

"THE GRAHAMSTOWN FINE ART ASSOCIATION"

An Essay

submitted in partial fulfilment
of the
requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF FINE ART

of

RHODES UNIVERSITY

by

J.C.W. COOK.

November, 1974.

To

P.E.D.C.

Student in the School of Art

and

my Mother.

FOREWORD

Those who have assisted me in this work include the following, whose help I gratefully acknowledge: Mr. D. Schaeffer, historian at the 1820 Settler division of the Albany Museum; Mr. M. Berning and Mrs. S. Fold of the Cory Library; the Registrar of Rhodes University and Mrs. R. Freeman of the University's filing department; Professor H.J. Chapman, Dean of Students who supervised my search of Council minutes; Miss Janet Clark who helped with the photographing and reproduction for the catalogue of the GFAA collection in the Albany Museum; and Professor B. Bradshaw, my supervisor. My father, Professor C.W. Cook, first raised the subject, and thereafter kept prodding me to find answers to his questions.

GROCOTT'S PENNY MAIL, JANUARY 24, 1882.

Grahamstown School of Art.

THE COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT OF THE GRAHAMSTOWN SCHOOL OF ART, have the pleasure of intimating to Teachers and others interested in the object of the School, that they have made arrangements for opening Classes under the Superintendence of Mr. W. H. SIMPSON, in the New Town Hall Building,

ON THE 28th JANUARY NEXT.

Enquiries to be addressed to the Honorary Treasurer, THOS. HOLLAND, Esq., Grahamstown.



ALL THE INFORMATION CONCERNING THE TRAINS

When he opened the 24th annual exhibition of students' work on the 1st July, 1927, Professor F.W. Armstrong gave the following account of the beginnings of the Grahamstown School of Art:

"I received a letter from a gentleman recently who stated that in 1881, just after he had arrived in Grahamstown, he attended a dinner given by the late Mr. Josiah Slater, the Proprietor of the Grahamstown Journal. The late Rev. Walton, the president, was also present. Mr. Slater announced that at a meeting that afternoon, it had been decided to start a school of art in Grahamstown.

The school was first held in a little building on a site now occupied by Dr. Anderson, which building had previously been the town hall, and it had also housed the museum.

From its first building, the School of Art was moved to Gowie buildings in High St., and afterwards to the present rooms in the City Hall, which the museum had occupied." (1)

The appointment of a master was the responsibility of Sir Langham Dale, the Superintendent General of Education in the Cape Colony. His choice for the first art master of the Grahamstown School of Art was Mr. W.H. Simpson. Simpson had studied at the South Kensington Museum, then at the Royal Academy. During the 1870's he had exhibited in the Royal Academy, at other exhibitions in London, and in the provinces.

Simpson assumed duties at the school when it opened early in 1882. The terms of his employment were that he would receive an annual salary of £200 from the colonial government, and would be entitled to 75% of the fees of pupils taught privately or enrolled in the classes he conducted at various schools in the town.

Little is known of the school during the first twenty years of its existence, and still less of Simpson's own activity during the period. There exists nevertheless a report by Mr. James Ford, the master of the New St. Art School, Capetown, who had previously been headmaster of the Macclesfield Government School of Art, on the conditions of art education in South Africa which vividly outlines the difficulties and needs facing an art school in an undeveloped country. From what we know of the conditions in the Grahamstown School of Art when it emerges into the light in 1902, Simpson must have faced similar problems.

(1) Grocotts: 1st July, 1927.

"The School of Art in Cape Town has none of the advantages of an English art school. We have no loan of art books, neither of oil and water colour paintings, nor of objects for painting purposes such as are furnished to English schools by the South Kensington Museum. We have neither art museum nor art library. I do not think that, a beginning once made, Cape Town would be wanting in the energy and enterprise necessary to carry out such as have been indicated above." (1)

Without such objects, art education was held to be impossible; their provision was one of the principal objects of the Grahamstown Fine Arts Association. Its energy, enterprise and ingenuity in finding means to do so is the real theme of this essay. The irony of the effort lies in the fact that by the time it had done so, the whole concept of art, its place in the community, and hence of what constituted art education had altered decisively.

Until 1887, School examinations in art were held under the auspices of the Committee of the South African Fine Arts Association. Students who qualified received certificates declaring that they had attained a certain proficiency. Students were required to submit the work they had done during the academic year for a competition. The competition was restricted to bona fide students, whose application had to be accompanied by a certificate from the master under whom they had studied.

After 1887, these independently conducted examinations were abolished in favour of the colonial art school examinations conducted at the Science and Art Department of the South Kensington Museum. These examinations involved both papers to be written under examination conditions as soon as possible after the examination papers had been received, and the examination of students' work at South Kensington. Exhibits had to be received in London not later than April each year. Local authorities were responsible for the entire cost of this examination: for examining papers, transport of works, clearing in London and conveyance to and from South Kensington. The whole elaborate system rested on the determination not to allow standards in the colonies to sink further than could be helped.

(1) Parliamentary Report of S.A. FINE ARTS ASSOC.

Grahamstown Art Gallery.

- I was born in the South West of London.
- I studied Art at the South Kensington Museum
- I afterwards became a Student at the Royal ~~Academy~~ ^{Academy}
- I exhibited pictures in the R. Academy in the several
- Also in other Exhibitions both in London & the
- Provinces. I was appointed Art Master of the
- Grahamstown School of Art in 1881 - by Dr
- Date - which position I held for 22 years.
- I retired from active service December 1903.

W. H. Simpson -

May 6/10.

In August, 1900, the Grahamstown School of Art moved into the premises in the Town Hall which it was to occupy for the next twenty eight years. Since the Museum already occupied part of the accommodation, the Fine Art Association committee negotiated with the museum committee suitable terms. The arrangement had obvious drawbacks, and by October, 1902, the Association's committee had to meet to discuss an adverse report on the condition of the School which had been received from an inspector of schools. The Superintendent General of Education in the colony did not consider that the school was in a satisfactory condition: his chief complaint was that the premises were too cramped. The theme was repeated many times during later years: the inhabitants of Grahamstown were much readier to take advantage of the Art School's facilities than to provide the room these really needed.

At this point, Simpson, who had now completed 22 years' work in the school, deemed the moment appropriate to retire. He had served twenty-two years in the school and asked the Grahamstown Fine Art Association committee to try to enlist the support of the Superintendent General of Education for a pension. In his reply, Dr. Muir pointed out that the request had already been refused once. Mere weariness was no grounds for retirement: there was no indication of poor health, no doctor's certificate, and since Simpson was not yet 60, not even the requisite number of years. Muir concluded by suggesting that Simpson should do another year; he would then be 60 and a proper object for a cordial recommendation for a pension.

Simpson followed Muir's advice: in April 1903 he resigned his appointment as art master with effect from the day of his 60th birthday. The committee of management of the school accepted, on condition he completed the 1903 academic year. The Cape parliament granted a pension of £60 per annum to Simpson in 1903.

Before Simpson retired, the structure of the school's committee of management had altered radically. In December 1901 Dr. Herman Becker outlined to the committee the history of the Grahamstown Fine Art Association, reminded the meeting of its original aims and related its accomplishments. Particularly he commented on the committee's desire to found an art association and gallery and suggested that this new direction find expression with a loan exhibition early in 1902.

Mr. O.H. Bate then moved that an association called the Grahamstown Fine Art Association be formed for the following objects:

- "1. To administer any funds that might accrue from government or other sources to provide for instruction in art;
2. To organize and hold occasional exhibitions of works of art;
3. To establish an Art Union, and to facilitate the purchase of works of art in connexion with these 'provided always that it shall be lawful for H.E. the Governor when it shall appear to him that the association is from the purposes of Act no.28 of 1860 entitled 'Act for Legalization of Art Unions' to revoke or annul this deed of settlement in so far as it relates to the establishment of the Art Union aforesaid.'
4. To obtain, by purchase or otherwise, works of art in order to form an art gallery in the premises of the association in the Town Hall buildings, Grahamstown." (1)

It was also agreed to levy an annual subscription of 10/6 for ordinary members; life membership was open to those who would donate not less than £25 to the association's funds, or contribute works of art to this value, accepted as such by the management committee as "being worthy of admiration." The committee also decided to apply to the Colonial Secretary through the Civil Commissioner for Albany for a government grant for support of the scheme.

These proposals show an extraordinarily alert and knowledgable committee; one that was aware of all the possibilities of government and public support, and determined to pursue each hopeful prospect. The GFAA was thus proposing to expand from merely managing the Art School into an association committed to raising a new awareness of the place of art in the community. It was moving art education beyond the classroom walls into a place of its own in the community.

The School of Art Management Committee was a substantial body presided over by a judge of the supreme court, and comprising another judge and lawyers, heads of schools, politicians and other local dignitaries. The mayor of Grahamstown, Mr. D. Knight, presided over the first meeting of the Grahamstown Fine Art Association, which elected Dr. Herman Becker, M.D. its first president, and Mr. H.R. Wood, vice-president. Two other doctors Drury and Edington served on the committee;

(1) GFAA Deed of Settlement.

the treasurer was O.H. Bate and W. Burnett Stocks the secretary. It is also noteworthy that when Rhodes University College was constituted in 1904, its council included the following who had also served on the GFAA: Dr. S. Schonland (director of the Museum); Mr. Josiah Slater (proprietor of the Grahamstown Journal); Mr. H.R. Wood, M.L.A.; Mr. H. Fichat; Mr. O.H. Bate and Mr. D. Knight. There was thus a core of citizens committed to the extension of education beyond secondary level, and into activities beyond the strictly utilitarian.

The vigorous and confident requests of the new association prompted the Colonial Secretary to inquire what had happened to the Grahamstown Art Association established in 1899 under the provisions of the Art Union Act. One had indeed been constituted in connexion with the Grahamstown Industrial and Arts exhibition of 1898-9, but had since been dissolved. The Grahamstown Fine Art Association wished to have the same privileges enjoyed by its predecessor transferred to itself and its new purpose of promoting art culture in Grahamstown, and hoped that it would be legally qualified to participate in the benefits envisaged under the Art Union system. As an earnest of still better things to come, the Association asked for a special donation of £125 to defray expenses already incurred and those envisaged if the objects for which the association was established were to be obtained.

Sir Thomas Graham replied on the 15th July, 1902, and regretted that the unforeseen expenditure needed to deal with an epidemic of plague in the colony prevented him from recommending the grant requested. Plague was a fearsome priority; nevertheless the committee had on record a promise of support given by Graham's predecessor, the Hon. Arthur Douglas, M.L.A., when Douglas had opened the association's first exhibition. So it reminded the Colonial Secretary of this promise and hoped that the government would reconsider its decision and fulfil the promise made on its behalf.

Sir Arthur Douglas, now Commissioner of Crown Lands and Public Works, approached the Colonial Secretary, Sir Pieter Fourie, who telegraphed the GFAA in August 1902 to say that he had approved the placing of £100 on the parliamentary estimates for 1903 for the GFAA.

The first local fund-raising effort was an Art Union Lottery held the evening the 1904 Fine Art Exhibition closed. The prizes were 19 paintings

GRAHAMSTOWN FINE ART ASSOCIATION.

The Committee of the above Association hereby announces that
It will hold, in the Art Gallery on the Upper Floor of the
Town Hall Buildings in Grahamstown,

**A LOAN
Exhibition of Paintings,**

On every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, in the Month of
April, 1902,

From 10 o'clock, a.m., to 1 o'clock, p.m., and from 2 to 5 o'clock, p.m.,
the only exception to which times of admission is that on the First
Day of the said Exhibition, the Opening will be at 11 o'clock, a.m.

The Charges for Admission will be ONE SHILLING for Per-
sons over 12 years of age, and SIXPENCE for those under that age
and for the Pupils attending the various Schools in Grahamstown and
visiting the Exhibition in charge of a Teacher.

The formal Opening of the Exhibition will
Take place at 11 o'clock, a.m.,

On Tuesday, the 1st April, 1902,

WHEN

The Hon. ARTHUR DOUGLASS, M.L.A.,

The Colonial Secretary, has kindly consented to perform the ceremony.

All owners of suitable Paintings which they are willing to place in the
Exhibition, in case they have not been individually asked to lend such
Paintings for that purpose, are requested to communicate with Mr.
William Burnett Stocks, who will thereupon take charge of and insure
the Paintings.

By order of the Committee,

E. J. SMITH,
Hon. Secretary.

and 11 prints valued at £88-18-6. For these 30 prizes, 195 tickets were sold at 10/6 each: income nearly matched expenditure.

After the resignation of Mr. Simpson, the GFAA now faced having to select a new art master from the various applications made for the post from Britain. The GFAA secured permission from the Superintendent General of Education for Professor Adams of London University to make the appointment on its behalf. Professor Adams' choice was Mr. F.W. Armstrong, ARCA, "a gentleman who is highly commended by the Principal of the Royal College of Art, South Kensington."⁽¹⁾ Mr. Armstrong took up his duties early in February, 1904.

By June, 1904, the number of students attending the School had risen from 30 to 67. The pupils of Wesleyan High School had been added to the list of schools in Grahamstown being taught by the master of the Grahamstown School of Art. Still more important, Armstrong had started, at the suggestion of Mr. Muir, a course for the members of the Grahamston Teachers' Training College, none of whom had studied under Simpson. Student teachers were now able both to practise as well as learn to teach fine art.

To the three mornings a week school room work current under Simpson were now added two afternoon and two evening classes as well as an outdoor drawing class on Saturday afternoon. The range of courses offered diversified to include clay-modelling, geometrical, perspective and machine drawing and the composition of designs for the construction of buildings as well as the painting, drawing and blackboard exercises already being taught.

Contemporary accounts of the impact of Armstrong's teaching were sunny. The committee of the GFAA were surprised and delighted that their high expectations of him were realized in the "devotion and thoroughness" with which he carried out his duties.

"There is but one opinion in this city with regard to the excellence of the choice that the Management Committee made when it conferred the appointment of Art Master on this very able and personally estimable artist who is not only highly accomplished in the execution of works of art, but as the

(1) Grahamstown School of Art Management Committee Minutes
24th September, 1903.

"current testimony of his students manifests, he is endowed with a remarkable capacity for imparting a knowledge of that accomplishment to all who become his pupils. This genius for conveying instruction is aided in that work by his unfailing patience and indefatigable, careful attention to details, as well as the great urbanity of his manner the combination of which characteristics renders him an invaluable teacher." (1)

Demanding as his teaching duties were, Armstrong found time to produce his own paintings and sculpture. He also carried out the large lancet window in Christ Church, Grahamstown, almost certainly the first stained glass window to be executed entirely in this country. Moreover, such was the confidence he inspired in the community, that the minister of Trinity Church was given permission by its committee of management as part of a general renovation "to make whatever use he wishes with that portion of the archway he had mentioned." (2)

Although a sculptor, Armstrong's major interest seems to have been his ceramic work and his experiments with local clays. The South African Journal of Industries notes in August 1919 that

"Professor Armstrong, principal of the School of Art, Grahamstown, after a long series of experiments with local clays has obtained results showing that the material withstands very high temperatures, and is most suitable for the manufacturer of high class pottery." (3)

Similarly, the "British and South African Export Gazette" of February 1923 commented enthusiastically

"The busiest of my friends interested in South Africa should make a visit to the Union High Commissioner's office in Trafalgar Square ... the pottery which is from the kilns of Mr. F.W. Armstrong, well-known as a teacher of art in Grahamstown, Cape Province, is admirable in design and is by no means inferior in

(1) Parliamentary Report GFAA 30th June, 1904.

(2) Minutes: Trinity Committee of Management, 12th February, 1906. The Rev. J.M. Dower and Armstrong had settled on the design of two angels, but "as the cost would be considerable from an artist's point of charge, he would rather not mention it." Mr. Dower therefore requested permission to have the privilege of paying for the work himself. The committee hoped to have the text "Glory to God in the Highest" under the archway, and was willing to pay 25 to have this painted in. The minister was asked to see whether text and design could be combined.

(3) S.A. Journal of Industries - August 1919 cit. in Dingemans, G.F. "Memorandum" 1923.

"general attractiveness to the highest class of English ware which is to be seen in Bond or Regent Street. There is nothing local about it." (1)

Mr. J. Hamburger, one of Armstrong's students, was later to set up a small pottery works to produce on a commercial scale; this still exists at 14a Kowie Street.

Some measure of the progress of the Art School under the direction of Armstrong and the assistance of the GFAA between 1904 and 1906 can be seen in the following figures. By the end of 1904, the number of pupils had risen from about 85 to 190; by the end of 1905 to 230, and by the end of 1906 to 250. Finances showed the same spectacular improvement: fees from students at the beginning of 1904 amounted to about £140 per annum; by the end of the year this had risen to £370; by the end of 1905 to £500, and by the end of 1906 to £570.

Armstrong recommended the appointment of an assistant; accordingly Mr. Charles Sidney Groves ARCA was engaged at a salary of £250 per annum, half of which was to be paid by the government education department. The school was thus able to expand further, and to offer woodcarving among its courses as well as additional classes.

Throughout this period, the GFAA found in Dr. Muir, the Superintendent General of Education, a most valuable friend. Muir was satisfied with the way in which the school was being run and was prepared to assist the GFAA in every way possible. His most valuable assistance was to protect the government grant to the GFAA so that all the fees derived from the pupils could be allotted to the art masters. The formula eventually agreed on was that provided at least £200 was raised locally for the salary of the art master, the government would grant £200. This arrangement would guarantee an annual salary of £400 for the art master, and indeed place him on the same footing financially as the professors of the fledgling Rhodes University College.

(1) British and South African Export Gazette, February 1923. See also similar references in "The Pottery and Glass Trade Review", Feb., 1923; "The African World", December, 1922; "South Africa", December, 1922; "Eve", Summer Number,).

Grahamstown Fine Arts Association.

Exhibition of Colonial Art.

AN Exhibition of Pictures by South African Colonists will be held in the Art Gallery in the Town Hall Buildings, Grahamstown, from the

25th March to the 7th April, 1903,

and, after the first day, will be open as follows, viz., on the 26th, 27th and 28th inst., from 10 o'clock a.m. to 1 o'clock p.m., from 2 to 5 o'clock p.m., and from 7 to 9 o'clock p.m.; and from (and including) the 30th inst., from 3 to 5 o'clock p.m. (excepting on Wednesdays), and from 7 to 9 o'clock p.m.

Charge for admission one shilling, and half-price for children under fourteen years of age, and pupils of Grahamstown Schools visiting the Exhibition with their teachers.

The Opening Ceremony will be performed at 11 o'clock a.m. on Wednesday, the 25th inst., and on that day the exhibition will remain open from that hour till 1 o'clock p.m., the charge for admission during that time being the same as on the succeeding days.

By order of the Managing Committee,

E. J. SMITH,
Hon. Secretary.

Grahamstown,
17th March, 1903.

Grahamstown Fine Arts Association.

Pictures and Music.

The Exhibition of Pictures by South African Colonists in the Art Gallery, Town Hall Buildings, Grahamstown, will be open from 8 to 11 o'clock in the evening, on

WEDNESDAY, THE 25th Inst.

Charge for admission two shillings, the payment of which will also admit
to a

PROMENADE CONCERT

In the Town Hall simultaneously given by the best Band in South Africa, that of the 16th Lancers, who are 45 in number, and will occupy the stage of the Hall Dressed in Full Uniform, this being their first appearance in Grahamstown so attired.

By order,

E. J. SMITH,
Hon. Secretary.

Grahamstown,
17th March, 1903.

At the close of the seventh year of the GFAA's existence, the winter of financial restriction checked the first burst of growth. Faced with the need for drastic retrenchment, the government struck first at the £100 granted by the public treasury to provide for the general expenses of the association and reduced this to £80. The Education Department withdrew its allowance to cover part of the expenses of general maintenance of the school for such items as caretaking, cleaning, lighting, printing, advertising and stationery. These reductions followed an earlier decision in 1905 not to refund the school a part of funds expended on furniture, casts, fittings, artists' materials, and other such "requisites for the pursuit of art", one half of which had previously been chargeable to the government.

Meanwhile the committee of management had begun to realize that the scale of the School's activities had reached the point where the wisdom of bringing them under public rather than private aegis became apparent. A notable incentive was that this would enable the school to qualify as an institution able to obtain revenue from rates levied on the general public. Such a step might well enable the school to raise the loan required to erect a specially designed school of art instead of continuing in the makeshift and manifestly inadequate premises in the Town Hall.

But under whose shield? As early as 1906, the GFAA began to negotiate with the Grahamstown Municipal School Board with a view to having the School Board take over the management of the School of Art. The GFAA and the Municipal School Board reached agreement on the terms of the take-over, but these were not acceptable to the Education Department. The School of Art was thus left to do what it could with the inadequate premises and the leaner finances.

In October, 1915, an inspector's report to the Education Department found that whereas the work produced by the school was of a high standard, the conditions under which it was done, particularly with regard to lighting and accommodation, were poor. The inspector was one of many to marvel that work of such quality could be produced in such daunting and unfavourable conditions.

The response of the GFAA was to resolve to apply formally to the government for a grant of £5,000 to build a suitable school of art and an art gallery in the city. The Superintendent General of Education replied that he had brought the matter of better accommodation to the attention of the Administrator and had been reminded that in 1915, South Africa had other priorities: it was not possible to consider the expenditure of considerable sums of money on such buildings.

Undaunted, the GFAA sent a copy of his letter to Adv. F.J.W. van der Riet, K.C., the city's M.P. with the request that he interview the Minister of Finance on the subject. Meanwhile another opportunity presented itself. The option on the roller mill building in Hill St., was offered by the municipality to the GFAA and the Public Library with the suggestion that this might meet their requirements.

At a joint meeting of the GFAA and the Library Committee in 1916 the GFAA stated that to be suitable for its purposes, it would be necessary to raise the roof and to provide top lights for the first and second floors. The mayor then asked the Library for its requirements, and the outcome of the negotiations was that the Library received the building for its own purposes. (1)

So during the visit of the Administrator of the Cape in March 1917, the GFAA again raised with him the question of more suitable accommodation for the art school. Again Sir Frederick de Waal conceded the need but declared that schools for ordinary tuition should have preference. He refused to make any promises, but suggested that if a building site were procured, this would add considerable weight to the GFAA's claim.

So the goal of the GFAA became a site for buildings that would include an art school and a gallery. Their campaign began with an application to the municipality for a site in the Drostdy recreation grounds. They were encouraged in this line by the precedent of the grant of a site to the Museum. In return, they were able to offer the cession of their rights to accommodation in the town hall buildings.

(1) GFAA Minutes, 17th March, 1916.

The exchange was acceptable: in return for the Town Hall accommodation, the GFAA received land "from the inner edge of the tar pavement on Somerset St., a distance of 150 feet from front to back and from Prince Alfred Row to the new road in the Drostdy allowing for a footpath of 15 feet." (1)

At its next encounter with Sir Frederick de Waal, held at the Grahamstown Railway Station, the GFAA was able to inform him of the success that had attended his advice, and that they now wished to submit sketch plans for the building estimated to cost £7,000. Sir Frederick was still unable to promise anything definite, but undertook to see what he could do on the following year's provincial estimates. He also stressed the desirability of the GFAA handing over the School of Art to the Municipal School Board, as provided for by Ordinance 16 of 1913. Unless this were done, he warned that it would be impossible for the School to borrow money from the government.

The GFAA was determined that any transfer of management would not be at the expense of art education: it knew only too well how easily preference would be given to general as opposed to specialized education, and even more how difficult it was to convince the public in times of stress or stringency that art mattered enough to figure on government budgets. Similarly safeguards were necessary for the Gallery project: if the School Board took over the School, who would fund the Gallery? The GFAA thus began to negotiate again with the City Council in February 1918 to clarify these points. If the School of Art were handed over to the control of the Grahamstown Municipal School Board, would this make any difference to the conditions of tenancy of the premises in the Town Hall building, pending the erection of a new building to accommodate both the Art Gallery and the School of Art on the site granted by the municipality? And what compensation would the City Council pay if the GFAA were to vacate their premises and cede all their rights therein to the City Council?

The GFAA approved in principle the placing of the School of Art under the control and management of the Municipal School Board, provided that all existing rights and privileges were secured together with any that

(1) GFAA Minutes, September, 1917.

might be derived from the School Board. They also made the change conditional upon the Administrator's assurance that a suitable building for both the School of Art and the Art Gallery would be erected within three years on the Drostdy ground site.⁽¹⁾

For its part, the Council had no objection to allowing the School Board to conduct the School of Art where it had always done so, provided that the premises would be vacated within three years from the date that the School Board assumed control. The Council also agreed to pay the GFAA £1000, to be spread over 10 years as compensation for the cession of its rights in the premises of the Town Hall buildings.⁽²⁾

At a further interview with Sir Frederick de Waal in 1918, Sir Frederick repeated that while the proposal had his full sympathy, the one essential was to find the money. The Provincial Council could only borrow from Parliament. As to the future, since primary and secondary school requirements had priority, he saw no possibility of providing a loan within the next two years: in three years' time, he might have overtaken all the requirements of primary and secondary education. If so, there would be no difficulty in providing what was required for new art premises. The GFAA concluded that since there was no immediate prospect of a loan, there was no immediate need or advantage to go under the School Board.

Since the avenue of provincial financing was firmly closed, the next best prospect of prising funds from a reluctant public seemed to be the centenary of the 1820 settlers. Would anything more obviously measure the distance their descendants had travelled than the erection of an Art Gallery on the frontier parade ground? So the GFAA wrote to the Centenary celebrations committee to suggest such a memorial: what better than an ornate and well-appointed Art Gallery to accommodate the collection of pictures now owned by the association?⁽³⁾

(1) GFAA Minutes, February, 1918.

(2) GFAA Minutes, 2nd March, 1918.

(3) GFAA Minutes, 6th February, 1919.

Meanwhile in May 1919 the GFAA heard from Mr. W.H. Figott, MPC, that the Cape Provincial Council had placed on the deferred estimates the sum of £4,000 for the building of a new Art School and Gallery, so at a meeting of the Peace Celebrations committee it was decided that the memorial to the fallen in the recent great war should take the form of a domed entrance hall to the proposed new Art Gallery. Mr. McWilliams, an architect of Port Elizabeth, was invited to come to Grahamstown to interview the Association about the design for the proposed new Art Gallery and Art School. His estimate was £7,000 for the Art Gallery, including the war memorial, and £10,000 for the School of Art. (1)

The GFAA realized that somehow the School had to be integrated into the emerging educational system of the Province. The GFAA therefore decided to try to get the School of Art graded as a secondary school. This meant that the School would have to be placed under the provisions of the Ordinance of 1920. But if this were done, Armstrong's salary would have to be raised to £750 which was impossible unless the government helped. Again, since this support would not come without government supervision through the School Board, the advisability of handing over the School of Art to the School Board was discussed once more. Both the GFAA and the Grahamstown Municipal School Board were able to agree to the following conditions in support of their application to the Education Department for the transfer of the control of the School.

1. That the equipment at present used by the School of Art would be handed over to the School Board to be used in the interests of the School.
2. That the cash balance of £250 held by the School of Art be handed over to the School Board to be used in the interests of the School.
3. That the School be managed indirectly by a committee nominated by the Board on the understanding that seven members of the present committee be so nominated.
4. That the School Board be urged to endeavour to provide adequate premises at as early a date as possible, and that in the meantime the GFAA guarantees occupancy of the present premises for Art School purposes. (2)

(1) Minutes, 5th December, 1919. His fee of £15 was divided equally between the GFAA and the Peace Celebrations Committee.

(2) Minutes, 3rd March, 1921.

When this proposition was submitted once more to the Administrator, he again refused because funds for existing institutions were insufficient. He still favoured the School coming under the School Board, but in view of the financial situation saw no alternative but for the School to continue under the same conditions for another year.

By 1923, an higher education act had been framed to provide for the recognition of certain institutions as places of higher education. Since the act of Union, higher education had been placed under the control of the Union government. Nevertheless, "education other than higher" remained in the control of the provinces, with the question left undecided where the division occurred between lower and higher education. But in 1922, the Financial Relations Act defined the difference in section 11 so as to include within the term "higher" (and thus within the finances of the Union government) the following: universities and colleges; the South African Native College; education provided by such technical institutions (including schools of art, music, commerce, etc.) "as the minister of education shall declare to be places of higher education."

The GFAA lost no time in applying to the government to have the School of Art declared an institution as provided for in the act. They cast their net even more widely: enquiries were sent to the universities of Edinburgh and Glasgow, as well as to the Armstrong College, Newcastle-on-Tyne, asking about requirements and procedures for the fine arts degree.

At this point a new possibility arose. Several members of the GFAA were members of the Council or the Senate of Rhodes University College, and on the 25rd October, 1923, a deputation from the Senate of Rhodes met with the GFAA to discuss the implications of the provision of the Higher Education Act of 1923, and particularly the possibility of establishing a fine arts degree at Rhodes in association with the School of Art.

The first stage of the proposal was to co-operate to provide instruction for Rhodes students in the subjects comprising the first two courses of the fine art degree of the University of South Africa. The accession of such senior students would also strengthen the claim of the School of Art for recognition as an institution of higher education in

its own right. Much could be said in favour: Armstrong had been employed by Rhodes as one of its instructors since 1905. Professor Dingemans was a member both of the Rhodes senate and the GFAA committee. Yet a question remained as before: was it possible to hand over the functions of a private committee to a public body in a way that would preserve within the larger institution the enthusiasms and priorities of the private committee? There would necessarily be some changes, but the GFAA was determined that the essential requirements of art and of art education as it saw these would not be submerged by other demands and claims. The same insight that made departmental heads fight for autonomy over their departments within the university made the committee cautious about resigning their supervision to a body whose concern for and competence in artistic matters was largely unknown.

Professor Dingemans thus outlined the position in a memorandum on the School of Art in relation to the provisions of the 1923 Higher Education Act. After analysing the numbers and composition of the school, its financial situation, the subjects taught and the nature of instruction given, and above all, the splendid record of the school in public examinations, he concluded that this record constituted a very strong claim for the recognition of the school under the provisions of the act. He suggested that the School might cooperate with Rhodes in order to train students for the fine art degree and such other degrees and diplomas that the University of South Africa might institute. To carry forward this scheme he proposed a new constitution for a managing committee comprised of representatives of the various interested parties. As he saw it entitlement to representation should be on the following basis: 4 members each nominated by the Minister of Education, the GFAA, and the Rhodes University College Council; two from the Grahamstown schools and colleges association, and one from the Board of Studies. The report and proposals indicate the thinking of the time: the orientation of the school was largely practical and didactic. It aimed at laying a foundation for further studies by acquainting young people (still predominantly school children) with many media in the hope that they would be inspired themselves. What was left open was whether this inspiration would lead largely to teaching others, or becoming artists themselves. The strong link with local schools in the number of school children at the School of Art needs to be noted. While they contributed

to the finances and the influence of the school, the emphasis this gave to the School was an obstacle to the simplest way of securing the recognition of the School as an institute of higher education: to incorporate it as a department of Rhodes. This suggestion was first made by an official of the Union Education Department, Mr. Coleman, at a meeting with the GFAA in May 1923.

After two further meetings between the GFAA and the representatives of the Rhodes Council, it was mutually agreed that incorporation of the school into the college would not at the moment be in the best interests of either. The college was not in a position to meet the extra cost of developing the Art School or to finance the loan for the new buildings until it had provided for its own more urgent commitments. The prospect of being placed in the limbo of unurgent projects did not assure members of the GFAA who were also on the College senate.

Thus the alternative of being declared an independent institution for higher education seemed more attractive. This would enable the School to develop along its own lines with its own priorities and at the same time provide the means for college students wishing to further their art studies. The independence from another institution would allow the School to preserve its own priorities.

This line of investigation was effectively checked when in October 1923 the annual grant paid to the School was reduced by a further 10% until further notice. This action, together with the fact that the Minister of Education was finally not prepared to recognize the Art School as an independent place of higher education forced the committee to re-open negotiations with the council of Rhodes for whatever terms it might be able to get.

The Rhodes council made it clear where its own priorities lay: none of its existing sources of revenue or grants were to be affected by the take-over. The General Purposes Grant was to be increased to provide for Art School expenses; the loan of £8,000 for the new Art School had to be granted without prejudice to those requested for other College buildings; the fees for non-matriculation art students were to count for the Government grant. The control of the school was to be

entirely under the College Council; all furniture and equipment used in the Art School was to be handed over free, along with the site already granted in the Drostdy grounds. In return, the pension rights of the Art School staff were to be guaranteed by the government; the status and remuneration of the staff as well as the status of the students were to be determined by the Council.⁽¹⁾ A minute of the Council's Finance committee dated 19th March, 1925, noted that the Secretary for Education had agreed to the take-over under these conditions, and had placed £1,000 on the estimates for this. The Registrar was instructed to reply that the amount should have been £1,200 and to protest accordingly. Nevertheless, the school was handed over to the College on the 1st April, 1925; Armstrong was appointed the first professor of the department of Fine Art, and Miss Greathead a lecturer.

Professor Armstrong's view of his department's policy in 1927 was to run it strictly in accordance with the Union Education Department's curriculum. Of nearly 70 students enrolled in various courses, 10 were taking the full art course in order to obtain an all round art education before specializing. The work these full time students were producing were to be regarded, not as marketable pictures in their own right, but studies done by those who hoped in future to be capable of producing fine work.

Before following the fate of the school under its new guise as a university department, it is appropriate to review the working conditions under which this progress had been made, as these can be discerned in various Education Department reports. Over a period of 15 years, inspectors had commented on the discrepancy between the work produced and the conditions of the school. Thus in August, 1906, the inspector wrote

"Under present conditions little or nothing can be done in the useful crafts, which should form part of the school curriculum. For further development of the school it is important that new buildings, giving more accommodation, and specially designed for the purpose should be provided as soon as possible."

(1) RUC Council Minutes, 19th June, 1925.

In 1910:

"The school of art aims at a high standard of practical and artistic development and in spite of many difficulties secures a large measure of success."

In 1920 the complaints become more urgent and specific:

"The accommodation is entirely inadequate and the conduct of such work as modelling and casting and almost every form of craft is a matter of extreme difficulty. A public art gallery is an appropriate and helpful adjointment to an art school, but when the gallery is also the school of art it will be already seen that the difficulties are not imaginary..."

The report noted in 1920 that despite the unfavourable conditions of work

"the school continues to do sound service in the training of those who desire to exercise their art for purely aesthetic purposes as decorators and craftworkers, or as teachers specially qualified to give instruction in drawing.

The number of students devoting their whole time to the study and practice of art is on the increase, and the work carried out by the student is of varied and important character. Much more work of an advanced order is in evidence especially in the direction of applied design.

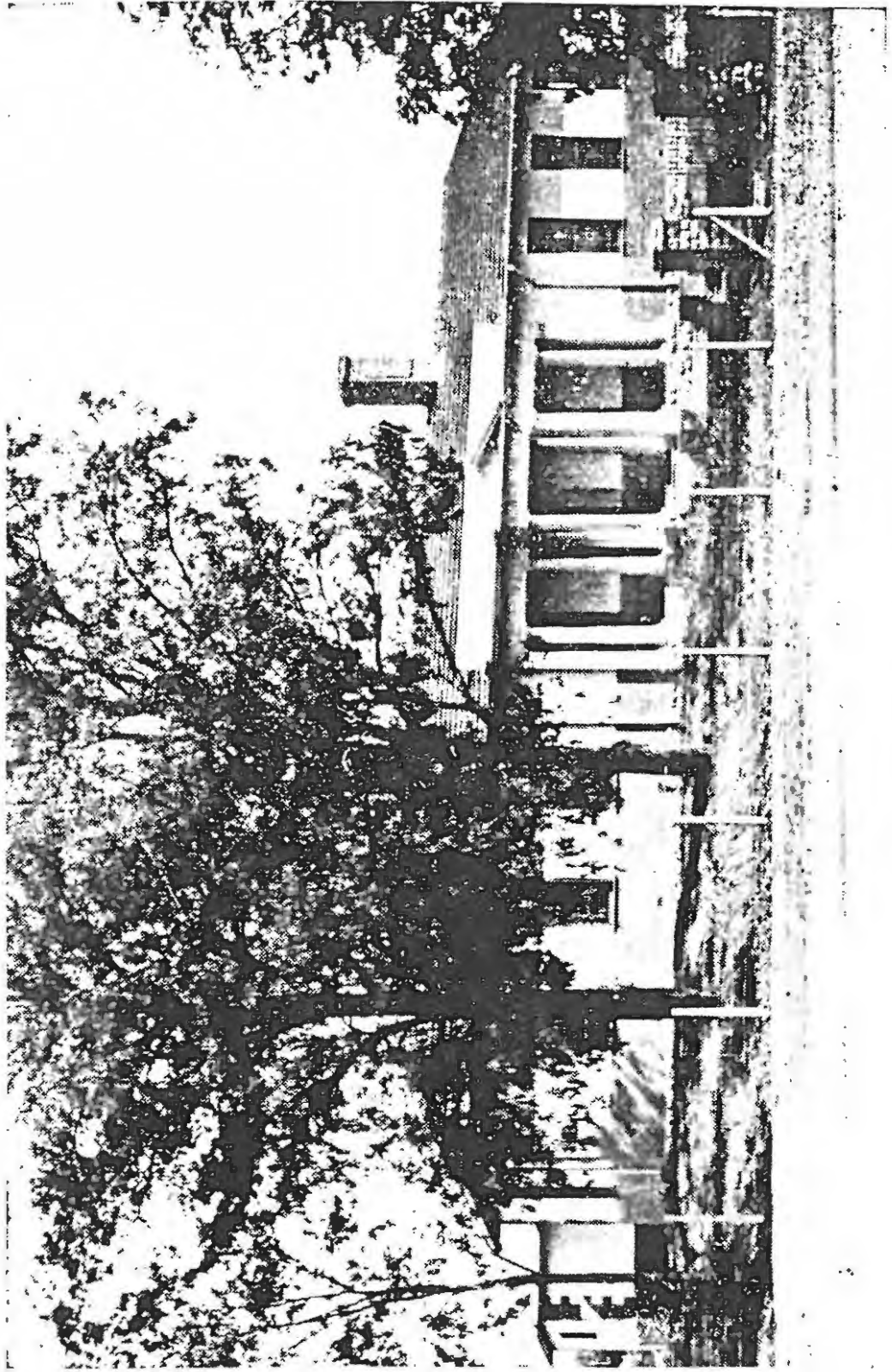
Here recent experiments in pottery have provided a strong lead and a powerful stimulus, in a craft of infinite artistic possibilities and capable of commercial development. Pots of great variety of shape have been produced, decorated, glazed and fired, and in view of the extreme difficulty attaching to the experiments; and the uncertainty of result inseparable from kiln work, the specimens produced must be regarded as not only exceedingly satisfactory, but of more than passing interest.

To the ordinary observer these examples of pottery are attractive, but to one with an intimate knowledge of the potter's art they tell of painstaking study, experiment and tests, perseverance under discouragement, and a degree of success much more real than apparent.

The permanence which firing gives to plastic works has stimulated decoration in low relief, and a number of really good such works are in progress.

In many of these the figure is combined in a decorative way with ornament, and the freedom and effectiveness of its use and treatment point to and demonstrate the value of the life class, and more particularly to rapid sketching from the figure within brief time limits.

In flat decoration and in black and white illustrations the figure has been effectively employed.



SCHOOL OF ART, R.U.C.

"A great deal of close study and careful execution have been put into the works carried out in connection with the art teacher's certificate for which a considerable number of students are preparing.

Drawing in line and in light and shade, painting in monochrome and still life, modelling and design, and the science subjects allied to art have all their quota of students, so that the curriculum is very wide and varied."

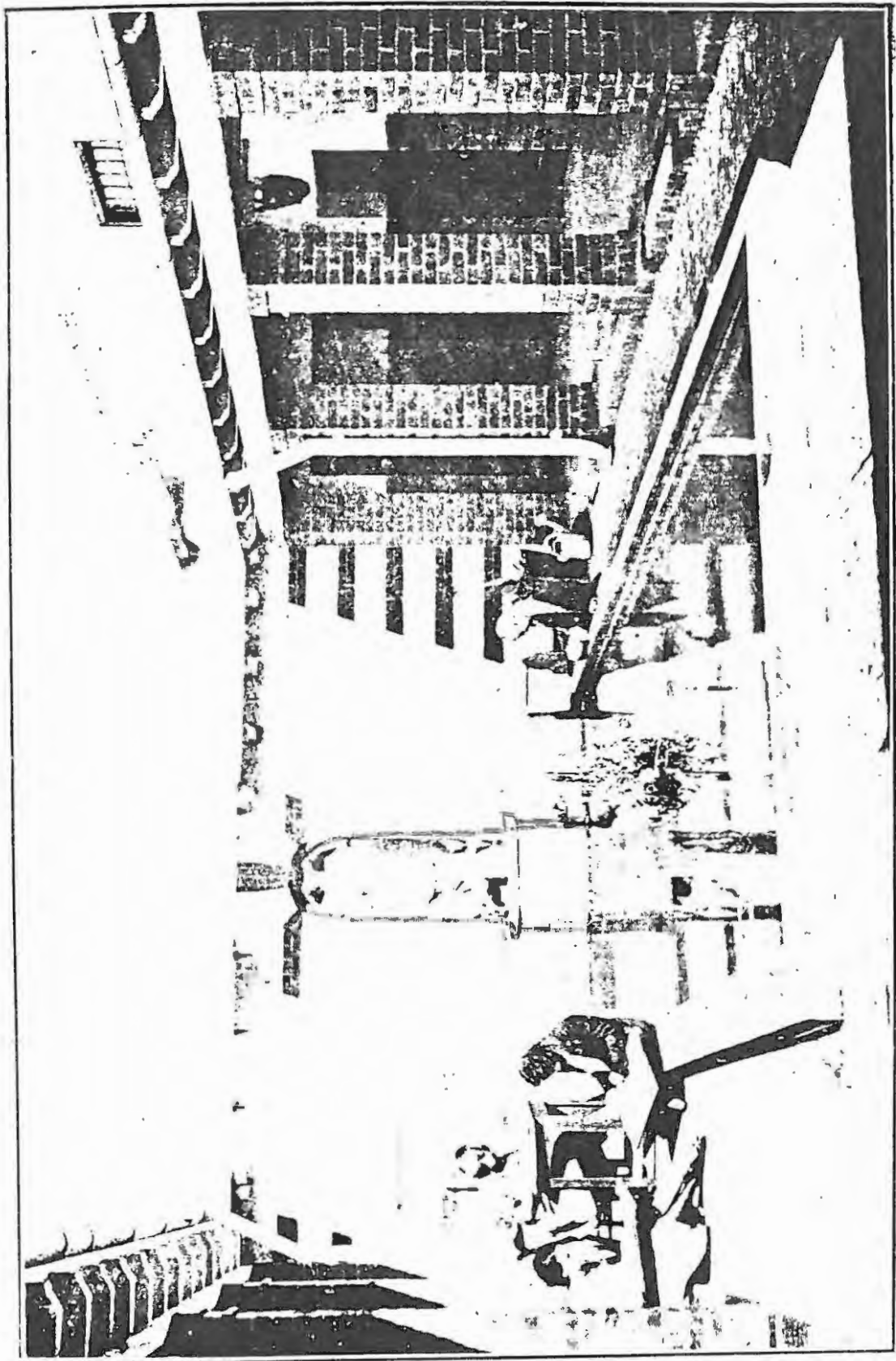
In 1921:

"In spite of these (difficulties) the work of the school has seldom been more successful or of a more interesting character."

Relief from the chronic shortage of accommodation came at last from the building of a new art school, built on the land of the Drostdy site acquired for this purpose 11 years previously. The school was the first of its kind to be designed and built specifically for its purpose, so its opening was an occasion in the history, not merely of art, but also of general education in the country. The Council of Rhodes University College, always aware of its debts to the Rhodes Trustees had proposed to invite Sir Alfred Beit to open the school. His unavailability made the Council turn to the Minister of the Interior, Public Health and Education, the Honourable Dr. D.F. Malan. It was an arresting choice for Grahamstown. Dr. Malan came fresh from flag controversies to settler country, but he came bearing gifts, so Grahamstown was able to exhibit once again its highly developed instincts for pragmatic politics. The opening took place on the 31st July, 1928, at noon in front of the school: Grocott's reporter noted "that the day was brilliant and the two flags fluttered in the breeze above the roof."⁽¹⁾

The speeches on the occasion were also notable, each giving a glimpse of what had combined to produce this notable result. Mr. Justice P.C. Cane introduced the Minister and said that the students both of the school and the College would find it "a great relief to get into new premises and carry on their work among comfortable conditions." Despite the fact that whatever work the school had produced had been produced in uncomfortable circumstances in Town Hall premises, he declared that "good work could not be done in uncomfortable surroundings in any school, and it applied with greater force to an art school." Then he continued

(1) Grocott's, 1st August, 1928.



ATRIUM, SCHOOL OF ART, R.U.C.

"We were often told in the past when we asked for assistance in the matter of art, that we were not to be too insistent in such matters, art being merely a frill to the scholastic joint; in short that they must not trouble about trimmings of that kind until the more solid work of education was dealt with. I am glad, Dr. Malan, that you have taken the view that tuition in art is necessary and that you recognise art to be an essential factor of modern education." (1)

For it was indeed remarkable that a politician so often accused of being narrow, bigoted and dogmatic should have been the one to give the lie to the myth about the cultural interests of cavaliers and the anti-cultural animosities of puritans.

In his reply, Dr. Malan noted the anxieties on the part of the College Council about extending charity to the Art School at the expense of its own family of departments, "so the Art School ... was very much in the position of an orphan, not knowing where to look for sympathy and assistance." It was an affecting metaphor, but hardly did justice to the hardheaded GFAA committee who had exercised a great deal of ingenuity and wit in the search for suitable sponsorship. "The fears of the College", he continued, "were groundless because today you have got a new Art School building and a new science building in connection with the college." He did not add that seldom have such benefactions rained down with such equity.

Dr. Malan wished above all to express gratitude to persons in Grahamstown including the members of the Art School, the GFAA and the general public who kept alive the interest in art development through the years of struggle and difficulty.

"The Art School is certainly one of the most important institutions of its kind in the country. I believe that for a period of 21 years this Art School has produced no less than 42% of the candidates for the departmental art examinations of the country, and they have secured no less than 43% of the 1st class passes."

More recently those figures had increased to 50% of the candidates and 53% of the first class passes.

"Therefore", he concluded, "I am perfectly justified in saying that the position you have reached is not due to assistance derived from outside but on account of your own determined, constant efforts during the many years you have struggled along."

(1) Grocott's, 1st August, 1928.

There had indeed been important assistance from outside, but Malan was right to have underlined the crucial factor as local effort, determination and work. His final hope was that the School of Art would progress and continually grow with the sympathy and support of the government and of the public of Grahamstown.

The third speech was Professor Armstrong's.

"Today we are entering the third important period in the history of this School. Something like 50 years ago a lady rode from Fort Beaufort particularly to teach the citizens of Grahamstown how to paint, and about 50 years ago this school was established by Sir Gordon Sprigg.

The next period started in 1904 when the school was re-organised by Dr. Muir ...

Today you have put the finishing touch upon the first school building erected in South Africa purely for the purposes of art education.

We look to the time when it will not only be a school in which painters, artists and sculptors have been trained in it, but when art will have been developed to such an extent that its effect will be felt throughout South Africa."

What Professor Armstrong could not have said was that one of the chief reasons for this pioneering result was his own capacity for imaginative and hard work; his willingness to work within the limitations imposed on him, while at the same time his great ability to improvise and develop new possibilities. The new school was the vote of confidence from the whole community in its director and those who had worked with him.

The achievement of the new Art School meant that, for the time being at least, one of the two main aims of the GFAA had been achieved. There remained the other: a public gallery. The history of this effort is less successful.

Once the Art School had moved to its new building, various alterations were carried out in the Town Hall premises now given over wholly to the gallery. These renovations and the new roof lighting cost £188-17-6. Running expenses amounted to 10/- a month paid to Mr. Lynsky, the caretaker of the Town Hall, and the cost of cleaning materials. The association aimed not only at gradually building up its own collection, but at staging periodic exhibitions. At the suggestion of

Professors Dingemans and Winter-Moore (who had succeeded Armstrong to the chair of Fine Art) the GFAA applied to the Carnegie Corporation for a grant in aid to the funds of the GFAA for its collection. They were successful in their application. The grant of 5,000 dollars, part of which was a collection of art objects, and the rest for the development of the library, was made to the Grahamstown School of Art in 1932. The Council proposed that Mr. Gane should write to the GFAA to express its appreciation of their efforts.⁽¹⁾

The issue of a separate Art Gallery was re-opened by the City Council's desire in 1933 to purchase the premises of the Art Gallery in the Town Hall building, where the Gallery now had three rooms on the upper floor. The GFAA stipulated a price of £1,600 on condition that it would be allowed to keep its pictures in the rooms under mutually agreed safeguards. The Council's counter-offer was £1,300, which the GFAA was not willing to accept. If not outright sale, what about rent? The GFAA indicated its willingness to allow one of the rooms to be rented for use as a broadcasting studio for at least £2-10-0 a month; for at least a year dating from January 1935, and provided the room was returned at the end of the lease in the same good condition. The Council wanted a three year lease with an option for a renewal, to which the GFAA had no objection, and the deal was concluded.

The Council remained determined to purchase the Association's premises. It therefore offered the upper storey of Mr. Irvin's store, which it would purchase and renovate and offer free of rental to the GFAA instead of the £1,600 for which the GFAA had asked. The GFAA rejected the offer believing that the time had come when they should possess an Art Gallery worthy of accommodating properly the valuable collection of pictures they now owned. They had already approached the Province for a loan for this purpose.

The Council agreed to pay the sum of £1,600, and offered the minor hall of the Town Hall free of rental as temporary housing for the art collection. So, in October 1935, the GFAA applied to the Provincial

(1) RUC Council Minutes, August, 1932.

CITY'S MAGNIFICENT NEW ART GALLERY

Feather in Cap of The Fine Arts
Association

FORMAL OPENING YESTERDAY BY
THE MAYOR



AN EXTERNAL VIEW OF THE NEW ART GALLERY.

Grahamstown's handsome new Art Gallery at the corner of Prince Alfred and Somerset Streets, a notable feather in the cap of the Fine Arts Association, was formally opened by the Mayor, Mr. G. W. Lucas, yesterday afternoon in the happiest of circumstances. There was a large gathering of prominent citizens present to appreciate the beauties of the new building and admire the Association's fine collection of pictures.

The gallery was opened at the new building when Mr. energetic President called upon Mr.

Then he was seated at the Second next door, the tea was served and the Mayor and other members of the committee afterwards revisited the gallery.

Administrator for authority to raise a loan not exceeding £2,400, which together with the £1,600 they hoped to receive from the City Council would enable them to build a suitable gallery. The authorization of the loan took two years; in the end £3,000 was advanced for a period of 40 years at $\frac{3}{4}\%$ for the first 20 years, after which time the interest rate would be reviewed.

Such a loan involved an annual expenditure of £145-18-6 against which the Association received a government grant of £90. Income from members' subscriptions was about £16. A deputation to the City Council in 1939 asked for a substantial grant in aid to meet the shortfall, but not until 1942 did the Council award the GFAA a grant of £20.

Meanwhile the gallery, designed by Mr. A.A. Tait was completed in June, 1938, and formally opened by the Mayor, Mr. G.W. Lucas on September 8th, 1938. So in the week of Munich, Grocott's recorded that "all present were immediately struck by the charm of the interior of the new gallery, the excellent lighting and the perspective its spaciousness allowed for full appreciation of the splendid collection of pictures which had been tastefully hung and displayed to the full advantage." The reporter, in noting these features, was making the most obvious contrasts between the old surroundings and the new.

The occasion did not pass without an appeal to the citizens of Grahamstown from Mr. Louw, now the president of the GFAA. The subscription was only 10/6; a town with such a large percentage of people interested in, or directly associated with, education should have more than 100 subscribers and not just 33. He contrasted this with Pietermaritzburg, where the town council had, with the approval of ratepayers, just voted a sum of £20,000 for an art gallery, while the GFAA had to be content with a structure costing less than £5,000 and to go even to that limit had had to borrow £3,000 on which they had to pay interest and redemption of about £150 a year. The shortfall in income made more subscriber interest essential. ⁽¹⁾

(1) Grocott's, 9th September, 1938.

The support from the Grahamstown community did not meet these modest expectations. Instead, the GFAA found the closing of the financial gap an all-consuming concern. It proved exceedingly difficult to meet running and maintenance costs; new acquisitions were impossible. These concerns appear clearly in a letter from Dr. Louw to the Town Council, in which he pointed out that elsewhere such galleries were regarded as public assets and were supported accordingly from public funds. Grahamstown's position was unique inasmuch as for almost 40 years the control of the Art Gallery and the purchase of paintings had been the concern of a small body of citizens (the GFAA), and he suggested that the best way of showing appreciation for this work would be to offer some practical assistance. The other unique feature about Grahamstown, upon which he did not comment, was the fact that its ratepayers made indirectly a much greater contribution to public and charitable works due to the almost unique extent of derating in the city.

Since Mr. Louw's plea, the Gallery has been modified, razed and the site redeveloped a number of times to suit changing requirements, technologies and fashions of higher education. Pietermaritzburg's collection is still housed in its City Hall.

Private committees initiate; they frequently are unable to sustain what they begin. The committee hoped to be able to do for the Art Gallery what it had been so successful in achieving for the school: persuade a public body to maintain what the GFAA had started. But, once again, after various other attempts had been made both to Rhodes and to the City Council for assistance, negotiations were opened with the Council with a view to the Council taking over the Gallery.

By 1948, the GFAA was unable to continue to maintain the Gallery "in a manner befitting the dignity of the city" because they lacked funds even to employ a caretaker, and this meant the valuable collection of paintings (conservatively estimated to be worth £5,000) had to be left wholly unguarded. Nor could they afford to keep the building in repair, and its condition did not favourably impress visitors to the city. The Council should note that visitors assumed that the Gallery was controlled by the municipality - as was the case elsewhere.

In 1949, the Administrator, J.G. Carinus, authorized the municipality to purchase

"from the GFAA for the sum of £2,585-14-0 being the balance outstanding as at 30th June 1948 on a loan of £3,000 granted by the Council to the Association, the property comprising the Grahamstown Art Gallery together with the art collection housed therein;

to charge the cost of the acquisition of the property referred to the Land Sales Account;

to transfer the Provincial grant of £90 from the GFAA to the City Council on the understanding that the municipality spend at least a similar amount each year on the institution failing which the grant shall be reduced proportionately." (1)

The GFAA likewise received permission to dispose of the Gallery on the same conditions.

At a meeting of the GFAA in September, 1949, held after the transfer of the Gallery to the municipality, Professor Winter-Moore proposed that the GFAA should continue to function even though both of its original aims were now superseded. He was seconded by Professor Guiton, whose wife was a member of the department of Fine Arts staff. Members preferred to have time to consider the matter, and it was decided that the President should call a special meeting when a suitable aim presented itself.

That was not for another ten years. In September, 1959, the penultimate minute of the GFAA recorded that

"In accordance with the resolution passed at the committee meeting held on 2nd September, 1949, a meeting of the subscribers was held in the Rhodes Art School on 20th August, 1959. This was duly advertised both in the press and at a public meeting when the new gallery was opened in the Albany Museum, but only three ex-members of the Grahamstown Fine Art Association attended that meeting." (2)

In September, 1959, the members of the Council of the Grahamstown Fine Art Association resolved that the funds standing in the Association account with the Albany Board of Trustees "be handed over to the Board of Trustees of the Albany Museum, Grahamstown, and that these funds be devoted by the said Board of Trustees solely to paying the costs of

(1) GFAA Minutes, 1949.

(2) GFAA Minutes, 19th September, 1959.



bringing to Grahamstown and exhibiting in the gallery of the Albany Museum, loan exhibitions of works of art."⁽¹⁾

The GFAA policy had two complementary purposes: the first was practical: to teach children and students how to draw and paint and model, and to provide opportunity for the development of the techniques upon which artistic expression was held to be founded. The other was somewhat less focused: to train the imagination, by holding up examples of "art" to be imitated. Teaching appreciation of art was not to be confined to students; it was hoped that the public would take advantage of the opportunity to educate itself from the facilities the Gallery provided for contemplation. In the mind of the committee, the two institutions, the Art School and the Gallery were complementary. But for a long period the use of the same premises for both purposes gave little encouragement to the art-lover who wished to look at the pictures collected by the Association. Hence while the numbers of pupils and the work they produced were deemed worthy of public support, the citizens of Grahamstown exhibited a disappointing lack of enthusiasm for being instructed in the art of aesthetic contemplation by the offerings of the Gallery. Perhaps the generally mediocre works collected by the GFAA were to blame, yet provincial publics have often had to accustom themselves in the arts to mediocrity.

The GFAA was only too aware how much any form of education had finally to depend upon public support; they knew too of the dilemma of patronage in an age where the two chief sources were government and business corporations. However unreasonable their insistence upon asking both for a large measure of self-direction in their projects and of financial support from such sources for their schemes, they sensed the danger of which Wyndham Lewis wrote in discussing the question of patronage.

"If you were to enquire of the artist ... what sort of patronage he would prefer, that of the State, that of a corporation, or that of an individual person, nine out of ten would answer 'Give me a rich little stockbroker every time'... The individual, however odious, is one thing - is simple; whereas the state, or the corporation, is many things, and this complexity, masquerading as a unity, is suspect, especially to such a man as the artist." (2)

(1) GFAA Minutes, September, 1959.

(2) W. Michel and C.J. Fox, "Wyndham Lewis on Art," London, Thames and Hudson, 1969, p.299.

But in Grahamstown, such a choice was not open; the GFAA had to choose between the 'complexities' of the Union Government and of Rhodes University College. Their hesitation was whether for the sake of art it would be better to deal directly with the 'complexity of government financing, or deal with it indirectly mediated through another corporation itself dependent upon the 'complexity' of the government. Throughout, the assistance of the government was crucial. But government did not initiate art education in Grahamstown. That was left to the minute private body which through its enterprise, persistence, knowledge and determination worked whatever levers were available to them to secure the maximum benefit to art education with the minimum compromises. Yet only when their effort had proved its worth beyond all doubt did the central government move to make possible what had been needed all along. Dr. Malan acknowledged as much when he arrived as fairy godmother to present the community of Grahamstown and the corporation of Rhodes University College with the facilities neither had been prepared to make a priority in their own budgets, but were happy enough to accept when paid for entirely by the central government. The Art School remains almost as it was on the day of its dedication, except that the atrium has been covered to compress into a single building the original plan of a school and exhibition space. The use which has since been made of the gallery site would appear to justify some of the fears expressed by the GFAA that the interests of art education might be submerged if care were not taken to protect them in any merger with a larger corporation. The lack of planning and coordination in the development of the Art School premises to meet the vastly increased number of students and their changed requirements contrasts sharply with the conditions so carefully planned and insisted upon by the GFAA.

But at least before he died in 1968, F.W. Armstrong saw the fulfilment of his prophecy in 1929 when he foresaw that in time the Art School would produce work of national moment. In 1964, the Grahamstown Group, formed from members of the university's department of Fine Art was founded, and gave an exhibition, not of "student studies", but of completed work.

This review of the GFAA's work may well close with the critique of the exhibition given by the late Professor R. Antonissen, then holder of the chair once occupied by Professor Dingemans and subsequently Vice-Principal of Rhodes University.

* ACTUALLY BY BRIAN BRADSHAW WHO ACTUALLY
 FOR REASONS BEST KNOWN TO HIMSELF TOOK THE
 CHAIR OF FINE ART IN 1960!

"The Grahamstown Group has constituted itself from among the staff and students in the Department of Fine Art at Rhodes University. The term 'group' one might of course expect to denote inter alia a more or less high degree of common interest, purpose, striving, perhaps even technique. But the impression I gained from these 40-50 paintings and drawings was rather a different one, namely, one of a wide variety ranging from land, sea and sky-scapes to still lifes and nudes, from life drawing to evocations of a purely imaginative world, from an atmosphere near impressionism to a very bold expressionism and a magic realism from refined design to visionary and daringly robust composition. The common ground of these artists would seem to be a strong sense of structure and form, a continuous investigation of environment in order to reveal in it the creative elements which at the same time render the essence of and surpass the realities, a realism intended not to imitate, to charm or enchant but to function as a straightforward statement about the world and very often as a vigorous affirmation of it." (1)

(1) S.A.B.C. "Arts Review", 1965.

NOTE ON SOURCES

Most of the material is drawn from the Minute books and correspondence of the GFAA, presently stored with the Albany Museum. The reports of local events are taken from Grocott's Penny Mail; and the Grahamstown Journal. The annual reports of inspectors of the Cape Education Department trace the varying fortunes and conditions of the Art School.* I was accorded the privilege of consulting the minutes of the Council of Rhodes University College to confirm details of the negotiations for taking over the Art School and of the Carnegie Library Grant. The note about Trinity's angels came from the minutes of the congregation's committee of management.

* The GFAA had from 1902-9 to submit its reports to the Cape Colony Parliament.

APPENDIX A: Professor Dingemans' memorandum on the School of Art, 1923.

The average number of students in attendance in 1923 was 63. Of this number 15 were full time students qualifying for the Cape Art Teachers' Certificate; 4 were half-time students taking the art course in connection with the syllabus for the Higher Primary Teachers' Certificate. The remainder took special art courses.

a. Age and b. General educational attainments of students.

a. 8 students under the age of 16; the age of the remainder varying from 16 to 35 years.

b. 2 students held the Higher Primary Teachers' Certificate
 9 " " " Lower " " "
 6 " " " Matriculation Certificate
 5 " " " Junior Certificate.

Subjects taught

Instruction is given in the following subjects in each of which examinations are held by the Cape Education Department. Freehand drawing, geometrical drawing, blackboard drawing, light and shade drawing, model drawing, perspective drawing, life drawing. Painting from still life; painting from life. Modelling ornament, modelling design, modelling antiques. Anatomy.

In addition the following crafts:

Woodcarving, metal work, pottery making, lace making, illuminating.

The examination successes:

Percentage of success 88%; percentage first class pass 46%.

The relation of this School of Art instruction in South Africa can be judged to a certain extent by the following table of results in the advanced Art examination. Of the first class passes in the Cape Province this School secured:

1920	40.6%
1921	33.3%
1922	55.7%
1923	72%

Second class passes

1920	35.9%
1921	39%
1922	52.2%
1923	64%

Of the total number of passes in the Cape

1920	38.1%
1921	35.6%
1922	52.2%
1923	67.5%

APPENDIX A (2)

Instruction given by the Principal at Rhodes University College

For the past 18 years the principal has lectured on graphics to the survey and mining engineering students. Since the institution of the Department of Education at Rhodes University College he has given instruction in the theory and practice of drawing to the students qualifying for the Provisional First Class Teachers' Certificate, the Higher Diploma and the Lower Secondary Diploma in Education.

For a number of years a six month course of lectures on drawing has been given to students taking science subjects.

Financial

The Cape Education Department contributes half the amount paid in salaries. The other half and the entire cost of maintenance have for the past 17 years been met out of fee income.

The following is a summary of the balance sheets for the past 5 years.

	Revenue (£s)	Expenditure
1919	874-11-1	730-19-1
1920	909-14-5	733- 0-6
1921	1028-11-1	1231- 3-4
1922	1031-17-6	1056-19-3
1923	1068- -11	1029-16-0
	<u>4911-16-0</u>	<u>4781-18-2</u>

The fee income for these years was as follows.

1919	515- 7- 0
1920	481- 4- 0
1921	565- 2- 4
1922	536-12- 6
1923	529-11-11

The excess expenditure in 1921 is accounted for by the fact that in that year the salaries of the staff were increased in accordance with the Cape Teachers' salary ordinance. The grant-in-aid was only received in the subsequent financial year.

APPENDIX BCATALOGUE

The following is a catalogue of pictures on exhibition in the 1820 section of the Albany Museum, on long loan from the Municipality of Grahamstown. This catalogue is not complete: some paintings of the collection are situated elsewhere in the Museum, but some appear to be missing entirely.

- | | | |
|----|---|------------------------|
| 1) | The Voortrekker: | Amschwitz, J.H. (RBA) |
| 2) | The Phantom Ship: | " |
| 3) | Italian Phantasy: | " |
| 4) | Silent Pool, Victoria Falls: | Armstrong, F.W. |
| 4 | 5) Dutch Canal: | van Beck, Benn J. |
| 5 | 6) The Glean, Coming Tide: | Bevington, W.G. (ARCA) |
| 6 | 7) Yellowwoods Waterfall: | " |
| 7 | 8) Salt River: | Bowler, J.W. |
| 8 | 9) E.L. Beach: | Brown, John. |
| 9 | 10) Meiring's Poort: | Brown, T.R. |
| 10 | 11) The Crabbing Beach: | Brown, Wanne. |
| 11 | 12) Pensive: | Bulman, H. |
| 12 | 13) Pistols and Coffee for Two: | Burnett Stocks, W. |
| 13 | 14) The Eucalyptus Avenue,
Pasadina: | Carlisle, M.H. |
| | 15) Celebrating Christmas: | Carter, Sydney. |
| | 16) | " |
| 16 | 17) Angela Mary: | Cohen, I.M. (R.O.I.) |
| 17 | 18) Preparing for sea: | Craft, Percy R. (RBC) |
| 18 | 19) Governor's Home: | Crossland, Robinson. |
| | 20) Purple and Gold: | " |
| 20 | 21) The Water Nymph's Pool: | Draper, Herbert. (RBC) |
| | 22) Red House: | Everett, F.F. |
| 22 | 23) Morning Harvest (The Catch): | Fiddler, H. (RBA) |
| | 24) Goodhurst Kent: | Gilbert, A. |
| | 25) Moonlight, Clovelly, Devon: | " |
| | 26) Landscape: | " |
| 26 | 27) Bushmanland - Cattle: | Glossop, A. |
| | 28) | Groves, C.S. (ARCA) |
| 28 | 29) Church Square, Grahamstown: | Hall, Miss Phoebe. |

APPENDIX B (2)

30)	Ebb Tide:	Hicks, R.A.
31)	Meadow Pool:	Jones, Reginald.
32)	Wonder of Nature:	de Jongh, Tinus.
33)	Steenberg Steenberg:	"
34)	The Old Oyster Woman:	Kay, D. (ARCA)
35)	Basotos Blanket:	"
36)	Anticipation:	Kenninton, T.B. (RBC)
37)	Evening, St. James:	Meacham, C.
37 38)	Lower High Street:	Moore, E.C.
39)	The Dusty Road - Karroo:	"
40)	Home Drakenstein:	Morgan, D. Carey.
41)	House:	"
42)	Clifton, Cape:	Morland, J.S.
43)	Summertime:	"
44)	Sisters:	Naray, A.
45)	Victoria Falls:	Naude, Hugo.
46)	A study - Native Head:	Oerder, F.D.
47)	Native Study:	"
48)	Spring:	Penstone, Mrs. C.
49)	Landscape - N. Transvaal:	Pohl, S.
50)	Cape of Good Hope:	Roworth, E.W.
51)	The Painter:	"
52)	The Hill:	"
53)	St. James:	"
54)	Glasses:	Romek, A.
55)	Landscape - House:	Simpson, W.H.
56)	Mountain:	"
57)	Lower Albany:	"
58)	Table Mountain:	van Someron.
59)	Camps Bay:	Spilhaus, Nita.
60)	Landscape:	Spinks, T.
61)	Difficult Road:	Uduary, P.
62)	The Hermit:	Unknown.
63)	Prairie Horses Steppes:	Viski, J.
64)	Country Road:	Volshenk, J.
65)	Calm Sunny South:	"
66)	Hout Bay:	Whale, R.H.
67)	Nature's Mirror:	Wiles, W.G.
68)	Departing Day - Uitenhage:	"
69)	Drostdy Gate:	Winter-Moore, A. (ARCA) [



1



5



2



6

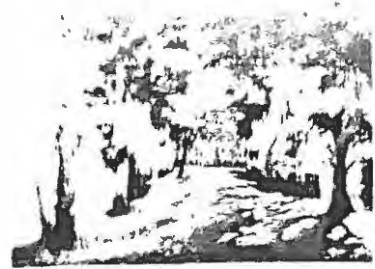


7





9



13



10



14



11



15





17



21



18



22



19



23





25



29



26



30



27



31





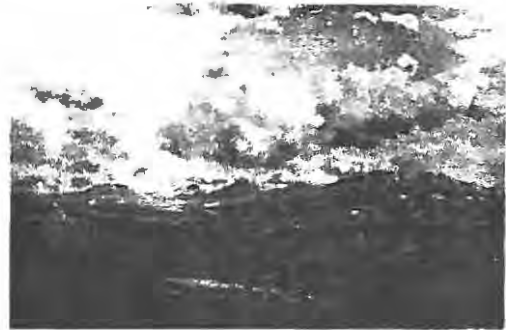
33



37



34



38



35



39





41



45



42



46



43



47



48



49



53



50



54



51



55



52



56



57



61



58



62



59



63



64





65



68



66



69



67



70