



Broughton Knox  
Principal, 1959 - 1985

**BROUGHTON KNOX**  
**Principal of Moore College, 1959 - 1985**

by  
Marcus L. Loane  
and  
Peter F. Jensen

**MOORE COLLEGE  
LIBRARY**

Moore Theological College  
NEWTOWN NSW

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Preface	(v)
Chapter 1	
Marcus Loane David Broughton Knox	1
Chapter 2	
Peter Jensen Broughton Knox on Training for the Ministry	13

Copyright © Moore Theological College 1994

Published by  
Moore Theological College  
1 King Street  
NEWTOWN NSW 2042

ISBN 0-909443-21-1

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form or by any means without prior permission in writing from the publisher.

## **PREFACE**

This short book has been prepared in order to commemorate the life and work of Broughton Knox. It is first being issued on the day when the Broughton Knox Teaching Centre at Moore College is opened by Archbishop R. H. Goodhew.

The initial chapter, by Sir Marcus Loane, was originally written for his book *These Happy Warriors* (New Creation Publication Inc. 1988), and is used by kind permission of the publisher. Sir Marcus has slightly revised the chapter for this publication.

The second chapter, by Dr Peter Jensen, was given as the Inaugural Lecture when the building was first used by the College on February 28th, 1994.

Under God, Moore College owes an immense debt to Broughton Knox. Sir Marcus Loane was his immediate predecessor as Principal, and Peter Jensen succeeded him. They join together in their affection and high esteem for Broughton and are delighted to honour his memory in this way.



**DAVID BROUGHTON KNOX**

*Marcus Loane*

A volume of essays in honour of David Broughton Knox was published in 1986; it was entitled *God Who Is Rich In Mercy*. The first essay was an Appreciation of his life and work by Archbishop Robinson, and I can do little more than traverse the same ground with added detail to fill in a few gaps. Broughton was born on December 26th 1916 in Adelaide, where his father was the Rector of St Luke's Whitmore Square, a parish in the heart of the city. Broughton's father had come out to New South Wales from Ulster as a child of five in 1880, and was always marked by a strong Celtic temperament and equally strong Protestant convictions. Broughton's mother had brought to the marriage the rare sweetness of a woman who lived in the sunshine of God's presence. Broughton was the first son but the third child in a home in which four boys and six girls were to be born. He was six years old when in 1922 his father left St Luke's and returned to the Diocese of Sydney as Rector of St Michael's Wollongong. Two years later there was a further move when he became Rector of St Paul's Chatswood. It was in this parish that Broughton passed from childhood to boyhood, and the home life of his parents was of paramount importance in his development. It was a home in which readings from the Bible and prayers were the rule every morning and evening; a home in which love and truth reigned supreme for all alike, 'as well the small as the great, the teacher as the scholar' (1 Chron. 25:8); a home that was also darkened with great sorrow. Gareth, at the age of eighteen months, died from meningitis in 1926; Margaret, who was four years old, died from the same cause as a complication from measles in 1927; and the eldest daughter Mary died from blood poisoning at the age of nineteen in 1931. That terrible succession of family bereavements meant that love and sorrow were to unite the whole family with bonds of uncommon strength and affection.

The eight years at Chatswood were the formative years in Broughton's boyhood. He spent his teens at Knox Grammar School from 1928 onwards. He was not over fond of games, but was a lover of books, of words, of debate and argument. His great friend was Kenneth Jacobs, who in later life would become a Judge of the Supreme Court in New South Wales and then of the High Court of Australia. Broughton's father left Chatswood in 1932 to become Rector of Christ Church Gladesville, and Broughton left school at the end of 1933. He spent the next twelve months on his uncle's properties at Daylesford and Rocklynne, between Orange and Cudal. It would not be easy to tell whether he enjoyed this experience, but it was not without value. Then in 1935 he enrolled at the University of Sydney as an Arts Student in Greek and English. One of his fellow students was Gough Whitlam; they both aimed at first class honours in Greek, but were thwarted by the arrival of a new Professor at the very end of 1937. This was Enoch Powell, who had obtained the appointment at the early age of twenty-six and arrived just in time to mark the papers of the final examinations. To Broughton's great disappointment, he was only awarded second class honours in his degree. Those mid-thirties were also the years in which the fledgling Evangelical Union was winning its spurs within the University. Broughton and his friend Geoffrey Parker were interested, but stood somewhat aloof. Broughton would not join the Evangelical Union merely because that was thought to be the right thing to do. He was determined to establish his independence; he would act for himself rather than walk in the shadow of his father's reputation. This was a test of his integrity as a responsible person who had to reach maturity in his own right.

The year 1938 was spent as a Catechist with his father in the parish of Gladesville; this gave him time to test his call with a view to ordination. He was steadily growing in the conviction that this should be his goal; but where should he be trained? Although he had applied to enter Moore College, that year had brought a breach of understanding between Broughton's father and T.C. Hammond of Moore College, and that in turn led his father to think in terms of theological study overseas. As I was in England during 1938, I was asked

to make inquiries concerning Wycliffe Hall in Oxford, Ridley Hall in Cambridge, and St John's College at Highbury, which was better known as the London College of Divinity. Broughton travelled to England with his parents early in 1939 and enjoyed the summer with them before they returned to Sydney. It was finally decided that he should go to St John's where Dr T.W. Gilbert was the Principal as it was the clearest evangelical college. He therefore enrolled at St John's in October, a month after the outbreak of war. Two years later he graduated with a First Class as an Associate of the London College of Divinity and a Second Class as a Bachelor of Divinity in the University of London, rising from a sickbed to take the latter exams. But he did not return home to Sydney. He was ordained Deacon in 1941 and Priest in 1942 by the Bishop of Ely and served as a curate in the parish of St Andrew-the-less in Cambridge. His work in the parish was light enough to allow him to become a member of Fitzwilliam College and to begin to read for the Theological Tripos under such mentors as Wilfred Knox and C.H. Dodd. But those were dark and troubled years in England. The summer of 1940 had seen the fall of France and the Battle of Britain. The month of June 1941 saw the Nazi onslaught on Russia, and December saw the destruction of the American Navy at Pearl Harbour. Broughton was bound to be caught up in the maelstrom of war; but for him there had been a short lull during his first two years in Orders.

During those years Broughton was drawn into vital contact with the Inter Varsity Fellowship. A small group of men in 1938 had formed the Biblical Research Committee with a single-minded resolve to roll away the reproach of anti-intellectualism so long levelled against Evangelicals. Broughton joined this Committee in the course of 1941 and soon became a close friend of Stuart Barton Babbage, who was to become its Honorary Secretary. They both took part in a small conference held at Kingham Hill in July that year; it was to prove pregnant for the future. Dr Douglas Johnson, General Secretary of the Inter Varsity Fellowship, liked to recall what he described as Broughton's sevenfold 'No, No, No ...' when he voiced his dissent. There were few who could say No so persistently and so effectively. July 1941 was almost the



darkest month in the whole course of the War, but this conference drew up plans of a far-reaching character. Eventually, they led to the formation of the Tyndale Fellowship, with its Summer Schools and lectures in post-war years. Broughton was credited with the idea that led as well to the purchase of Tyndale House in Selwyn Gardens, Cambridge, and its development as a residential research library. Douglas Johnson was the mainspring in this movement, though he remained in the background. He drew very able men to his side and they began to provide an upsurge of first class Evangelical literature. One of their first ventures was the *New Bible Handbook*, though it did not appear until 1947. It included an article from Broughton; a small beginning, but a promise of things to come. But all these interests were interrupted in December 1943 when Broughton resigned from his parish to become a Chaplain in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve.

Broughton's service in the Navy began only six months before D-Day; it was to give him a direct share in one of the grand events in World War Two. After a brief spell at Devonport, he was posted to a Combined Operations base at Garelock in the Firth of Clyde, where men were training for the Normandy invasion. Early in the new year, Broughton had some reason to think that his name would not be listed for that operation. This led him to lodge a special application to be allowed to go, on the ground that he was a single man who had no dependants. As a result he joined the Depot ship which was to anchor off Sword Beach on D-Day plus one, June 7th 1944. His ship was forced to move further west when things went wrong on the beach, but it remained off the coast for three months. He was then sent back to Rosyth before being appointed to serve in the first 'Monab' (Mobile Naval Air Base), which was to accompany the Squadron destined for the Pacific. It was believed that the war with Japan would go on for at least twelve months after the collapse and defeat of the German Forces, and the plan for Monab was that it should form an on-shore base in support of the Marines who were to storm island beaches. Broughton's ship the Emperor of Japan (code-named J1) reached Jervis Bay in December 1944; he was home for

Christmas. But the war with Japan did not outlast VE Day in Europe by more than a few months; plans for Monab were shelved. Broughton was transferred briefly to H.M.S. Anson, and then to H.M.S. Vindex, an Aircraft Carrier ferrying supplies to the Occupation Forces in Japan. This ship sailed at last for England in 1946, via Durban and Simonstown. Broughton then chose to be discharged from the Navy in his own home country, and the voyage back to Sydney brought him home once more in time for Christmas; a civilian at last.

Archbishop Mowll had for some time been anxious to build up the staff of Moore College, and he spared no effort to arrange for Broughton to go into residence in February 1947 as a tutor and lecturer. His long absence overseas meant that he was scarcely known among his contemporaries, but a surprising episode in his early months at the College brought his name to the fore in church circles. A small group of laymen in a country parish had brought a suit against the Bishop of Bathurst on the ground that certain forms of Ritual, authorized in what was known as the Red Book, contravened the law of the Church of England. The case was heard by the Chief Judge in Equity; it turned very largely on the nature of the nexus between the Church in New South Wales and the Church of England. Sir Adrian Knox had delivered a crucial Opinion on this question in 1912. T. C. Hammond was asked in Court if he was in agreement with this Opinion, and he replied, 'Yes, insofar as I understand it.' Broughton, to the surprise of most people, was then called to appear before the Court as an 'expert' witness. Mr R. W. Kitto, K.C., later a Judge of the High Court of Australia, appeared for the Bishop of Bathurst, and set out at once to discredit Broughton by a rigorous cross-examination. Had he read the Opinion by Sir Adrian Knox? He had. Had he just read it in preparation for this case? No; he had read it some years before. How was that? When he was a boy of sixteen, he had taken it down from one of his father's bookshelves; he had read it then and had formed a conclusion about which he had seen no reason to change his mind. Did he consider himself an expert? Broughton was quite unfussed in his reply; 'I would not describe myself in that way; but there are others who do.' Kitto threw his papers down; it was said to have been the first



time that he was rattled by a witness. Broughton's view as to the legal nexus based on Sir Adrian's Opinion was endorsed by Mr Justice Roper. It was a triumph for the 'expert'!

Broughton's advent to Moore College in February 1947 marked the beginning of a lifelong commitment to its affairs. The College in 1947 had begun to expand with new buildings and an influx of ex-Servicemen as students. The staff consisted of the Principal, Vice-Principal, and two resident tutors and lecturers, and the course of study prior to ordination was increased to three full years. T. C. Hammond was at the peak of his career when he left the College at the end of September that year to spend eighteen months on leave in Britain. Broughton was his understudy in lectures on doctrine, and it became clear that his great primary interest lay in Theology. He was never nervous, but was rather hesitant in his manner of speech; he had yet to acquire the easy, self-confident, fluent style of later years. He was single, restless, struggling with study, finding his balance; he was devoted to his family, but determined to establish his own independence. He pursued his studies with patience and perseverance until he gained his M.Th. degree from the University of London in 1949, having concentrated on Biblical and Historical Theology. Then in 1950, at the age of thirty-three, he married Ailsa Lane, a singularly happy marriage. Academic success and a happy marriage brought him a new maturity, and in 1951 he was granted three years leave of absence in order to pursue a Doctorate overseas. He and Ailsa settled down in Oxford, where he read in the Bodleian Library and lectured at Wycliffe Hall in New Testament. Among his students was J. I. Packer, later so well-known as an author and teacher of Theology. Archbishop Mowll arranged for him to attend the Faith and Order Conference at Lund in 1952, and he was elected to the Geneva Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches. Meanwhile he was attached to St. Catherine's College and in 1953 he was awarded his degree as a Doctor of Philosophy. His thesis was subsequently published as the *Doctrine of Faith in the Reign of Henry VIII*. It had involved valuable research in books printed in black letter in the early sixteenth century, and is now a

standard work of reference for students in that period of history.

On his return to Sydney in early 1954, Broughton took up his work at Moore College as its Vice-Principal. T. C. Hammond's resignation at the end of 1953 had left Broughton with a clear field for his future work in Theology, to which he would devote himself for the rest of his life. His contribution to College and Church affairs during the next five years was richly varied. He drew largely on his English experience in replacing the Annual Convention with a College Mission in various parishes. He played a key role in establishing Halls of Residence for University students in two former hotels at Broadway in 1954. He had become a member of the Australian Committee of the World Council of Churches on the nomination of Archbishop Mowll, and was one of the Australian delegates to the Assembly at Evanston in 1954. This was followed by the Anglican Congress at Minneapolis, at which he was also present. Then in 1955, he took part in a Faith and Order Conference at Christchurch, New Zealand. But this marked the end of his ecumenical involvement. His contributions in debate at meetings of the Australian Council of Churches were too strong for the more liberal emphasis which was predominant. Meanwhile he took up his father's mantle on behalf of the *Australian Church Record*, which he valued highly as an independent paper serving the Evangelical cause. He was responsible for much of the editorial work, and its columns provided a regular vehicle for the expression of his viewpoint during the next three decades. He became a member of General Synod in 1952 and its Constitution Committee in 1954. He soon began to make his voice heard in debate in the Diocesan Synod and its Standing Committee, and he became a member of the Cathedral Chapter in 1961, being elected to fill his father's canonry after his death. He had always cherished a large vision for the future of the College, and his growing prestige made it clear that he would go much further.

On the death of D. J. Davies in May 1935 and the resignation of T. C. Hammond as from the end of 1953, Archbishop Mowll had cast his net wide before settling on the



appointment of a new Principal. So it was towards the end of 1958; as it turned out, Broughton's appointment was almost the Archbishop's last decisive act before his death on October 24th that year. Broughton came to his new office in February 1959 knowing that he had won the Archbishop's confidence and support, and he took up his duties in an eventful period. The Billy Graham Crusade in May that year was to trigger off an explosive expansion in College enrolments in the early sixties. The provision of Commonwealth Scholarships for University students and then of free Tertiary education brought about a steady rise in the calibre of candidates for ordination. The staff increased to match the growth in the overall enrolment; a four-year course became the norm, with the London B.D. as its goal. The principle of assessment for the College had been established by the Diocesan Synod in 1955, and the financial status of the College was further strengthened by a succession of legacies. There was extensive property development with a series of new buildings which were to transform the whole style of College life. Broughton's priorities never wavered; he set his heart on a highly qualified staff, on a wisely developed library, and on academic excellence. He was active in the affairs of the Australian College of Theology and of the Board of Studies in Divinity in the University of Sydney. He took a long view of College affairs and was single-minded in his pursuit of the ultimate objective. When it seemed to him that Archbishop Gough's policy was likely to encroach on the independent status of the College, he entrenched himself more firmly than ever against all outside pressure. He never courted popular sentiment, was sometimes misunderstood, and did not always command the goodwill of older clergy. But he was venerated by his own students and left an indelible mark on the character of the ministry.

Broughton's resignation from the Principalship took effect on February 28th, 1985. He had held office for twenty-six years, longer than any of his predecessors. It was arranged that he should continue to lecture in Theology until he reached the age of seventy-two at the end of 1988. His great contribution to the character of the ministry in the Diocese during his long term in office was due to what he was as a man and as a theologian. He had never ceased to read widely

and to think deeply about the issues of Theology. He had gone on Sabbatical leave in 1968 and again in 1980 in order to pursue his reading in England. His Moore College Lectures in 1979 were published as *The Everlasting God*, and his book on *The Lord's Supper from Wycliffe to Cranmer* in 1983. Broughton was the natural successor to T. C. Hammond as a theologian, but differed from him in his fundamental approach. T. C. Hammond, himself a Gold Medallist in the school of Philosophy, always held that Philosophy was the proper handmaid of Theology; his Theology was rooted in the metaphysics of the mediaeval Schoolmen, much as Scottish Theology was rooted in German philosophy. Broughton on the other hand was primarily concerned to develop a Biblical Theology; his teaching was rooted in the textual study of the New Testament as practised in Cambridge. In his research for his Oxford thesis he had perceived that John Frith was the first English writer to insist that only what is taught in Scripture may be required as an essential article of faith: 'Faith leaneth only on the Word of God, so that where His Word is not, there can be no good faith.'<sup>1</sup> But Frith went still further. There are many doctrines taught in Scripture, but it is not necessary to hold them all under pain of damnation. This was incorporated in the language of the VIth Article of Religion: 'Whatsoever is not read therein [in Scripture] nor may be proved thereby is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of Faith or be thought requisite or necessary to Salvation.' That was the ground on which Broughton took his stand.

Broughton's teaching was all rooted in his understanding of the integrity and authority of Holy Scripture as God's supreme written revelation of truth. He was never a blind adherent of Calvin, or Cranmer, or any other Reformation Divine; he carved out his own very independent line of approach. He admired Calvin rather than Calvin's more extreme disciples, and he followed Amyraldus rather than the latter in his view of predestination. He was not at ease with the doctrine of imputed righteousness, but followed Sanday

<sup>1</sup> The Writings of John Frith and Dr. Barnes, p. 49.



and Headlam in treating it as a legal fiction. This led him to prefer the concept of reconciliation rather than of justification as the criterion for a standing or falling church. As for the church, Broughton and D. W. B. Robinson hammered out a much more radical assessment of the Anglican tradition in their emphasis on the church as 'only and always a congregation of believers, whether on earth or in heaven.'<sup>2</sup> Broughton's mind was very subtle, but he had a tendency to crystallize his thinking in short dogmatic statements which over-simplified the situation. On his return from England in 1953, Faith was the keyword in his teaching; he liked to say that the exercise of Faith is Worship. After 1968, the keyword was Fellowship; the main purpose of a Christian assembly is to enter into Fellowship with the Lord of the church and with its members. After 1980, it was Relationship; the ideal of Relationship in the Triune Godhead is the perfect pattern of His people. But the thinking that lay behind such keywords was acute. W. J. Lawton was to say that Broughton's ideas had shaped the mind of a whole generation of clergy in their understanding of the doctrine of the church and had had a disturbing impact on parish life in the Diocese of Sydney.<sup>3</sup> Its full effect for good or ill will not become self-evident until a whole generation has passed away. But it is not too much to say that no other contemporary Australian Churchman has had a more original mind or has shown a more penetrating insight into questions of pure Theology, and that insight was derived from his understanding of the supreme revelation of truth in the Bible.

Broughton's activities covered a wide spectrum of church life and affairs; they stretched from a body like the General Synod Commission on Canon Law to his role as the President of the New South Wales Council of Churches. He had a shrewd mind, which revealed itself in his grasp of church law and his highly intelligent approach to matters of finance. He had no nervous qualms in debate, and was never afraid of

<sup>2</sup> *Church, Worship and the Local Congregation*, edited by B. G. Webb, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 83.

controversy. He was sometimes enigmatic, sometimes provocative; but he held on with a tenacity that could not be shaken. He was obstinate in argument, maddening in committee; but he survived where others were ignored. His dedication to Theology and the training of men for the Christian ministry led him into a new venture when he undertook to establish a new Theological College for the Church of England in South Africa as from October, 1988. He had mellowed since he retired and was always relaxed in his own home circle. The shape of his head with its shock of white hair gave him an amazing resemblance to his father; their portraits were almost interchangeable. He honoured his father, but worked out an independent line in thought and practice. He sat loose in a way that his father never did to clerical conventions and Anglican traditions. It was pointed out by Archbishop Robinson that he was more at ease with Grindal than with Hooker,<sup>4</sup> and this streak of Puritan non-conformity manifested itself in his indifference to the outward forms of clerical decorum. His was phlegmatic in some respects, but deeply emotional in others. He learnt to ski with his children and built a boat to sail with them on the harbour. He had no ear for music, but always delighted in Ailsa's singing, and drew strength and encouragement from her unfailing cheerful support. His home life, his College career, and his general ministry were all in the same mould. It would have been said of him, as of Nehemiah's colleague as they built the walls of Jerusalem: 'He was a faithful man, and feared God above many' (Neh. 7:2).

Broughton was 72 years old when he went out to South Africa to found the George Whitefield College for the Church of England in South Africa. He went to serve a small and embattled Church in a country racked by political turmoil and racial violence. He and Ailsa took up residence in Kalk Bay and opened the College for black and white. He struggled for funds, for books for the library, for housing for the students. Four years later, in December 1992, he retired, leaving the

<sup>4</sup> *God Who Is Rich in Mercy*, edited by P. T. O'Brien and D. G. Peterson, p. xii.

College as a steady going concern. It had been the crowning work of a distinguished ministry. As events turned out, he had little more than twelve months back in his own country, but that last year brought two great joys in his family circle: his youngest daughter was married in September, and his younger son was ordained to the priesthood in December. He died as the result of a massive cerebral haemorrhage on January 15th, 1994.

## **BROUGHTON KNOX ON TRAINING FOR THE MINISTRY**

The First Lecture Given in the New Building

*Peter Jensen*

### **Introduction**

The building in which we meet today is named after David Broughton Knox, Principal of Moore College from 1959 to 1985, and one of its greatest leaders. More than any other person Dr Knox created the modern College. He had many gifts, but pre-eminent among them was his gift of teaching God's word, and it is fitting that this centre for teaching and learning bears his name.

While he was still at university, Broughton acted as a catechist in his father's parish. During that time he visited extensively in the district, following the pattern of Paul at Ephesus, 'teaching (you) in public and from house to house, testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance to God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ' (Acts 20:20, 21). It seems that during this time he engaged profoundly with the Lord in prayer. Several times before his recent death he referred to the way in which he had at that earlier time asked *earnestly* that the Lord would make him 'a man after his own heart' (1 Sam 13:14), perhaps in the pattern of King David. His prayer was that he may be used of God in fruitful service.

We may testify that this was an answered prayer. In the 1920s & 30s Anglican evangelicalism in England and Australia had reached a low ebb, not least in the area of evangelical thought. Broughton was one of that group who helped engineer a significant renaissance. He played a part, for example, in the birth of the Tyndale Fellowship and Tyndale House and hence the Tyndale commentaries. His greatest contribution, however, was the creation in Australia of the modern Moore College, with its excellent library, learned faculty and strongly motivated students. He was, it must be said, Principal at a time when the community was raising its academic standards dramatically. But it was his genius which



enabled Moore to do the same, and to do it in a way which forwarded the gospel rather than betrayed it.

When he retired in 1985, he left the College in a flourishing condition, poised to make an international contribution through the teaching and writing of its faculty, markedly influential through its graduates, beginning to gain a reputation in some circles at least for offering a distinctive vision of what theological education should be. When I had the opportunity of visiting theological colleges overseas in 1987, I was able to see clearly what Broughton had achieved and how much we owed to his wisdom. Much of it we take for granted and assume as obvious; it is only when we see that it is missing elsewhere that we begin to realise that determination and wisdom were needed. Broughton had that understanding.

What was it that Broughton Knox insisted on in theological education, and how do we benefit from his insights today? His achievements arose from his theology, and we should turn there first.

## 1. THE KNOX THEOLOGY

### In context

It is a perennial temptation of theology to turn itself into anthropology; to talk about man rather than God. In Broughton's time various types of man-centred theology held the attention of many in the church. There were ecclesiastical versions, in which the church and its sacramental system intruded between the person and God with the result that the Bible was supplemented. There were rationalistic versions, in which human reason became the norm for our talk about God, with the result that the Bible was diminished. There were experiential versions, in which the human spirit was thought to relate in revelation to God's Spirit, with the result that the Bible was bypassed. Broughton's lectures at various times were marked by strenuous critique of anglo-catholicism, of liberalism and of arminianism. He offered such critiques not in a spirit of combativeness, but because he saw in these

versions of Christianity distortions of the gospel and an assault on the Godness of God. To this extent he was in sympathy with the neo-orthodoxy of the middle years of this century, but he was not a Barthian or even a Calvinist in any strict way. He was without doubt an evangelical, reformed, Anglican churchman, but his attachment to the Bible freed him from strict adherence to any particular school of thought.

### In method

Since Broughton believed that God speaks uniquely and sufficiently in Holy Scripture, the exposition of the Bible occupied the central role in his method. He was not averse to natural theology, but only as natural theology was interpreted through scripture. Because he believed this so firmly, he broke with a tradition of systematic theology in which doctrine consists of commenting on the views of others whether historical or contemporary. It is true that his first year lectures seemed to be an exposition of T. C. Hammond's *In Understanding be Men*. I personally always imagined that this was a sort of joke on Hammond, whose own method was to critically expound E. J. Bicknell on the 39 Articles! But the difference between Knox and Hammond was profound. When Hammond was Principal of the College, he worked his way through Bicknell page by page. For Knox, Hammond's book was a mere adjunct to his lectures. The real text-book was scripture itself. Broughton was far from ignorant of historical theology; but he left no doubt that he was grappling with scripture, not with the writings of others, no matter how sharp or how learned.

### In substance

Under these circumstances, we can see where the heart of the Knox theology was. It was not in the doctrines of scripture or the church, though he was well-known for his views in these areas. The heart of things was the Lord God himself and especially the Lord in his relationship to the world. Broughton attacked man-centred theology because he was God-centred. Do not get me wrong here; he cared deeply about humanity. But the Saviour of humanity is the Lord



God, and it is by focusing on him that we learn what it is to be human.

Broughton's doctoral thesis was on justification by faith alone. This doctrine is only another way of saying God reigns, Jesus is Lord. It is a declaration of God's complete sovereignty in our salvation. I once asked Broughton to write two or three articles on 'The Christian World View'. I was expecting something like what Francis Schaeffer was then providing—the Christian idea of science, of philosophy, of culture. I received back articles on the sovereignty of God and the cross of Christ. This was the Christian world view, according to Broughton. After some reflection I could see how right he was, and what made his theology perennial.

### **Its consequences**

By focusing on God in his relationship to the world, Broughton determined the shape of theological education. There were two chief consequences of his approach, the first to do with the Bible and the second with relationships. We have already seen that this involved the task of putting the Bible at the centre of everything, since the Bible is the living and active word of God. If to you this sounds fairly obvious, be assured that making the Bible central is not on everyone's agenda in protestant theological education. The lack of such a centre is mourned, and frequent attempts are made to provide a substitute. Most lately it has been suggested that the action of God in the congregation should be the revelatory centre for theological study. Even in evangelical seminaries, the centrality of the Bible cannot be assured in practice as other worthy subjects crowd the curriculum. But Broughton never wavered in according scripture its sovereign place.

The second consequence of the Knox focus on God was his emphasis on relationships. This arises from what he called 'the foundation of the Christian religion',<sup>1</sup> namely the doctrine of the Trinity. For Broughton, God was no lonely monad, but the triune centre of love and fellowship, of what he frequently called 'other-person-centredness'. Trinitarian Christianity,

<sup>1</sup> D. Broughton Knox, *The Everlasting God* (Welwyn, 1982), 49.

true Christianity, had to be about fellowship, about relationships. God is not solitary, and we are not intended to be alone.

How did these emphases on scripture and relationships shape the business of training for Christian ministry? I intend to expound each in its turn in a moment. But first let us see how Broughton envisaged the Christian ministry, what he thought of its tasks and calling. He once put it thus:

The minister of the congregation is the teacher of God's Word to the congregation. This is his main task. He will have other duties and opportunities of service as a Christian, but his main task is that of teacher. He is to open up the Word of God, so that the congregation can see what the verse, or the paragraph or the chapter or the Book, or even the Bible as a whole, on which he is preaching, is actually saying. In this way the minister's words, being plainly seen to be what God is saying to the hearer, is received into the mind as God's word, and so reaches the conscience of the believer, suffuses his emotions, moves his will and issues in a godly life—friendship with God and loving actions towards others.

The minister is the teacher. This was our Lord's ministry. 'Teacher' was the title the people gave him and which he accepted. It was Paul's ministry. He told the Ephesians amongst whom he ministered for three years that he had 'taught' them in their homes and publically 'the whole counsel of God.'

And it is the teaching ministry that has been entrusted to the modern minister. As Paul told Timothy 'what you have received from me in association with many others, do you hand on to faithful men who are able to teach others also.' The modern minister of the congregation is the last in this line of apostolic succession in the teaching ministry, and it is his great privilege and task in his turn to teach others also 'the whole counsel of God.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> 'Report by David Broughton Knox to the Executive of the Synod of the Church of England in South Africa on Theological Education' (1986), 1.



We may say the congregation was the pre-eminent scene of the ministry, and teaching its distinctive role. Lest we think, however, that this was one-sided or even novel, let me say that to my mind Broughton's picture of the minister was always shaped by the ordination of priests in the *Book of Common Prayer*. Furthermore we should remember the picture of him visiting door to door in Gladesville, or on a College Mission in Newtown. It is no accident that Richard Baxter's *Reformed Pastor* was one of his recommended books for many years. I ought also to point out that his doctrine of the church was one that encouraged the exercise of the gifts of the Body of Christ. Now let us turn to the themes of scripture and of relationships.

## 2. SCRIPTURE

You will have noticed, I am sure, the characteristic Knox appeal to Acts 20:27, 'I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God.' It was one of his favourite biblical references. In practical terms, he understood the whole counsel of God to be the scriptures, and the task of the ministry to expound the whole of God's revealed word. There are four consequences of this that I draw to your attention.

### First, the normative role of scripture

In the Knox theology everything had to be tested by scripture, and the business of systematic theology was to be biblical. Broughton used to denounce the practice of giving the name 'Biblical Theology' to the course taught by his esteemed colleague Donald Robinson, since he claimed, with some justice, that his doctrine course was biblical theology. He had no aim to introduce studies of modern theology, and even historical theology was a mere hand-maid to the chief business. Not for him, therefore, the division that exists almost universally elsewhere between exegesis and theology, between biblical studies and doctrine. All studies in the curriculum fed into the central study—the knowledge of God and of his ways as revealed in scripture; all served this central focus. He insisted that, come what may, theology was the

central study of the theological college—not practical ministry or psychology, not even Old Testament or New Testament as such. In the service of this view he consecrated his great intellectual gifts, distilling the wisdom given to him by God in clear, illuminating, fresh phrases which brought life through truth. Whatever else he taught his students, he taught them to ask, 'What does the Bible say?'

I ought to add another element to this, in order to avoid misunderstanding. It could be thought from what I have said that there was a detached and cool appraisal of scripture, that the objective side left no room for the subjective, that we are dealing with a hard and scientific approach to revelation. But there is no truth in that at all. Knox taught that the Bible is God's personally directed speech; it is addressed to us; as we tremble at God's word, we encounter not just print on a page, but the Lord himself. Broughton's own profound personal piety, his faith in God, his prayers, demonstrate that here was a man who walked with God and who, like Abraham, was a 'friend of God'. By putting what God has done *for us* first, he was able to enjoy to the full what God is doing *in us, with us and through us*. To take on board Broughton's great emphasis on God and to remain experientially unmoved is to miss the whole point.

### Second, the whole breadth of scripture

Over the years, theological colleges have modified their academic offerings dramatically. So many new subjects have clamoured for attention and have received admittance, and so tight have the finances become, that the study of scripture has shrunk. The biblical languages receive less treatment, and any attempt to give a holistic account of scripture is abandoned. The student involves himself or herself in electives, and can pass through a College with minimal attention to the Old Testament.

Broughton Knox totally opposed these trends. To him, the pastor must know 'the *whole* counsel of God'. The context of any passage was the whole of the Bible. To be ignorant of one part of scripture was to diminish your grasp of the other parts. He insisted on *time* being given to study—the four year



program was a minimum not a maximum in his view. He insisted on as much scripture as possible being studied in College. He insisted above all, on the plain, continuous *reading* of scripture, preferably in its original languages. For many students scripture knowledge consists mainly of the study of the opinion of experts about scripture. Not so for Broughton Knox. First must come scripture; whatever else you do, there must be scripture; the best commentary on scripture is scripture itself. This is the first great hermeneutical key.

The College which lives by this insight will need to be committed to the highest academic standards. This is a paradox little understood. According to liberal dogma, the so-called fundamentalists are intellectually inferior. For a few decades there was some truth in this charge. But you cannot be focused on knowing God in scripture and also be content to feed your soul with pious nonsense. A true evangelicalism will demand a mind consecrated to Christ and at full-stretch for him.

Our present danger is not a lack of rigour or intellectual demand. It is, rather, that our community, faculty and students will treat the Bible as exam-fodder, as merely the way to achieve professional advancement. We may become experts in the law and lack the inner core of the matter—the heart that trembles at God's word. 'How I love your law,' cries the psalmist. So too must we, if we are to be educated theologically and avoid mere professionalism.

### **Third, the unitive nature of our study**

One of the great debates in all theological institutions is the divide between the academic and the pastoral, the theoretical and the practical. At the moment, and not surprisingly given the poor understanding of so many, the so-called 'practical' is in the ascendant. Students wish to be taught the 'how-to' of their subject rather than the 'what', the Bachelor of Ministry rather than the Bachelor of Theology.

Contrary to popular opinion, Broughton encouraged the introduction of ministry subjects at about the same time as they were introduced in England and the U.S.A. He saw that

homiletics, evangelism, psychology and education were valuable in training for the ministry. The consequence is that Moore has as much or a greater amount of practical training as appears in any other college.

But Broughton refused to allow the divide which is in so many minds, or to set the subjects at odds with one another. He was very wary of electives—if a subject is needed, let all do it; if not, do not include it at all. But since the heart of his concern was God—let all subjects relate to this centre: 'Anything academic which is not pastorally orientated ought not to be in the ordinand's training; anything pastoral which is not fully informed by the whole counsel of God ... is unworthy and inadequate.'<sup>3</sup>

This was a philosophy which infused the College and led to that clarity of mind and strength of purpose which both friends and foes have recognised as typical of Broughton's students. It never crossed his mind that his teaching was pastorally irrelevant or merely speculative. Theology was the most practical discipline of all, for it was the truth. He never sought to give a version of the truth; he sought to expound the truth. Theology classes were practical ministry classes, and vice versa.

### **Fourth, the critical nature of our study**

It is truly strange to see Dr Knox described as a 'fundamentalist'. I remember a fellow student making a violent attack on Biblical criticism in the College chapel. In the very next lecture Broughton publicly corrected the student, pointing out the great advances that Biblical criticism had brought to the study of the Bible, and castigating the blinkered obscurantism which motivated the sermon. Broughton was fully prepared to learn from all sources, and at this level alone the Library remains one of his finest achievements. Other theological colleges, even in the 1960s, kept some books under lock and key. Other libraries may not have purchased evangelical books. But the Moore

<sup>3</sup> A remark recorded in the Minutes of a meeting of Principals of Anglican Theological Colleges held in 1975.



College library buys books representing all points of view and students have free access to them. Broughton argued that as long as the central theological foundation, that the Bible is God's very word, is secure, all else can minister to the discerning mind.

### 3. RELATIONSHIPS

God graciously reveals himself to us, and we discover that our God is three in one and one in three, that relational love is at the heart of the universe. How did that shape Broughton's attitude to the study of theology?

All great men have their critics and sometimes the criticism is fierce. One of the first times I ever heard Dr Knox criticised was (I think) in the early 1960s when someone told me that he actually encouraged students not to use his title, but to call him by his Christian name! This was a characteristic Broughtonian fault. I would have described him as a somewhat diffident or shy man in personal contacts. But he knew that relationships were both the heart and the fruit of the gospel, and he valued the family of God, the brothers and sisters whom God had sent his way. I would say that few in our part of the world have done more to provide us with a proper concept of church, freeing it from unnecessary and inhibiting structures and making room for authentic, evangelical fellowship.

To Broughton, 'Fellowship is a basic and delightful human experience. The acme of fellowship is Christian fellowship ... The essential principal of friendship and of fellowship is unselfishness, the centring of your interests on the welfare of the other, sinking your own self-interest in the welfare of all. This generates great enjoyment.' He linked it directly with God—'Ultimate reality, God, is persons in relationship. Thus there is no experience more ultimate than personal relationship, or more blissful, for this is how God's being is, and God is ultimate blissfulness.'<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> B. G. Webb, *Church, Worship and the Local Congregation*, Explorations 2 (Sydney, 1987), 59.

How does this relate to theological study? Clearly we may and should think of God in private; clearly you may study theology on your own. But God places us in relationship, to receive and give his blessings to one another, and fellowship is the natural and appropriate context for our life of knowing God. Normally this fellowship is found in the home or in the church but, when we have the opportunity to give ourselves to God's word in preparing for ministry, it is a wonderful blessing to experience Christian relationships at this point too.

The impact of this theology on a college is obvious. The whole idea of residence, for which Broughton fought tenaciously, flows from it. To him the College dining room was as important as the classroom and the chapel. The corporate life of prayer needs to be undergirded and sustained. Unlike the practice of American colleges, chapel at Moore remains a frequent and obligatory experience—not to teach us liturgy, but so that we may together respond to the presence of God in our midst. Unlike the practice of British colleges, we never meet without the exposition of the word of God, since it is this activity which helps define the church, and preaching is God's instrument for ruling us and making us more like Jesus. Knox was fond of quoting the apostolic description of ministry: 'But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word' (Acts 6:4). Here was a description of the essence of his College.

It is evident, I hope, that sanctification was a great concern to Principal Knox. His own standards were high and he expected it in his faculty and students. He had a particular dislike for anything coarse or uncouth. But his study of the doctrine of justification by faith saved him from that noisy arminian piety which draws attention to itself and claims to be the only one interested in godliness. Some of his sermons were riveting attacks on sin and exhortations to repentance; he preached with great power and great effect for godliness. A college which cared nothing for holiness would be anathema to him. He especially emphasised prayer as the chief work of faith. But the real test of holiness is neither the capacity for clapping in chapel nor the correctness of formal worship, but faith in God and love for others. You are



put here in a residential college so that you can learn to exercise both to the good of all.

At the very heart of the human relationships at the College, however, was the relationship between teacher and student. Dr Knox knew full well that a college was its faculty, and that campus, and even library, took subsidiary places. In many other colleges may be found the unfortunate breed of theological academics, persons who do well in their primary degree and decide of their own volition to follow a path of scholarship. They gather their funds and take themselves off to a place of higher learning, the more prestigious the better. They then offer themselves as teachers, replying to the job advertisements of those institutions which advertise for staff. Having qualified themselves to doctoral level, they are eager to teach their dearly purchased speciality and hence contribute mightily to the splintering of the theological curriculum and the impracticality of theological education. It shall not be so among you!

Broughton was extremely careful in his choice of faculty. He was first and foremost concerned to recruit those who had a proven track record in the ministry of the gospel. Naturally, they must also be academically gifted, and no one did more than Dr Knox to raise the academic standards of the faculty of the College. He gave every support to those involved in further study or writing books and articles. I need hardly say that he chose as his colleagues those who were capable of teaching the Anglican faith in its reformed and evangelical expression, but I, for one, was never conscious of inhabiting a theological straight-jacket. I differed from him in a number of areas on which he held passionate convictions—evolution being one example—but it never raised difficulties between us. Dr Knox's mind was so original, indeed so radical that he was forever challenging us to deeper and better thought. 'By what right was the Book of Esther retained in the canon of scripture?' he wanted to know one morning. 'What were we to make of the *five* comings of Jesus?' 'How could we prove that water-baptism was intended in Matthew 28?' He was himself a great teacher, with the capacity of enthusing his students. In the end, we must not fret even if our campus is rundown

and ugly—the teacher-student relationship is what really matters

Which brings us, I suppose to this new building. Among his other virtues, Dr Knox was a visionary and a shrewd businessman. He purchased the land for the campus, or most of it. He foresaw the College as it would need to be. I cannot be sure that he approved my initiative in erecting this building. I suspect he thought that there were more purchases to be made, more houses, more shops, I know that he was not content with what we have, and given the choice between fixing a house and buying a new one he never hesitated: buy first, fix second! Nonetheless, I did not hesitate for long myself. The College needed this building and I have no regrets at all in initiating its development. For myself, I believe that education best occurs in surroundings which are both comfortable and stimulating. I think that beauty matters, and you will find that this building reflects my concern for you whether as a teacher or a learner. But I want to endorse thoroughly the priorities of my revered teacher and friend: in order to serve students best—first faculty, second library, third campus.

## CONCLUSION

Obviously, the half has not been told about this remarkable man. Most modern students of this College have never heard him lecture or preach. Yet believe me, they are taught by him everyday and owe him far more than they can imagine. He prayed *earnestly* that he be 'a man after God's own heart', and I believe that his prayer was fully answered. Naturally he had his faults, personal and theological: faults of judgment, faults of character. He was fearless in his ministry of God's word, and there were those who were stung by him and disliked it. Others found him difficult, especially when he insisted on matters of principle above mere friendship. If you ask me about his limitations, I believe that they chiefly arose from his being a child of his own times; he represented a Protestant ascendancy which had a place in the church and society which is now a half-forgotten dream. We need to develop an

approach to our world far more in touch with its modern realities than we can now learn directly from Broughton. And yet, he laid the foundation for this by being an original thinker. The Christian view of the world remains the sovereignty of God and the centrality of the cross.

When Dr Knox was buried recently, the gathered crowd sang two hymns. They will tell you finally of the simplicity of the man, and of what really mattered to him. For, despite his formidable and subtle intelligence, there was a pure faith in his Saviour. We sang:

What a friend we have in Jesus,  
All our sins and griefs to bear  
What a privilege to carry  
Everything to God in prayer.

Finally, and most appropriately, we joined in the child-like song which summed up so much:

Turn your eyes upon Jesus  
Look full in his wonderful face  
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim  
In the light of his glory and grace.

DBK would say nothing else to us. His faith was centred on Christ, and his hope was to be with Jesus. Christ was his gospel, and Christ is the foundation of this building. That is to say, Christ crucified must be the theme of all the teaching and learning which will occur here. We will never surpass Christ in wisdom, never grow richer than we already are in him. By teaching Christ, we will consecrate this building to God's service and best honour our friend and teacher, who himself pointed to Jesus both in life and in death.

