The black frock coat and black bow tie are only relieved by a white
shirt with high collar and a slim, undecorated watch chain, the
typical mid-century dress of a conservative bourgeois gentleman,
correctly outfitted for his profession of the law, a figure of stability
and assurance. In spite of the audacity shown in the commission
of such a huge painting, mentioned earlier, the self assurance of
this subject allowed for a certain modesty, for the portrait was the
result of a public subscription on the occasion of Manning's
knighthood, and yet there is no indication of the imperial honours
he had won. The viewer does not meet with any bold confrontation
in the gaze of the sitter, which is directed out and over the right
shoulder. As the torso faces left the impression is one of
uncomfortable stiffness and aloofness. The expression on the face
is serious and withdrawn as if engaged in deep thought. The
power of this portrait resides in the scale of the commanding,
centrally placed figure. Although the portrait is not an outstanding
example of Sir John Watson Gordon's work, nevertheless, the painter
obviously understood how to convey the dignity and commanding
presence of the sitter. This portrait is a celebration of the
individual and an instrument of power.
Less compelling in its evocation of power is Capalti's Deas Thomson. Again the standard black suit is shown, but Deas Thomson wears on the left breast his Companion of the Bath decoration which he received in 1856. Attention is drawn to this by the self-consciously placed left hand on the hip, directly below the medal, thus creating a light-toned area surrounded by the black and drawing the eye to that side of the work. This was a stock pose, frequently used in the eighteenth century by Sir Joshua Reynolds and his colleagues. In the Deas Thomson portrait, details such as the florid carpet and the disturbing contrast of the red drape and the green tablecloth distract attention from the figure, and contribute to a less successful evocation of power than is seen in the austere figure of Manning. Although there is undoubted skill shown in the arrangement of the Manning portrait, in both these works the artists have concentrated upon projecting the powerful individual rather than on any effort towards artistic innovation.

James Macarthur could be compared to both the above-mentioned works. Again this portrait denotes the individual, rather than the office, but it is an image of conservative respectability rather than an evocation of power. This extremely formal work shows Macarthur as a cultivated aristocratic gentleman with absolutely no reference to his colonial birthplace, his association with the university as a member of the first senate, or his occupations of pastoralist and politician. The execution of the painting is technically very competent, but the style is conservative, devices such as the ionic column, the hand on the book, the tablecloth and matching drape framing the figure had all been repeated endlessly and with more imagination in the eighteenth century by Pompeo Batoni.

At the university the convention of the very formal and conservative style of public portrait was firmly established by the 1890s when Lady Windeyer gave the portrait of her husband, William Charles Windeyer (c.1887) by the English artist A.J. Foster, showing the subject formally posed in the robes of his public office of Chief Justice. Lady Windeyer could presumably have chosen instead Tom Roberts' Windeyer (1892) which is not so formal in style. The comparative lack of formality may have been the reason that the Roberts was not given; on the other hand, ironically, it may have
been considered that a work by the English painter A.J. Foster
(now largely forgotten) was more prestigious.

Could it be said that the university portraits painted in the
 colony differ substantially from those executed overseas? The
 portraits of Badham and Allwood are equal or superior in style and
 execution to the portraits painted overseas. But although skilfully
 painted, and in Badham exhibiting considerable flair, both are
 extremely conservative. In the Rev. Charles Badham, Anivitti
 found a subject whose appearance and style he could easily adapt
 to the Italian Renaissance tradition of portraiture within which he
 appeared to work. The Italian Renaissance scholar Paolo Lomazzo
 codified in 1584 the correct pose for a man of honour, as one in
 which the 'honourable personage' should 'rest himself without moving
 ... carry his body upright with his face more upright than downwards,
 bear the parts of his body afar off one from the other ... stretching
 forth his right hand with a kind of magnificency ...'. 119 Badham
 was a distinguished orator, therefore the oratorical gesture of the
 hand with the open palm was appropriate. It was appropriate also
 in terms of Badham's religious and teaching vocations, as the
 gesture derives from the language of signs developed in the
 fifteenth century by the Benedictines, and denotes demonstration. 120
 Physically, Badham's domed head, flowing white beard and aquiline
 features could be compared with Donatello's St. Mark or to the
 prophets from Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel ceiling. The flowing
 academic robes with hood arranged asymmetrically over the right
 shoulder also have a neoclassical connotation. The mace, in the
 place of honour to Badham's right, signifies authority, as in the
 portrait of Nicholson.

Although in a poorer state of repair, due to overcleaning early
 in the century, the portrait of Canon Allwood is also distinctive.
The stock pose has a neoclassical background similar to Capallí's
 James Macarthur but here there appears in the distance a building
 which could be the university. The formal three-quarter length
 seated pose shows the Canon partly cut off from the viewer by the
 architectural construction on which his hand rests. The background
 drape is not as flamboyantly composed as in the Badham, allowing
 the interest to centre on the stylised folds of the cassock, which
call to mind the fluted column of Roman architecture, thus creating a static pose, the stillness of which accords with the direct gaze of the sitter.

Other public portraits at the university painted in New South Wales later in the nineteenth century cannot be distinguished from earlier portraits in the collection painted overseas, and lack the

plate 21 panache of the Anivittis. Percy Spence's Mr. Justice R.E. O'Connor

plate 22 (1892) is academic and stiff, although his Sir Philip Sydney Jones (1895) seen in three quarter view shows a little more imagination.

plate 23 Ethel Stephen's Sir Normand MacLaurin (1911) a half-length study of a man in the robes of vice-chancellor includes no accessories

plate 17 and is quite similar to the plain presentation of the Merewether portrait (c.1878 unknown English artist). It conforms to requirements of the public portrait in its essentials but is modest in size and straightforward in style. Nevertheless in the early twentieth century a more distinctive style of portraiture emerged in the university portraits, for instance Sir John Longstaff's Professor John Irvine Hunter (1929) includes Australian landscape details in the background.

The nineteenth-century portraits at the university are on the whole stiff, formal and very conservative in style. While it could not be said that the nineteenth-century portrait collection at Cambridge University is exactly avant-garde, portraits in that collection by George Richmond, Holman Hunt and George Frederick Watts for example, are far more relaxed and imaginative in pose and confident in execution than most of the portraits at Sydney. Even the Cambridge portraits, however, appear conservative in comparison with portraits by French artists of the same era, for example Edgar Degas' Portrait of Duranty in the Burrell Collection, (Glasgow Museum and Art Gallery) although the Degas work does not quite fit the category of 'official portrait'.

How were these portraits received by the critics and the sitters themselves? On the whole there was little critical acclaim for the
portraits under discussion, which is not surprising as their primary function was other than artistic. The Phillips portrait of Nicholson was described as 'well-known, large and much admired' but this was in the context of a report on the Great Hall. In university records it was described in similar terms. Not everyone in the colony was of a similar opinion, however, for the poet Charles Harpur wrote an ironic inscription for the portrait:

The semblance of a senatorial spirit
Whose bright claims even Envy could not smother;
So deep his genius, and so large his merit,
That none could fathom one or measure 'other:
And being thus untestable they led
Most men to hold them but attributed.

Woolley's portrait was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1866 with the caption 'The Rev. Dr. John Woolley, late principal of the University of Sydney. Painted for the students of the University a few weeks previous to his sailing for Australia in the unfortunate steamship London'. Woolley himself had been satisfied; 'I think it is a good one (portrait)', he wrote to Windoyer, 'a flattering likeness and a good piece of art'. Nicholson was prepared to be more critical, 'I have not yet seen the picture ... from what I hear I rather fear that whilst it may have some merit as a work of art, it will not be successful as a likeness', he wrote. Obviously both Nicholson and Woolley required both a likeness and a work of art. The reception of Woolley's portrait by one journalist on its arrival in Sydney was non-committal. 'A testimonial portrait, painted by one of the first English artists, has just arrived in Sydney, and the occasion is therefore opportune for presenting the accompanying engraving of the lamented Dr. Woolley. The portrait just arrived in Sydney is the result of public subscription.' Despite the somewhat laconic comment, the fact that the portrait was mentioned at all in the local press is an indication of its importance in the colony at the time, although the interest was also inspired by the drama of Woolley's death by drowning. Merewether was also pleased with his portrait, his friends in England admired it, said it was a good likeness and a good painting. The few imperfections were corrected before it left the artist's studio according to Merewether, whose rather smug description of the painting omitted the name of the artist.
The first university portrait commissioned in the colony was the most successful as a work of art in the eyes of the local critics. As mentioned previously at the annual exhibition of the New South Wales Academy in 1872 at Clark's Assembly Rooms, Elizabeth Street, Sydney, Anivitti won a gold medal for his portrait of Professor Badham. The Sydney Morning Herald critic wrote that the exhibition as a whole was 'decidedly the most attractive exhibition the society has yet been able to produce ... the number of exhibits (was) greater and on the whole, they (were) of a higher order of merit'. \(^{131}\) Sadly there was no mention of Anivitti, but the review of the Intercolonial Exhibition, 1875 in which the portrait won the prize for portraiture described the Badham portrait as 'the most noticed and admired; it is indeed an admirable picture and conveys a pleasing idea of the learned and eloquent original although some of the drapery is rather stiff'. \(^{132}\)

Public critical acclaim would no doubt have contributed to the prestige of these portraits, but sitting them in the Great Hall provided a more widely recognised distinction in the eyes of the general public than would have been gained from critical reviews read by a limited proportion of the community. At the same time these stylistically conservative but nonetheless impressive (in the eyes of many colonials) formal portraits conferred on the Great Hall a semblance of tradition in emulation of institutions of the mother country.

Before the conclusion of this chapter it must be noted that there is a disturbing lack of any official portraits of women in the University Collection. The only nineteenth-century portraits of women are Mrs. Blacket and Mrs. Woolley, both domestic portraits donated by their descendants. The twentieth century has seen little improvement, there are only four portraits of women, plus one very recently given by a donor who noted the dearth at the University Exhibition of 1988. \(^{133}\) The lack of nineteenth-century portraits of women relates to the fact that no women held official positions at the university in the nineteenth century. The closest in style and size to a nineteenth-century official portrait of a woman is Tremayne Lark's Miss Fairfax (no date), Hon. Secretary of the Ladies' Committee formed to raise money for the Women's College.
This portrait is not part of the University Collection though, it belongs to Women's College, University of Sydney.

Thus, in conclusion, it is apparent that there was no coherent policy in regard to patronage espoused by the university as a body towards commissioning official portraits in the nineteenth century. Nevertheless a coherent pattern emerged, but what prevailed was largely the taste of individuals associated with the university, and their style of patronage was conservative in the extreme. The emphasis was on recognisable representation of an individual, which entailed an image of respectability and power in all but a few cases. Except towards the last decade of the century, artists working in the colony were not considered appropriate. Other institutions with collections of portraits followed a similar pattern of overseas patronage, but this was in contrast with the policy of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, which began purchasing Australian work as early as 1889. This highlights the ambivalent status of the portrait, for in many cases its importance was not seen in terms of art, but in relation to social issues. The Art Gallery was collecting art for art's sake, but other institutions like the university saw the portrait, not in relation to art, but as contributing to an historical tradition, as well as the above-mentioned social function. Thus the portrait was regarded not only as a likeness, but also as a commodity, which when purchased was expected to produce certain desired effects, beneficial, in the case of the university portraits to both the institution and the individual.