



DALE TRENDALL

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Arthur Dale Trendall 1909–1995

A. D. (DALE) TRENDALL was one of the foremost historians of classical art of the twentieth century. He was not only the leading authority on the red-figured vases produced during the fifth and fourth centuries BC in the Greek colonies and native towns of south Italy and Sicily, but a scholar who had a profound influence on the humanities in general, and classical studies in particular, in Australia and New Zealand for more than half a century.

He was born on 28 March 1909, in Glenmore (Auckland), New Zealand, of parents who had migrated from England. His father, Arthur Dale Trendall, taught woodworking and technical drawing. His mother, Iza Whaley Uttley-Todd, was also a teacher and seems to have had a profound influence upon her son's character. It was from her that he derived his great love of Gilbert and Sullivan, which he knew by heart and was fond of quoting. And it is significant that his first book, *Paestan Pottery*, is dedicated to her alone. His uncle, Charles Uttley-Todd, was involved in the building of the new Australian capital, Canberra. It was, therefore, not inappropriate that Dale himself was later to accept a university appointment in Canberra, and to be concerned with the development of that city, as a member, from 1958 to 1967, of the National Capital Planning Committee.

Under his parents' influence he began to develop that quickness of observation, those powers of memory and of concentration to which he owed his later remarkable achievements. In 1912 his parents visited England for a year: late in life he claimed to remember the devastation at Messina still visible after the catastrophic earthquake of 1908, and to recall being taken to see a great aunt who had been born on the day of the battle of Waterloo. However, the family returned to New Zealand before the outbreak of the First World War, and moved to the rural hamlet of Howick (now part of the city of Auckland), where they remained until 1916 when they moved into Auckland proper so that

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Dale could begin his schooling. He remembered fondly those idyllic years at Howick: at the back of the house a stream meandered through a large paddock; there was an orchard and a dairy; the family kept a cow, chickens, and ducks; transport was horse-drawn.

As a boy Dale spent ten years (1916–25) at King's College in Auckland, which at that time, as he once remarked, was more concerned to turn out young gentlemen than potential scholars. Nevertheless, it is only fair to say that his outstanding intellectual ability was recognised by his teachers, and encouraged; and Dale maintained his association with King's until the end of his life. During these years he regularly received prizes for proficiency in Languages and Literature, as well as Mathematics and Science, and he won the Stuckey Prize for English Literature in 1925. He was Dux of the school in 1924 and 1925, and in his final year a school prefect; and his headmaster prophesied 'a brilliant future'. His earliest literary work, now sadly lost, dates from this time. It was entitled *The Furniture and Appurtenances of Heaven as Revealed to Wondering Mortals through the Medium of Hymns A & M*, and included, for example, a section on heavenly timepieces (as in 'Lord, her watch Thy Church is keeping'). It was prefaced by a limerick:

A missionary maid named O'Brien,
Sang Hymns A and M to a lion,
Of the maiden there's some,
In the lion's tumtum,
But she's mainly an angel in Zion.

Even now I have a vivid memory of Dale reciting these lines with relish, a bright twinkle in his eye and a puckish grin on his face.

It was during these years at King's (in fact 1920) that he fell seriously ill from peritonitis after a burst appendix. He had to endure a considerable period of convalescence; but during his enforced leisure he read voraciously. This was the foundation of his extraordinary knowledge of the byways of English literature in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, as well as of classic detective fiction. This interest remained strong throughout his life, and there were few occasions later that did not call forth a favourite quotation, often from Saki, Kai Lung, or the Good Duke Alfred. At this time too he developed an abiding interest in stamps and coins (an interest that found expression in the 1930s in a few short pieces on archaeology on stamps for *Gibbons' Stamp Monthly*, and in the early 1960s in Canberra when he was a member of the Advisory Committee on Decimalisation).

In 1926, having won a University of New Zealand Entrance Scholarship, he began his studies at the University of Otago (then part of the University of New Zealand) in Dunedin. He lived at Selwyn College, and his experiences

there were probably significant for his later career as Master of University House in Canberra. He chose Dunedin (rather than Auckland) at the instigation of his parents who felt that he should begin to be more self-reliant. At first he intended to major in mathematics, but he had been able to learn Latin at King's College and his incipient interest in classics was fostered by the inspiring teaching of Professor T. D. Adams. Adams possessed a mellifluous voice, and a manner of presentation and delivery that was matched in Dale's experience only by the Cambridge philosopher F. M. Cornford. These lectures, which also introduced him to Greek art, produced a lasting impression, and immediately brought about his decision to follow a career in classics. But more fundamentally Adams provided a conception of classical studies that was not confined to language and literature, but all embracing; and a model of a sensitive and kindly scholar. This debt to Adams was acknowledged in 1938 in the dedication of his second book, *Frühitaliotische Vasen*.¹ Trendall completed his BA in 1928, and in the following year he gained his MA (NZ), with First Class Honours in Latin. He was awarded the James Clark Prize for Greek in 1928, and for Latin in 1929.²

For a young New Zealander in the 1920s, with a keen mind and a desire to pursue a career in classical studies, England was clearly the next step. However, he returned to King's College in Auckland to teach for a year before taking up, in 1931, a University of New Zealand travelling scholarship which enabled him to proceed to England. There he briefly rented accommodation in London (Gordon Square) before moving to Trinity College in Cambridge where he gained a Studentship (£200 per annum). He was excused the first two years of the Classical Tripos on the strength of his previous work in New Zealand, and graduated in 1933 with a starred First (one of only six that year) and distinction in classical archaeology. During these years he attended lectures by A. E. Housman (whose scholarship he admired but whose style he found very dry), A. B. Cook (whose classical knowledge he found encyclopaedic), A. W. Lawrence, and C. T. Seltman. But he was most impressed by the lectures of the philosopher F. M. Cornford and the historian M. Charlesworth. During his Cambridge years his supervisor was A. S. F. Gow, for whom he developed a considerable admiration, although he never forgot Gow's remark, overheard as Dale was leaving after his first interview: 'Another damned colonial!' Yet it was Gow who first introduced him to the Oxford scholar J. D. Beazley, the eminent classical archaeologist, whose approach to the study of Greek vases was to be inspirational for the young scholar.

In later years Dale would occasionally delight friends, especially young friends, with anecdotes from his own student days in Cambridge. One incident

¹ See also L. S. Adams, *Thomas Dagger Adams, A Memoir* (1954), pp. 26–7.

² *King's Collegian*, 29/1 (1930) 7.

that comes readily to mind occurred at an afternoon tea at the home of Charles Seltman. Among the guests was a certain Prudence Wilkinson, one of the outspoken young women of the time, and soon to marry F. L. Lucas (see that interesting work *From Olympus to the Styx*, dedicated 'To Each Other'). During a lull in the conversation and the rattle of teacups, Miss Wilkinson was heard to remark: 'Don't you think, Mr Seltman, that the average man's appreciation of the Parthenon sculptures is entirely due to latent homosexuality?'

During the first long vacation (1932) at Cambridge Dale travelled in Italy, partly to learn Italian, partly to see the archaeological sites. He was much impressed by the remains of the Greek cities, most especially the unspoiled beauty of Paestum. This experience, combined with the influence of J. D. Beazley, led to his decision to devote his life to the red-figure pottery produced by the Greek inhabitants of South Italy and Sicily. It was a subject that he pursued with absolute devotion and undimmed enthusiasm for more than 60 years. He once remarked to me that he had 20,000 loves, and they were all vases.

But his decision to study this relatively neglected area of Greek pottery was courageous. At that time, partly through the outstanding work of Humfry Payne, Greek art of the Archaic period was very much in vogue, and South Italian vases were not appreciated, but deemed to be 'late' and 'colonial'. As Dale himself later observed, the general attitude was 'rather like Virgil's advice to Dante in regard to the lost souls outside the gate of Hell: "non ragionam di lor, ma guarda e passa"'.³ Like his contemporary and friend T. J. Dunbabin, who had gone from Sydney to Oxford, Dale felt a sympathy for the vibrancy and novelty of colonial Greek culture in Magna Graecia, and so he persevered, though he certainly felt at times that he was working nearly alone:

my colonial upbringing had perhaps given me a slight prejudice in favour of the Western Greek colonists and it enabled me to view some of their problems, as well as their attitude to the motherland, with a more sympathetic eye, and perhaps with even a greater understanding, than my English colleagues, who tended to look upon the ancient Greek world very much through the eyes of the Athenians rather than those of the Syracusans or Tarentines.⁴

But the problem for the young student was not only scholarly prejudice, but also the sheer amount of material, and the task was to prove more formidable than he at first realised. From the middle of the fifth century until the early third century BC certain of the Greek colonies and native centres in Magna Graecia produced pottery painted in the red-figure technique with

³ A. D. Trendall and Alexander Cambitoglou, *The Red-figured Vases of Apulia* (Oxford, 1982), p. 1036.

⁴ Address on the occasion of the conferring of the degree of Doctor of Letters at La Trobe University, 16 Dec. 1991.

scenes drawn from myth and everyday life. These vases represent not only a significant example of the artistic sensibility of the Western Greeks, but a fundamental source for many aspects of Greek and native culture, from religion, burial customs, and the theatre, to warfare, costume, and jewellery. The output was large. Today, well over 20,000 such vases survive, scattered in museums and private collections from Trondheim in the northern hemisphere to Dunedin in the southern, and many more appear each year through regular or illicit excavations. Furthermore, in the early 1930s serious scholarship devoted to South Italian red-figure vases was not extensive, and most vases remained unpublished, often gathering dust in museum basements (his work, as he once remarked, fell into the category of 'dirty' rather than 'dirt' archaeology). The great German archaeologist Adolph Furtwängler had recognised one group of early South Italian vases which he thought had been made by immigrant Athenian potters at Thurii. In Italy, G. Patroni and P. Ducati had made some progress in differentiating the principal local fabrics of Apulia, Lucania, and Campania, and Patroni had postulated the existence of a fabric at Paestum. In England the work of J. D. Beazley, though principally concerned with Athenian vase-painting, provided useful notes, especially on the initial phases of Lucanian and Apulian, and E. M. W. Tillyard's publication in 1923 of the Hope vases represented a considerable step forward in distinguishing local South Italian from imported Athenian red-figure. But most significant was an article published in 1929 by one of Beazley's students, Miss Noël Moon (later Mrs Walter Oakeshott), on the early phases of South Italian pottery. It was the work of Beazley and of Moon, in particular, that provided the immediate stimulus to Dale's research, and it was a debt that he readily acknowledged.⁵

At the beginning of his career he set himself the task of identifying the five principal local red-figure styles, which we now recognise as Apulian, Lucanian, Campanian, Paestan, and Sicilian; of defining the chronological development of painted pottery in South Italy during the Classical period; and of attributing, through a careful stylistic analysis, the many thousands of vases to painters and groups. If today the basic classification has been established, this is mainly Trendall's achievement. But it was not at first easy to decide where to begin.

His first article appeared in 1934 in the *Journal of Hellenic Studies*. It dealt with an Early Apulian volute-krater that had been found in a large tomb at Ceglie near Bari in 1898, but had remained unpublished. Much of the short piece is taken up with iconographic matters, but already style has a place: following an opinion of Beazley, the vase is placed between the Painter of the

⁵ See 'Beazley and Early South Italian Vase Painting', in D. Kurtz, ed., *Beazley and Oxford* (1985), pp. 31–41.

Berlin Dancing Girl and the followers of the Sisyphus Painter, about 410 or a little later, and the mainstream of Early Apulian production is located at Taranto.

After completing his studies in Cambridge, Dale received the Charles Walston Studentship which enabled him to profit from a year spent in Greece. But Italy had captured his imagination, so he moved to the British School at Rome for two years as Rome Scholar in Classical Studies. His topic of research was the red-figure pottery of South Italy, in particular the 'style presumed to be Paestan'. He finally chose this topic as a starting-point because the number of Paestan vases was relatively small, most were to be found in the museums of Naples and Madrid, and comparatively little research had been carried out. Moreover, Paestan was recognised to have a certain importance in providing the only two South Italian vase-painters who signed their work—Asteas and Python; the style was relatively homogeneous; and the mythological subjects were of considerable interest. A preliminary article in the *Journal of Hellenic Studies* for 1935 broke new ground by attempting to outline the early phase of Paestan before the main production of Asteas and Python. This was followed the next year by his first book, *Paestan Pottery*, printed under the auspices of the British School. Here, for the first time, the fabric was studied as a whole: all Paestan red-figure vases then known, some 400, were collected and organised into painters and groups on the basis of a thorough stylistic analysis using the Morellian method as it had been adapted to painted Greek vases by Beazley. It was a methodology that he was to employ in all his publications. Some fifty years later Dale returned to the study of Paestan pottery, completing, as he felt, the cycle of his research. *The Red-figured Vases of Paestum*, published in 1987, again by the British School at Rome, is a much more elaborate work than its predecessor, incorporating almost 2000 vases, which are, however, catalogued and discussed in the same sensitive manner, and with the same clarity and thoroughness. But this is not merely an enlargement of its predecessor: new perspectives on the development of Paestan are revealed, particularly the presence of a new artist, the Aphrodite Painter, whose vases reveal a strong Apulian character and suggest that the artist may have moved about 330 from Taranto or thereabouts to Paestum.

The publication of *Paestan Pottery* brought Dale both a Fellowship (1937) at Trinity College, where he had been a Student and Research Scholar, and a Litt.D. from the University of New Zealand (Beazley was the assessor), the degree which, along with his later Cambridge Litt.D., he most valued. He did not, however, return immediately to Cambridge, for upon the resignation of Ellis Waterhouse in June, 1936, he was appointed Librarian of the British School at Rome, a position that he held for the next two years. His duties involved a considerable reorganisation of the Library, but he also found time to give lectures at the British School, the German Archaeological Institute, and

the American Academy, and to take students around the monuments of Rome and the ruins of Pompeii and Paestum, demonstrating his desire to impart something of his own fascination with the remains of classical civilisation. During the summer months he travelled extensively not only in southern Italy but on visits to museums elsewhere in Europe (Berlin, Vienna, Leningrad, Moscow). The immediate result of this activity was *Frühitaliotische Vasen*, a volume in the prestigious series *Bilder griechischer Vasen* (edited by J. D. Beazley and Paul Jacobsthal), a long essay really in which he set forth his thoughts on the early phases of Lucanian and Apulian red-figure. When the series was reprinted in the early 1970s, he insisted on revising the work, which he did while propped up in bed after a debilitating fall.

These years passed in Italy during his young manhood left an indelible impression. They not only consolidated his feeling for the country and its people, but gave him a love of good Italian food and wine (among his favourite Roman restaurants were 'Fagiano' near the Column of Marcus Aurelius, and later 'Da Giggetto' in the old Jewish quarter), and later during his Mastership he took particular care with the cuisine and the wine cellar at University House in Canberra, and even instituted a periodic Wine Symposium. These years also gave him an enduring love of Italian opera, for he heard such singers as Beniamino Gigli, Giacomo Lauri-Volpi, and Maria Caniglia in their prime; and often in later life he could be heard humming an aria as he made cold coffee for the mid-morning break in his flat at La Trobe University or walked rapidly to the mailroom.

Finally, in 1938, he resigned the post of Librarian and left Rome to take up his Fellowship in Cambridge. He might have spent his academic career there, but in the following year he was offered the opportunity of a free trip by boat to New Zealand and a visit to his parents after seven years absence. In August, while in Auckland, he unexpectedly received an invitation to apply for the Chair of Greek in the University of Sydney, which had been recently vacated by J. Enoch Powell, who had returned to England at the approach of war in Europe. He accepted the invitation, and thus, at the outbreak of the Second World War, Dale was established in Sydney. He found a suitable flat on the second floor of a building at no. 2, Penshurst Avenue, Neutral Bay, with a beautiful view over Sydney Harbour. The flat provided two bedrooms as well as a study, dining-room, and sitting-room, so he persuaded his parents to leave New Zealand in 1940 and join him in Sydney. Every weekday he would take a ferry at 8 a.m. across the Harbour, then a tram in order to arrive at the university for his first Greek class at 9 a.m.

Early in 1941, however, with the Japanese threat growing, Trendall and three other academics ('men of the professor type') from the University of Sydney (T. G. Room, Professor of Mathematics; R. J. Lyons, Senior Lecturer in Mathematics; and A. P. Treweek, Lecturer in Greek) were approached by a

representative of the Chief of the Australian General Staff to see if they would be willing to help with the decoding of Japanese signals. The group got together informally to study available books on cryptography and to work on Japanese diplomatic messages supplied by the Army. During this period they succeeded in breaking the Japanese LA-code, a low-grade code used for consular messages. Room, Lyons, and Treweek moved to Melbourne the same year to join the Signals Intelligence Organisation set up by Captain Eric Nave. Trendall was transferred early in 1942, and proved to be exceptionally gifted as a cryptographer. He headed a small group working out of Victoria Barracks in St Kilda Road, a group that specialised in decrypting Japanese diplomatic signals. In later years, however, he was very reticent about this period of his life, and he was very reluctant to talk about his own accomplishments.⁶

The end of the war brought a return to regular university teaching, not just of Greek, for in 1948 the University of Sydney was persuaded to establish the first Department of Archaeology in Australia. Trendall was appointed Professor of Archaeology while retaining the Chair of Greek. In developing courses in both classical and near eastern archaeology he had the assistance of J. R. Stewart, a specialist in the archaeology of Cyprus, whom he had managed to persuade to come to Sydney in 1946 as a Teaching Fellow in History, and who was now transferred to the new department as Senior Lecturer. Trendall and Stewart had, one suspects, rather different ideas on the subject of archaeology, and both were determined individuals, but though they may have had their differences, they remained friendly until Stewart's untimely death in 1962.⁷ Certainly, the new programme produced some outstanding graduates: one of the first was J. B. Hennessy, who was to continue the Australian activities in Cyprus, and eventually to succeed Stewart in the Edwin Cuthbert Hall Chair of Middle Eastern Archaeology at Sydney. On the Classical side Dale's finest pupil during these Sydney years was undoubtedly Martin Frederiksen, who went on to a distinguished career as an ancient historian at Oxford, and whose early death in 1980 he felt very deeply. Another favourite pupil of this Sydney period was Alicia Totolos, who moved to London and became the first Secretary of the Institute of Classical Studies, welcoming over the years many Commonwealth scholars 'with an openness and warmth . . . typically Australian'.⁸

⁶ See David Jenkins, *Battle Surface! Japan's Submarine War Against Australia, 1942-44* (Sydney, 1992), pp. 42-3, 157-9.

⁷ On Stewart, see R. S. Merrillees, 'Professor James R. Stewart: A Biographical Lecture', in C. A. Hope and J. K. Zimmer, eds., *Essays on Australian Contributions to the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East* (Melbourne, 1983), pp. 33-51.

⁸ Address by J. R. Green at the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, on 5 August 1997, launching the international appeal in aid of the A. D. Trendall Research Centre for Ancient Mediterranean Studies.

In his teaching, as in his research, Dale's passionate involvement in the study of the Classical world found an outlet. His lectures on Greek art, which were delivered three times a week and were open to all comers, were inspiring and came to enjoy a legendary renown. As one former evening student at the University of Sydney recently recalled, 'What Professor Trendall had that no other lecturer of that time seemed to have was passion. . . . If Professor Trendall had chosen to hold his lectures at midnight in the rain in the Quadrangle, he would have drawn a crowd.'⁹ Even after he left teaching in Sydney for administration in Canberra, he did not lose his enjoyment in communicating his enthusiasms to both scholar and layman. Occasionally he was persuaded to give a series of lectures on Greek and Roman art: for the Department of Fine Arts at the University of Melbourne, for example, or for the Australian National University, in 1956, when there was standing-room only in the theatre and long and spontaneous applause after the last lecture, as appreciative letters to the local newspaper at the time noted.

The new courses in archaeology in Sydney after 1948 were designed to make as much use as possible of the objects in the Nicholson Museum. This museum justly bears the name of Sir Charles Nicholson, Vice-Provost and then Provost of the University of Sydney from 1854 to 1862, who donated his sizable collection of Mediterranean antiquities to the university in the enlightened belief that it would have greater impact in fostering an interest in the Classical world in Australia than in England, where such collections were not uncommon at the time. In addition to his other responsibilities, Dale was honorary curator of the Nicholson Museum, and from 1946 to 1951, with the assistance of Stewart, he concentrated upon the improvement of the display by the acquisition of new cases and the installation of better lighting, and more particularly upon increasing the number and variety of the holdings through judicious acquisitions. An Association of Friends of the Nicholson Museum was formed in 1946 'with the aims of stimulating a wider interest in the Museum and of providing additional funds for the purchase of suitable antiquities'.¹⁰ In the years after the war it was possible to build up the collections with material not only from excavations in Cyprus and the Near East, but with many important classical objects that were obtained in Europe, relatively inexpensively, as old collections were broken up: in 1946, for example, a superb Attic Late Geometric krater from the Dipylon Workshop, and vases from the Cowdray collection; in 1947 a Chalcidian neck-amphora and three other vases from the collection of Sir Herbert Cook at Doughty House (Richmond); in 1951 the collection of Roman glass that had belonged to Professor A. B. Cook of Cambridge; and, of course, major examples of South Italian red-figure pottery (often with the help of Noël Moon). The aim was not

⁹ *The Gazette*, University of Sydney (Dec. 1992).

¹⁰ A. D. Trendall, 'The Nicholson Museum', *Art and Australia* (Dec. 1967), 533.

to develop a public gallery but representative collections that would be used in the teaching of the different ancient Mediterranean cultures. Many are the Australian students who have benefited from this vision.

Obviously, the years of world war had interrupted Dale's research into South Italian pottery. In fact, after 1939, when he arrived in Sydney, he was not able to return to Europe until the end of 1950, although he did visit New Zealand in 1947 (when he discovered a lost red-figured cup by Douris in the Canterbury Museum in Christchurch),¹¹ and again in August 1949, when he stayed at Selwyn College in Dunedin while studying the Greek pottery in the Otago Museum. Not only was travel difficult, but few new publications were available. In later life he was somewhat sensitive about this 'lost' decade in his scholarly achievement. Yet the period was by no means unfruitful, for not only did he prepare a guide to the casts of Greek and Roman sculpture in the Nicholson Museum (now the only witness to that collection), but he edited and partly wrote the basic Handbook to the museum. Moreover, the second edition of this Handbook, produced in 1948 in collaboration with J. R. Stewart, was well received internationally, providing an excellent introduction to the art and archaeology of the Near East and the Classical World.

Late in 1950 Dale was free, however, to return to a war-ravaged Europe. In December he was in Rome, staying at the British School, now under the able direction of J. B. Ward-Perkins, whom he had met in the 1930s and who remained a life-long friend. His presence in Rome and the completed reinstallation of the vases in Sala VIII of the Museo Gregoriano Etrusco led to the invitation to publish the South Italian and Etruscan red-figure vases in the Vatican. The resulting catalogue, written in elegant Italian, appeared in two monumental volumes in 1953 and 1955:¹² not only does it provide a definitive classification, but its introductory sections on the various styles may still be consulted with great profit. At this time he was also concerned about a possible move from Sydney to Cambridge, for he was among those being considered for the Chair of Archaeology, recently vacated by A. W. Lawrence. In the event, the Electors chose Jocelyn Toynbee. This was not a great disappointment, for Dale was in fact reluctant to leave Sydney, partly because he had devoted much effort to building up Classical art and archaeology there, but also because his parents were now aged and his mother particularly in poor health.

This first post-war trip lasted until January, 1952, and was the longest of any he undertook, involving visits to sites and museums in Greece, the Near East, North Africa, as well as collections in England, France, and America, for

¹¹ His satisfaction at this unexpected discovery is expressed in 'Attic Vases in Australia and New Zealand', *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 71 (1951), 178–93 at 186.

¹² A. D. Trendall, *Vasi antichi dipinti del Vaticano: Vasi italoti ed etruschi a figure rosse*, vols. I–II (Città del Vaticano, 1953–5).

he was very aware of the gaps in his knowledge. From this time until increasing age brought a halt to his travels in 1990 he made annual pilgrimages to Europe, with frequent visits to the United States. Indeed, he estimated that he had travelled some 25 times around the world. And in Italy he came to be referred to as 'archeologo volante' and 'rondine d'inverno'. These journeys often lasted three or four months, normally somewhere between October and May, so that he could avoid the heat of an Australian summer and, in later years, also avoid the beginning of the academic year in March. They were stimulated not only by a love of travel, but also by a strongly-held belief that it was imperative to examine, at first hand, as many vases as possible, and that to rely, particularly in matters of style, solely on photographs or illustrations was inadequate and potentially misleading.

For many years he sojourned regularly in London, enjoying the hospitality of the Principal of London University, Sir Douglas Logan, and of Lady Logan at their residence in Gordon Square. He developed a warm friendship with T. B. L. Webster, and his admiration for the scholar and the man will be evident to all who read the summary of the memorial lecture he gave in December, 1974.¹³ Their mutual concern with Greek drama led to their collaboration on *Illustrations of Greek Drama*, published in 1971, a work that examined pictures on Archaic and Classical vases that seemed to illustrate (but not 'represent') moments in Greek plays. Although not pioneering, the book helped to spawn a lively (and continuing) debate on the possible influence of drama on representations in Greek art. Trendall was also a fervent supporter of Webster's brainchild, the Institute of Classical Studies, and over the years he is said to have given some twenty lectures and seminars at the Institute, presenting his latest researches and new South Italian vases.

In October, 1953, he was invited to become the first Master of University House at the Australian National University in Canberra. This was an inspired choice, but it is not entirely clear why he accepted. He had served as Acting Vice-Chancellor during that year with considerable aplomb, and he seems to have acquired a certain taste for administration. He seems also to have felt that he had achieved his main goals at Sydney University, and, after fifteen years in Sydney, he perhaps realised that he needed a different challenge and a change of scene (especially after his mother's death early in 1954). In any event he took up his new position in April of the following year. The task before him was formidable. University House had been newly built to be the graduate residence of the university, to provide a centre for university staff and to represent, in a sense, the university to the general community in Canberra. 'The Master, in short, had to be a distinguished scholar and man of affairs, an

¹³ 'T. B. L. Webster Memorial Lecture', *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies*, 21 (1974), 1-2.

official public relations officer and the proprietor of what, in law, was a common boarding house.¹⁴ It is perhaps not surprising that he should have been successful in juggling the diverse demands of his new position, for at Sydney from 1947 to 1950 he had acted as Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Chairman of the Professorial Board, while still teaching his normal complement of courses. Dale remained for fifteen years as Master of University House, and with his urbanity, cultivated taste and 'fine Italian hand', guided the fledgling institution through the difficult early years and gave it a distinctive style which, despite many forced changes, has not entirely disappeared.

His position as Master, and as Deputy Vice-Chancellor (1958–64) of the Australian National University, brought him to the notice of many influential people, foremost of whom was the Prime Minister, R. G. Menzies. These relationships in turn led to new responsibilities. For example, in 1961 he was appointed Chairman of the Interim Council of what was to become (1964) the Australian Institute of Aboriginal (later Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Studies, and he continued in this position until 1966, thus playing a prominent role in its early development. Again, in 1955 he served on the three-member Royal Commission instituted to examine the discontent at the University of Tasmania. The final report of the Commission criticised in diplomatic language the governance of the university, and made important recommendations, though unfortunately these were only implemented in part. Had they been fully instituted subsequent events (including the dismissal of the Professor of Philosophy, S. S. Orr, which precipitated one of the most extraordinary cases in Australian academic history) might have been handled very differently.¹⁵ But perhaps Trendall's most significant influence was felt in the formulation of educational policy, particularly in the area of Higher Education, an influence achieved both informally through his friendship with Menzies and formally through his membership, from 1959 to 1970, of the Australian Universities Commission.

Since he felt keenly the need for an Australian equivalent of the British Academy, which would represent the humanities to the Commonwealth Government and to the community generally, he was prominent, as a Foundation Fellow and inaugural Chairman, in the establishment of the Australian Humanities Research Council, which in 1969 became the Australian Academy of the Humanities. Indeed, he delivered the Inaugural Address at the first annual meeting of the Research Council in November, 1957, and again in May, 1979, to commemorate the first decade of the Academy.

¹⁴ Francis West, *University House, Portrait of an Institution* (Canberra, 1980), p. 21.

¹⁵ See Richard Davis, *Open to Talent: The Centenary History of the University of Tasmania, 1890–1990* (1990), esp. chapter 5. For the Orr case, see most recently C. Pybus, *Gross Moral Turpitude* (1993).

Despite the heavy demands of academic administration Trendall found time to continue his research. When he began his study of South Italian red-figure in the 1930s he concentrated upon Paestan, numerically the smallest of the local South Italian fabrics, but during the 1950s and 1960s he moved on to the larger and more complex task of differentiating the red-figure pottery of Lucania, Sicily, and Campania, and of identifying the individual painters. A series of articles devoted to particular artists culminated in two volumes that have become the *locus classicus* on the subject. *The Red-figured Vases of Lucania, Campania and Sicily* was published at Oxford in 1967, with supplementary volumes appearing in 1970, 1973, and 1983. Though based, in the case of Lucanian, upon the preliminary work of Noël Moon and, in the case of Campanian, upon a fundamental article by J. D. Beazley, these volumes go far beyond what had previously been attempted: the basic development of painted pottery in the three regions over some 150 years is set forth and analysed through the study of some 6500 vases and 250 painters or stylistic groups.

The work of Beazley on Athenian black- and red-figure vases, and of Trendall on the comparable South Italian red-figure inevitably suggests a comparison. Although Trendall readily adopted Beazley's methodology for the study of figured vases, the resulting monographs are rather different. Beazley's major catalogues are austere, with little explanation provided and no illustrations; and his detailed comments must be sought elsewhere, in his basic articles and general books. Trendall's principal publications include similar lists of vases arranged according to painters and stylistic groups, but each catalogue is preceded by a general commentary, often lengthy, on typical features of style, and on interesting points in the iconography or vase shapes. Since there are always copious illustrations, the reader is readily able to gain some understanding of the characteristics of a painter or group, and of the reasons for Trendall's attributions.

He also took on at this time the arduous task of preparing approximately every three years a report on recent archaeological activity in South Italy and Sicily for the British publication *Archaeological Reports*. The first instalment appeared in 1955, the last in 1973. These reports remain important sources for excavations that have been only partially published or not published at all. Dale was very pleased when Martin Fredericksen agreed to carry on the series.

His friendship with (Sir) Joseph Burke, the first Herald Professor of Fine Art in the University of Melbourne, gave him an introduction to (Sir) Daryl Lindsay, Director of the National Gallery of Victoria from 1941 to 1955, and to Lindsay's successor, Dr Eric Westbrook. With Lindsay's support the Trustees of the munificent Felton Bequest were persuaded to devote considerable funds to the creation of a representative collection of Greek vases of high quality.¹⁶ The first two vases, which arrived in 1956, were outstanding choices:

¹⁶ For Trendall's role, see Ursula Hoff, *Art Bulletin of Victoria*, 36 (1995), 61.

an Attic black-figure amphora near in style to the great master Exekias; and a Chalcidian black-figure psykter-amphora, a unique piece, that remains the finest Greek vase in Australia. As Honorary Consultant of the National Gallery from 1956 to 1992 Trendall oversaw the continued growth of this distinguished collection of vases and wrote the popular guide. He had, of course, always believed in the necessity of establishing collections of Classical antiquities as an important aid in promoting an understanding of ancient Mediterranean culture, particularly in Australia and New Zealand, which were geographically far from the centres of Classical civilisation, and he was ever on the lookout for opportunities. In 1948, for example, he had been largely responsible for the acquisition by the Otago Museum in Dunedin of a large part of the A. B. Cook collection. And when in 1957 Canterbury University College (now the University of Canterbury) in Christchurch received a gift of Greek vases in memory of James Logie, who had been Registrar, Trendall was consulted over the purchase, and invited to write the catalogue, which eventually appeared in 1971 as *Greek Vases in the Logie Collection*. Today some eleven universities in Australia have teaching collections of Classical antiquities: they are a tribute to Trendall's astute advice and judicious encouragement.¹⁷

In March, 1969, Dale retired as Master of University House. He had lived in Canberra for fifteen years, just as he had spent fifteen years in Sydney. He had foreseen for some time that, for economic reasons, changes would be necessary in the running of University House, changes which would be more easily instituted by a new Master. Moreover, he wished to devote all his remaining years and energy to scholarship, free from administrative obligations. He considered retirement to England or Italy, where he would be closer to colleagues and collections, but he felt that he could do more in the Antipodes, where he had after all been born, to further the development of Classical studies. Thus when he was invited to become the first Resident Fellow at La Trobe University, a university newly established at Bundoora on the northern outskirts of Melbourne, he accepted. His 'retirement' at La Trobe was to last more than a quarter of a century. As Resident Fellow of the university he was given a flat that he had a hand in designing on the top floor of the south wing of Menzies College. This flat provided living quarters for himself, and room for the great personal library and photographic archive (some 40,000 photographs at the time of his death), which he had assiduously accumulated over a working lifetime as an essential tool of his research (eventually bequeathed to the university as the basis for a research centre). It also provided a small balcony or solarium where after the day's work he

¹⁷ An account of these university collections is given by Trendall himself in *Twenty Years of Progress in Classical Archaeology* (Sydney, 1979).

would often sit talking with friends over a glass of sherry, or watching the glorious sunsets or the grey herons nesting in the great gum nearby.

Though he occasionally chaired a committee, provided advice to the university authorities, or gave a course of lectures or a graduation address, these years were notable principally for his scholarly accomplishments. A steady stream of books and articles appeared. After his definitive study of Lucanian, Campanian, and Sicilian red-figure, he turned his attention to the vase production of ancient Taras (Taranto) and Apulia, the last and most prolific of the South Italian fabrics. In this he was fortunate to have the collaboration of Alexander Cambitoglou, who had first met Trendall in 1951 and took up a post at the University of Sydney in 1961 with Trendall's encouragement. In this same year they published a joint study of the earlier phases of Apulian, entitled *Apulian Red-figured Vase-painters of the Plain Style*, but this was to prove only a preliminary to the main work, *The Red-figured Vases of Apulia*, which was issued by the Clarendon Press in 1978 and 1982. In three volumes, incorporating some 1300 pages and 400 plates, perhaps 10,000 vases are assembled and attributed to about 370 painters and groups, thereby providing the first comprehensive treatment of the subject. But as with Trendall's earlier works its usefulness does not cease with this classification, for the volumes are a treasure of knowledge, accumulated over many decades, on the style, subjects, shapes, and chronology of the red-figure vases of Apulia. It is certainly a '*monumentum aere perennius*', unparalleled in the archaeology of Magna Graecia. When one examines these volumes, it is hard to believe that any individual will ever study as many South Italian vases as Trendall, or 'know' them so thoroughly.

The final decade of his scholarly activity was given over to two supplements (1983 and 1991–2) to the main volumes on Apulian pottery, to a work on Greek red-figure fish-plates, and most usefully to a popular handbook (*Red Figure Vases of South Italy and Sicily*, 1989), in which he attempted to condense a lifetime's research.

But it would be wrong to believe that his influence during his years at La Trobe University was confined solely, or even most significantly, to his scholarship, for he made friends readily, especially among the young, and his door gave entry to a new and wonderful world to many students of the university and particularly to residents of Menzies College. Those who ventured into his lair discovered someone not only distinguished in his chosen field but deeply cultured and humane, with a lightning wit; someone too who was genuinely young at heart and concerned about their problems. Thus he was consulted as some wise, old uncle, and his influence on many young lives was quite profound. And in his last illness it was particularly these young friends who provided the most support. In the late 1980s he developed diabetes, which affected his eyesight. He endured two operations, but his sight did not

improve. Late in 1992 he began to have a problem with his heart, which was stabilised, but increasing frailty eventually forced him to move into a home for the aged. He was much assisted during this difficult time by an old friend, Dr Kel Semmens, and through the devoted assistance of two other friends he continued to come to La Trobe two or three days a week to answer correspondence. In 1995 he suffered a number of small strokes, and died on 13 November. He never married.

Trendall was a man of medium height, with thinning hair, fine and silvery, in later life. All his movements were quick, his eyes sparkled with intelligence, and a mischievous smile often lit up his face. He could be demanding, and he could put his scholarly opinions eloquently and passionately. To some he could seem at times intimidating, but to those who knew him well he was a man of great charm and humanity. As John Boardman has remarked: 'his company and conversation shimmered with his delight in his work and in the world around him'.¹⁸ In addition to his sharp mind, he possessed a slightly perverse sense of humour, which not infrequently emerged in his writing. For example, in one of his major works, *The Red-figured Vases of Campania, Lucania and Sicily*, page 569, after dealing with a dreary series of Campanian red-figure vases ornamented entirely with female heads, he remarks: 'The pink-cheeked faces which decorate these vases . . . are among the last manifestations of the r.f. style and point to the fulfilment of Katisha's prophecy in the *Mikado*:

Thy doom is nigh
Pink cheek, bright eye.'

There are many stories recounted that exemplify his quick and subtle wit. One of the most famous concerns an occasion during his years in Canberra, when he was asked to provide a name with a classical flavour for the new police-boat that was about to be launched on Lake Burley Griffin. Without hesitation he suggested 'Platypus', which was enthusiastically accepted as a very suitable Australian name. He did not, however, mention that the literal meaning of the Greek word, 'flatfoot', was no less appropriate. On another occasion, some time during the 1960s, after dinner at University House, a small group was discussing a suitable motto for the new (and costly) National Library, an enterprise that had been realised largely through the efforts of Sir Harold White and Sir Archibald Grenfell Price. During the conversation Trendall was heard to remark: 'alba, sed non sine pretio'.

He possessed a strong sense of duty and an unusual power of concentration and discipline. Even in later years he would rise early and work until five or six in the evening, often seven days a week. He was punctilious about answering any letters (and he did this by hand) as soon as possible—something that was

¹⁸ Obituary in *The Independent*, 25 Nov. 1995.

not always easy given the number (the record in my time was some fifty items in one day), and his replies to queries about vases sometimes amounted almost to mini disquisitions.

Many honours, academic and public, came to him during a long life. In 1976 he was made a Companion of the Order of Australia (AC), the highest honour that his adopted country can bestow. In England he was elected Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries in 1939, and in 1968 Fellow of the British Academy,¹⁹ of which he was awarded the Kenyon Medal in 1983. In Italy, too, his work was recognised. He was made a Commendatore dell'Ordine al Merito of Italy (1965), and also Commendatore dell'Ordine di S. Gregorio Magno (1956), a signal honour from the Vatican to someone who was not Catholic. He was particularly proud that, in 1973, he was elected a Foreign Member of the Accademia dei Lincei, and a Corresponding Member (later Honorary Fellow) of the Pontificia Accademia Romana di Archeologia. In 1971 he received the Galileo Galilei Prize from Italian Rotary, a gold statuette by Emilio Greco, which he later donated to the National Gallery of Victoria.

Dale Trendall believed absolutely in the value and joy of knowledge, and in the sharing of that knowledge with all who would listen. He was as much at home with the brash undergraduate as with the eminent scholar.

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Note. Dale Trendall very deliberately left few personal papers, so this brief memoir is largely based upon our discussions during the last twenty years of his life. But I am especially grateful to Miss M. K. Steven and to Sir John Boardman for their comments. I am also indebted for recollections to the following: Ruth Carington Smith, Bill Grainger, Dick Green, Elizabeth Pemberton, Con Slump, Alicia Totolos. For his years in Rome, I have consulted: T. P. Wiseman, *A Short History of the British School at Rome* (1990), and the *Reports* of the British School for the years 1933–9. For his Canberra years, see Francis West, *University House: Portrait of an Institution* (1980).

¹⁹ He was elected an Ordinary Fellow of the Academy, at a time when scholars from Commonwealth countries were still eligible.

