

1920 - 1925

## AN ARM OF KING EDWARD TECHNICAL COLLEGE



Figure 18. The School's first prospectus, 1924, cover design by T. H. Jenkin (photo courtesy of the Hocken Collection).

The teaching of English imports, Thomas Jenkin and Frederick Ellis, contributed little towards advancing current overseas art innovations within the Dunedin School of Art, but they did boldly publish the School's first stand-alone prospectus, which contained an expanded and ambitious curriculum.

Debate over the School's future continued as evidenced by the Mayor, Mr W. Begg, who, in response to a deputation of citizens wishing to save the School of Art, convened a public meeting in the Dunedin Town Hall on the afternoon of 8th July 1920. In addressing the gathering he said he was "glad to see a good turnout, which should show to the bodies more immediately interested that the citizens were keenly interested in the School of Arts and Crafts. He understood that the School had actually been closed; this was to be regretted. Dunedin residents had at all times prided themselves upon their educational institutions, but the Education Board had closed the School of Arts and Crafts, retaining only an efficient tutor to train its own students. He did not think they were there to criticise the action of the Board, but to see if something could not be done to get the School going again. Sir John Roberts moved – 'That this meeting of citizens deplores the closing of the School of Art in Dunedin after an existence of 48 years, during which time it has admittedly done splendid work. The meeting further considers it a stigma and a direct blow to the educational position of the city and province and resolves to use every effort to have the School reopened at the earliest possible date.' The motion was carried unanimously."<sup>1</sup>

Two weeks later, at a meeting of the Education Board on 21st July, the question was largely resolved after the tabling of a report from a sub-committee, which had conferred with a range of organisations, and seemingly, most productively with the Technical College Board. It recommended that, "On condition that the Technical College Management undertake and carry on the classes in art and design and provide proficient instruction in the drawing required by the Board's pupil teachers and probationers, the Board agrees: 1. To give to the Technical College for the above purposes the free use of the present School of Art classrooms until a proper building is provided for the art department of the Technical College. 2. To hand over to the Technical College, all apparatus and equipment now in the School of Art. 3. To entrust to the teachers of the Technical College the instruction in drawing of the Board's pupil teachers and probationers, and to pay for such instruction the amount allowed by the Department for that purpose. 4. In the event of the Technical College Managers at any future time cease to carry on these classes, the apparatus and equipment mentioned in (2) above are to revert to the Education Board."<sup>2</sup>

The report was approved and forwarded to the King Edward Technical College Board of Governors for its consideration, which it did at a meeting on 20th October, and at which the Chairman commented, "It appears that the Government would find the salaries for these teachers. That meant that the financial side of the matter was now assured, and there need be no hesitation about the Board's acceptance of the conditions."<sup>3</sup>

A meeting of the College Board, held on 18th November 1920, and reported at length in the *Otago Daily Times* the following day, considered the recommendations of a further sub-committee, this time set up to consider School of Art staffing and the integration of the School into the College. The sub-committee recommended that the following appointments be made, "(1) An art master to act as head of the art department. The man for this position should hold a full art diploma of the standard at least of the A.R.C.A., and be specially qualified to give instruction in life and landscape drawing and painting, and in modelling and design. (2) An assistant art master to act as an instructor in applied art. The man to fill this position should also be the holder of an art diploma and have special training in design and modelling, and in metalwork and woodwork. (3) An assistant art master for general drawing and elementary painting. For this position also a holder of an art diploma is sought. (4) An art mistress as an assistant for drawing, painting, design, and general art and craft work. (5) An assistant art mistress for elementary work. This position is filled by Miss Daisy M. White, [a student of Hawcridge and O'Keeffe, who had been earlier appointed in June and who quickly became a respected teacher of crafts and a regular exhibitor in both crafts and painting]. (6) Students in training: The regulations, recently issued, provide for the employment and payment of students in training. The Director suggests that at least two should be trained in pure art and two in applied art. The report was adopted, and it was agreed, that applications for the positions be advertised in the four centres of New Zealand and also in Australia. The School of Art classes would continue in the art building in the meantime."<sup>4</sup>

By 15th December the Appointments Committee had received five applications for the position of Head of Art, one for an assistant master to teach design and modelling, thirteen for an assistant master to teach drawing and painting, and four for an art mistress position to cover a broad range of subjects including drawing, painting, design and general art and craft work. As a result the Committee recommended that the Board "... extend to Mr A. Dattilo Rubbo of Sydney, an invitation to visit Dunedin with a view to his appointment as Head of the Art Department, and that the Board offer to contribute £30 as part payment of his expenses. In the event of an agreement with Mr Dattilo Rubbo, the Committee asks power to make the appointment." In addition, "... it was resolved that Mr O'Keeffe be re-appointed to position (3) and Miss Hutton to position (4)."<sup>5</sup>

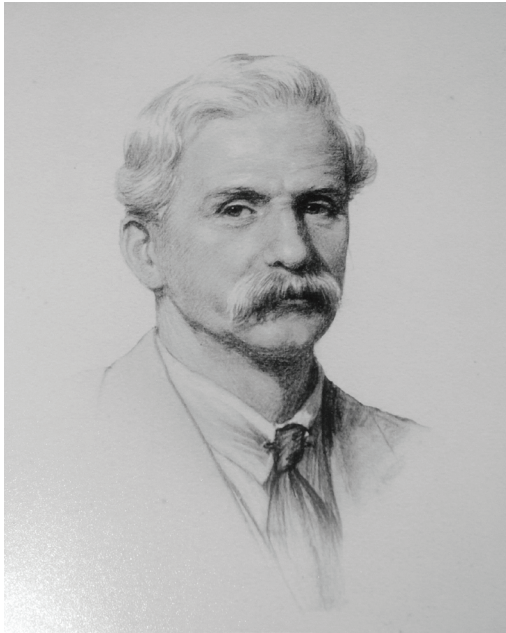


Figure 19. Frederick V. Ellis, *Self Portrait*, pencil (photo courtesy of his son).

However, as the Technical College was now governed by the Dominion grading scheme which made no allowance for the head of such a department within a college, the salary of £500 offered was less than acceptable and Signor Rubbo replied to the offer, that even a £600 salary would be insufficient.<sup>6</sup>

During this period of uncertainty, that is, from 1920 to early 1922, Nellie Hutton and Alfred O'Keeffe continued teaching drawing to junior and senior Technical College pupils along with taking classes for pupil teachers, probationers, and classes for country teachers on Saturday mornings, and from February 1921 when the School of Art reopened under the auspices of the Technical College, day and evening drawing and painting classes for the community. Daisy White was teaching a range of subjects and Basil Hooper returned part-time, to teach Architectural Design and History of Architecture. The School now boasted a roll of 325 students.<sup>7</sup> Nellie, who had been teaching in the School since 1895, was at this stage eligible for retirement superannuation, but was given permission by the Minister of Education, "for a year's extension of her period of engagement."<sup>8</sup>

Discussions continued over the appointment of a Head of Art. "It is now evident that a special arrangement will be required to be made in order to secure the services of an art master of sufficient ability, energy and enthusiasm to re-establish and reorganise the Dunedin School of Art."<sup>9</sup> An example of the on-going public interest shown in the position was evident when the Otago Art Society wrote in May to the King Edward Technical College Board saying, that they would be prepared to contribute £50 per year for the next three years towards the Head of the Art Department's salary if that would be of help in appointing someone. The sum included a donation of £25 from the President of the Society, Sir John Roberts.<sup>10</sup>

The Appointments Committee then wrote, in July 1921, to Mr William Sanderson La Trobe, Superintendent of Technical Education, saying, "(A) Assuming that donations are forthcoming for the purpose, would it be permissible for the Board to subsidise the salary of the Head of Art Department to the extent of £100 per year. (2) If the Head of the Art Department be designated Director and be appointed as such, will he, if subject to the Director of the College, be entitled to all the allowances and privileges pertaining to a Director."<sup>11</sup>

La Trobe replied, "The Department is cognisant of the difficulties incident to securing a suitable applicant for the position from the ranks of art instructors in the schools of this dominion, and is convinced that the most

satisfactory course for the managers to pursue would be to send Home to the Royal College of Art direct, or through the High Commissioner. The Department is prepared to do all in its power to assist the managers and will, if they so desire, communicate at once with the Principal of the Royal College or High Commissioner on their behalf, or will assist them in any way to reach finality in this important appointment.”<sup>12</sup> This correspondence initiated what would later become known as the La Trobe Scheme, a policy of the Department of Education, “by which young men of sound art training have been brought out from London during the year to take charge of classes in Dunedin, Auckland, Napier and Wanganui.”<sup>13</sup>

The Appointments Committee in turn replied, “Having considered your communication of July 5, the Committee unanimously agrees that the suggested course of sending to the Royal College of Art offers the most satisfactory solution of the difficulty of filling the position of Head of the Art Department. In view of the delay and consequent disorganisation that has already taken place, in connection with art teaching in Dunedin, the Committee goes further and recommends to obviate any further delay, and permit of full courses of work being undertaken from the beginning of next year; a Master of Applied Art should also at the same time be sought and appointed direct from the Royal College of Art. The Board therefore asks that the Department concur in this recommendation, and have both appointments made at the same time. Recognising that the Education Department is in a better position to give an official and binding explanation of the Grading Scheme, has a full knowledge of the art requirements, is familiar with local conditions, and has expert knowledge available, the Dunedin Technical School Board is prepared to leave the negotiations and the selection and appointments of these two masters, entirely in the hands of the Department.”<sup>14</sup>

In January 1922, positive news finally arrived from the High Commission in England regarding the search for a suitable art master in the form of a testimonial from the Registrar of the Royal College of Art, saying, “Professor Rothenstein and Professor Lethaby wish me to say that they do not think it possible to recommend a better man than Mr Jenkin for the post of teacher of painting and life drawing at Dunedin. His qualifications are much higher than any other candidate for the post in New Zealand, and while they recognise that his quiet and somewhat shy manner would not show him to the best advantage in an interview, they wish me to assure the High Commissioner that he is a man of sterling character who has been a great influence for good in the College, and his war record proves him to be a man of energy and resource.”<sup>15</sup>

In return, Mr Massey, Prime Minister of New Zealand, sent a telegram dated 14th February to the High Commission in England saying, “Teacher, painting, Dunedin. Appointment of Jenkin confirmed, payment second class passage approved, telegraph date of leaving. Massey.”<sup>16</sup>

Two days later, the *Otago Daily Times* reported that Mr A. Marshall, the Director of the Technical College, had announced to the Board that “two competent teachers had been obtained to take charge of the painting and crafts sections respectively. Both of the appointees are young men of high qualifications and it is expected that one of them will reach New Zealand in time to reopen the School after the Easter vacation. In making the announcement, Mr Marshall stated that cablegrams had been received from Home, notifying that the High Commissioner (Sir James Allen) and two professors of the Royal College of Art, London, had selected two masters for the Dunedin School of Art. The first of these is Mr Thomas Jenkin, a holder of the Diploma of the Royal College of Art, London, who besides being the teacher of painting will undertake the control of the School and virtually occupy the position of principal. The other is Mr Frederick Ellis, who is also the holder of the Diploma of the Royal College of Art, London. He has been appointed to take charge of the crafts section of the School and will be known as the crafts master. Mr Ellis is leaving England this month by the steamer *Tainui* and it is expected that he will reach Dunedin in time to open the School immediately after the Easter vacation.”<sup>17</sup>

Biographies of the new staff, forwarded from its London correspondent, were reported in the *Evening Post* on 12th April 1922. “Mr T. H. Jenkin, who has been appointed teacher of painting, etc., at the Dunedin School of Art, received his elementary training in art at the Battersea School of Art under Mr Andrews who is now art director



at Lahore. For some time he acted as assistant master at Bridgewater School of Art, and in 1912 entered the Royal College of Art as a royal exhibitor. Mr Jenkin joined the Boy Scouts at the inception of the movement in 1908, and when war broke out he was corporal in the Territorial Regiment of the London Rifles Brigade. He was immediately mobilised and proceeded to France with his regiment on 4th November 1914. 'For two years before the war,' the registrar writes, 'Mr Jenkin had been the crack shot of his battalion, and in France he was specially detailed to pick off enemy snipers.' He did much other useful work and was mentioned in dispatches for his services in drawing maps. He was later drafted to Germany, being finally demobilised in 1920 with the rank of Captain. He resumed his studies at the Royal College of Art in 1921 and was granted the full diploma of the college - the highest award granted by the Board of Education for proficiency in art. Mr Jenkin has already taken a prominent part in the social life of the college, and he will be greatly missed. He is married and has two children."<sup>18</sup>



Figure 20. Jenkin and Ellis supervising in the drawing studio, 1924 (photo courtesy of the Hocken Collection).

And the article on Ellis read, "Mr F.V. Ellis, the newly appointed crafts master at the Dunedin Art School received his early training in art at the Municipal Technical College of his native town, Halifax, Yorkshire. Here he studied for four years gaining the Art Class Teachers' Certificate and the Art Masters' Certificate. After holding the post of assistant master at the same school for two years, he commenced study at the Royal College of Art in 1914, but left in December of that year to join the army and served four years in France in the R.F.A. He returned to the College in February, 1918, where he studied design under Professor Anning Bell, R.A., and etching and engraving under Sir Frank Short, R.A. Taking his Diploma in 1920 he was awarded a Travelling Studentship in stained-glass design for that year. After a protracted tour in the art centres of Italy and France, he returned to

London and worked for a few months carrying out private commissions. Mr Spencer, Registrar of the Royal College of Arts, says Mr Ellis is a great worker, and very energetic, and design and craft will be all the richer for his presence in Dunedin. Writing to me, Mr Ellis himself says: 'I count myself very fortunate in securing the appointment at Dunedin, for I have relatives and friends in New Zealand, who are unanimous in their praise of their country. I am fond of sport - boxing and motorcycling in particular.' Mr Ellis, who is unmarried, sails by the *Tainui* today." Professor Bell commented separately on Ellis saying, "He is certainly the best student I have had under me since I have been at the College - a matter of four years. He is extremely conscientious, and possesses, I think, a sense of responsibility, and will probably make a very good teacher."<sup>19</sup>

Frederick Vincent Ellis (1892-1961) arrived in Dunedin in April 1922 and the Director of the Technical College reported to the Board on 26th April that, "Classes were this week opened by him in subjects most in demand by inquiring intending students, and it is already evident that his energy and ability will lead to a wider demand for instruction in the various craft subjects which he is undertaking."<sup>20</sup> The School of Art Committee also reported to this meeting saying that they had looked over the School of Art and Craft buildings "with care and deliberation, and had decided that a certain amount of renovation and possibly alterations would be required, but agreed to hold off doing anything until after the arrival of Mr Jenkin, the newly appointed Head of School. With his help, the Committee felt, they would be better able to comment on building requirements and any additional equipment that might be needed."<sup>21</sup>

Thomas H. Jenkin (1889-1958) arrived in May and in June the Director reported that Jenkin and Ellis were now well established in the old School of Art building, and that its rooms had been rearranged in several respects. He also recommended that the Board make an application for a grant in aid to assist with the renovation of its rooms and for the installation of electric lights,<sup>22</sup> alterations over which Board members could not reach agreement, but they did agree to the purchase of an etching press,<sup>23</sup> which was likely the result of some successful lobbying by Ellis. With the arrival of Jenkin and Ellis, Nellie Hutton and Alfred O'Keefe found themselves redundant. Nellie Hutton, now aged 47, had been on the staff for 27 years, and Alfred O'Keefe, who was 64, had been with the School for the past 23 years. Both, fortunately, were eligible for retirement superannuation.

The School was initially over-staffed and in July, two months after his arrival, Jenkin was approached by the Otago Boys High School to see if he might be available to help them out with some part-time teaching as Mr L. D. Coombs, their drawing master, had recently left. Jenkin was happy to do so and sought approval from the King Edward Technical College Board, which was granted, providing his services were always available when required by the School of Art.<sup>24</sup> However, in August, when The Boys High School Board sought to formalise this in writing to the Director of the King Edward Technical College,<sup>25</sup> his answer, due possibly to an increase in art student numbers and the thought that the Boys High School might instead be encouraged to send their students to the Technical College for art instruction, was a definite, 'No!'<sup>26</sup>

A broad range of classes was introduced by Jenkin, Ellis, Hooper and Miss White, throughout the 1922 year, by the end of which, the School boasted 231 students, comprising of 110 day and evening class students from the community and 121 teachers, pupil teachers and probationers.<sup>27</sup>

The College Board, having visited the School of Art premises in Moray Place, was aware that its rooms needed considerable upgrading, and as a result wrote in September 1922 to Superintendent La Trobe inviting him to inspect the School in the hope that a Ministry of Education grant towards renovations might ensue.<sup>28</sup> When an inspection did not appear imminent, the Board made a formal application in November to the Ministry of Education and approval was granted for a range of work to be implemented. This began during the Christmas break, was soon completed, and itemised costs were forwarded to the Ministry in March 1923. These included, glass panels for the doors in the main corridor upstairs, alterations to a skylight, erecting a framed light along with the School of Art name over the front door, stopping, kalsomining and painting of four rooms, main entrance, passage and lavatories, and the installation of electric lighting throughout the building.<sup>29</sup>

In 1923 student numbers increased to 294, which included 124 teachers, pupil teachers, and probationers, and 170 students in the various art classes. However, things do not appear to have gone as smoothly as Angus Marshall, the College Director, may have hoped, for even with an increase in student numbers and his written acknowledgment to the Board in his end of year report that “the instructors are able, keen and energetic.” He found it necessary to add, the following criticism, which he assumed would be regarded as confidential, “I am well aware of the accepted theory that the artistic temperament is not to be subjected to restraint, or to compliance with fixed rules and regulations, and also that students taking up art merely as a pastime should be allowed considerable latitude. But, it has to be noted that the formation of habits of punctuality, of regularity, of concentration, of determined application, and of consistent work, must be the predominating feature in art training as in every other department of education. In other words, even in art teaching, the inculcation of regular methodical habits of work is more important than the actual instruction. The value of this basic principle does not seem to me to be sufficiently appreciated in the school, and therefore requires to be emphasised. It is stated above that 170 students other than teachers this year attended the art classes, but the records and attendance sheets show that many, far too many, of these failed to attend with sufficient regularity or continuity to justify their being students. The most satisfactory feature of the past year’s work was the progress of the five students taking the full art course during the day, and it is evident that the future success of the School of Art must to a great extent be determined by the number of such students that can be attracted. But unfortunately the internal construction and arrangements of the School are not suitable for all day occupation, the neighbourhood and surrounds are distracting, and becoming more so, whilst the distance from the College [two city blocks down a steep hill] adds to the difficulty of supervision. Therefore, during the incoming year, I propose holding as many as possible of these day classes in the College where full use can be made of all the teaching power.”<sup>30</sup> And where, presumably, a weather eye could be kept on students and staff alike.

Near the end of 1923, and in preparation for the following year, current classes, along with a number of additional offerings, were listed and published in a booklet titled ‘Dunedin School of Art Prospectus - 1924’. Even though numerous newspaper advertisements for art classes had appeared over the years, this was the School’s first formal publication of a School of Art prospectus. It itemised all programmes on offer for first and second year full-time art students, along with a number of afternoon and evening part-time classes, juvenile classes, Saturday classes and a special course of lectures dealing with the History and the Principles of Art.<sup>31</sup>

This was an ambitious undertaking, particularly considering the breadth of classes offered to first year full-time students, which consisted of: “Drawing of common objects, plant forms, birds and animals, followed in each case by practice in Drawing from Memory; Modelling of common objects, plants and design; Craftwork, Needlework, Stencilling; Design and Principles of Lettering; Outdoor Studies in pencil and colour; Geometry; English literature and Composition; and Mythology.” And for full-time second year students, “Drawing of plant forms, birds and animals, then same in colour work, and also regular practice in Drawing from Memory; Modelling birds, animals and craft design; Principles of Design; Design and Lettering; Anatomy; Applied Art; Etching; Life Drawing; History of Art; Industrial History and English Literature; Geometry and Perspective; Outdoor Studies and Landscape Painting.”<sup>32</sup> In addition, Jenkin and Ellis shared the teaching of four two-hour classes per week for Pupil Teachers, Probationers and Country Teachers.

A ‘Special Committee’ of the Board, tasked with considering the College Director’s annual report for 1923, met on Tuesday 18th December, and even though the Board had overseen an extensive upgrade to the School of Art facilities only one year prior to this, the Committee resolved, “That early steps be taken to remove the work of the School of Art to the Technical College; that the Works Committee be authorised to proceed with the special alterations required in suitable rooms at the College, and that in the meantime a sketch plan of alterations be obtained from Messrs’ Mandeno and Fraser and submitted to the Department with application for a grant in aid.”<sup>33</sup> The resolution then became part of the Board’s end of year report to the Ministry of Education, which stated that “The School of Art has not progressed and expanded to the extent anticipated by us, and, on the recommendation of the Director, who wished to be in a position to exercise closer supervision,

it has been decided to transfer the art classes to the Technical College. This will be done as soon as the necessary preparations involving alterations can be made. The ideal arrangement will be to have the art school erected at one end of the college, and connected thereto by suitable corridors. The transfer of art classes to adapted rooms within the Technical College should therefore be regarded as a temporary expedient which will serve until a separate building is erected on a site adjacent to the College, and whilst recording this view, we express the hope that it may ultimately be attained.”<sup>34</sup>

The relocation of students from the old School in Moray Place to temporary rooms within the Technical College began in April 1924 and was completed in September.<sup>35</sup> Unfortunately, this had, as Rosemary Entwisle elucidates in *The La Trobe Scheme and the Dunedin School of Art*, “a seriously deleterious effect on the fortunes of the School. In the first place, it occasioned a running battle between the Director and the art teachers who recognised and resented Marshall’s attempts to supervise their conduct. And, quite apart from the staff’s resentment, there was a real loss in the public’s perception of the School’s status. Its continued existence was lost sight of by the public who came to know it as the Art Department of the Technical High School.”<sup>36</sup> It was not until 1928 that the ‘School of Art’ title again came into common usage within the College. Entwisle further comments, that “Despite Marshall’s declared support for the School of Art, his overlord-ship was not wholly for the good. Accustomed to maintaining the discipline necessary for vocational and prevocational teaching, he jibed at the looser conduct of the Art School. The first La Trobe teachers responded by thwarting his attempts to control and as a result, they lost his and the Managers’ support. Without it, the School had difficulty maintaining its identity.”<sup>37</sup> Years later, Robert Field reminisced that Marshall used to suddenly turn up to check on the activities of Jenkin and Ellis, and he would be greeted with signs on the art room doors telling him to keep out.<sup>38</sup>

As a result of the ongoing tension between the art staff and the College Director, it is not surprising to find that they began looking elsewhere for employment. The first indication came in February 1925 when Ellis wrote to the College Board stating that he would not be available for reappointment on the termination of his three year contract and would therefore relinquish his teaching duties on 31st March 1925,<sup>39</sup> although he was talked into maintaining his two evening classes for which he would be paid, “... the termination of this arrangement to be dependent upon a fortnights notice on either side.”<sup>40</sup> Jenkin’s contract was also coming due, which the Board decided not to renew and authorised the Director to employ temporary assistance until new staff could be appointed.<sup>41</sup>

Ellis married Elizabeth Bunbury in 1926 and moved to Wellington where he worked in the New Zealand Railways Publicity Studios during the depression. He also taught evening classes in Life Drawing and Design from 1927 to 1930 at the Wellington Technical College, was appointed full time in 1931 and Head of Art in 1933, retiring in 1959. He became well known for his stained glass window designs throughout New Zealand and was a regular exhibitor of etchings, lithographs, statues and paintings at the Wellington Academy of Fine Arts.



Figure 21. From left, A.H. O’Keefe, Robert Hawcridge, Miss Reid and Miss Zellar at the Dunedin School of Art and Design. (photo courtesy of the Hocken Collection).



Jenkin moved with his family to Invercargill where he and his wife Dorothy both taught art and became respected members of the Southland arts community. On Jenkin, H.V. Miller comments, “[He] is known to us as a moving spirit, with the Southland University Association, in regenerating art in Southland.”<sup>42</sup> On retirement, they moved permanently to Stewart Island where they had previously spent many happy family holidays.<sup>43</sup> He is represented by several portraits in the Invercargill Anderson Park Art Gallery and Dorothy had a book published of her watercolours of Stewart Island fungi.

With their departure the Ministry of Education was again approached to see if suitable candidates might be found from graduates of the Royal College of Art, and William Allen and Robert Field, who happened to be working in Edinburgh at that time as assistants to Professor Gerald Moira of the Royal College, were recommended as possible appointees. Both were contacted by the Royal College in late March,<sup>44</sup> and their interest in the positions saw their names being forwarded to the King Edward Technical College Board by the High Commission in London, “recommending the appointment of Messrs Allen and Field to the vacancies on the art staff ... and on the motion of [Board member] Mr Wilkinson, the appointments were confirmed.”<sup>45</sup> For young graduates, a trip to the other side of the world with a confirmed job at its end would have been hard to resist, and three weeks later, on 19 June, they embarked on the *Arawa* for New Zealand.<sup>46</sup>

William Henry Allen, (1894-1988), son of master tailor parents and whose father later became a professional musician, was born in Stroud, Gloucestershire. On leaving school in 1910 he found employment as an engineering apprentice in the Drawing Office of the Dudbridge Iron Works, and over the next three years developed an interest and knowledge of art through attending evening classes at the Stroud School of Craft and the Stroud School of Science and Art. With the outbreak of war in 1914 he joined the army and in March 1915 was sent to the front in France, ending up in hospital back in England and with hearing loss in one ear. On his release, he was employed at the Iron Works and also attended classes at the School of Art in Putney, London. In 1919 he was awarded a war service scholarship, which gave him entry to the Royal College of Art where he majored in Painting and Mural Decoration under Professor Gerald Moira, gaining the Associate Diploma in 1923. He married Elena Macardle, a professional musician (cellist) the following year and found employment, initially with Anning Bell, R.A., working on altar pieces, cartoons, stained glass and mosaic panels, and later, along with ex-student colleague, Robert Field, as a studio assistant to Professor Moira in the production of murals for the Battersea Power Project.<sup>47</sup>

Robert Nettleton Field, (1899-1987) son of an insurance clerk, was brought up in Bromley, Kent. He was interested in art from an early age and his mother, Constance, (née Nettleton) whose grandfather was a portrait painter, nurtured his interest, resulting in Robert attending art schools in Bromley and Southend-on-Sea between 1914 and 1919 and being accepted into the Royal College of Art in September 1919 where he gained the Associate Diploma in Painting in 1922.<sup>48</sup> Due to the quality of his work he was granted a further year of study, but rather than spend that year working towards a Prix de Rome Scholarship, which was the customary practice, he decided to try for something different. In an interview with Libby Wilson in New Zealand many years later he commented, “I went into the School of Sculpture, which welcomed me really because they had very few students, amongst those were Henry Moore, Barbara Hepworth and others whom I got to know ... we got the chance to really get down to the study of form in three dimensions. And I’ve never regretted it [gaining the Associate Diploma in Sculpture in July 1924] I wouldn’t be here but for that, because that gave me the entrée to come out as a sculptor, [which arose when] one day I walked into the common room and found W. H. Allen, and he said, ‘look Field, have a look at this. What do you think of this as an idea?’ And we looked at the notice board and, unusually, two artists were required and he said, ‘What about coming out with me? They want a painter, I can be that and you’re a sculptor, they want a sculptor.’ He was married at the time; I was single. I thought it was a jolly good idea, I mean we couldn’t get work. I tried those commercial studios. Apart from anything else, it was just a ghastly sort of job. Teaching is pretty bad, but it is far preferable. So we came out.”<sup>49</sup>

On 12th August 1925, the Director reported to the College Board that the new art teachers had arrived and had

entered upon their duties with an energy and enthusiasm that boded well for the success of the art classes.<sup>50</sup> He may have been pleased with them, but the new arrivals were considerably put out when they discovered the cramped working conditions and only five full-time students, although they did have some evening classes to help justify their existence. Field later recalled, "It was a nasty situation that we came into, to find that they [Jenkin and Ellis] were being pushed out and we were pushed in. We didn't know that we were coming out to replace the other two men. I had a vague feeling that we would see them, we would meet them, work with them, because I had known them as students before they left, not intimately, but I had known them as part of the College. It was a terrific shock. However, there it was."<sup>51</sup>

- 1 *Otago Daily Times*. 9 July 1920: 7.
- 2 *Ibid.* 22 July 1920: 8.
- 3 *Ibid.* 21 October 1920: 4.
- 4 *Ibid.* 19 November 1920: 2.
- 5 K.E.T.C. Board and Committees Papers. 15 December 1920. (Hocken, AG-763-003/002)
- 6 *Ibid.* 30 January 1921.
- 7 A to J. 1922, E-5: 8.
- 8 K.E.T.C. School of Art Committee meeting minutes. 4 July 1922. (Hocken, AG-763-004/002)
- 9 K.E.T.C. Board Annual Report to the Ministry of Education for 1920. 12 April 1921.
- 10 Letter to the College Board from the Secretary of the Otago Art Society. 6 May 1921. (Hocken, AG-763-003/002)
- 11 Report of the K.E.T.C. School of Art Committee. 20 July 1921. (Hocken, AG-763-003/003)
- 12 Report of the Technical College Board Meeting held on 20 July 1921. *Otago Daily Times*. 21 July 1921: 8.
- 13 A to J. 1923, E-5: 8.
- 14 *Otago Daily Times*. 21 July 1921: 8.
- 15 K.E.T.C. Correspondence Files. Letter dated 26 January 1922. (Hocken, AG-763-008/005)
- 16 *Ibid.* Letter dated 21 February 1922.
- 17 *Otago Daily Times*. 16 February 1922: 3.
- 18 *Evening Post*. Volume C111, issue 86, 12 April 1922: 7.
- 19 *Ibid.*
- 20 K.E.T.C. Director's Report to the Board for meeting on 26 April 1922. (Hocken, AG-763-003/003)
- 21 Report of School of Art Committee to KETC Board for meeting on 26 April 1922. (Hocken, AG-763-003/003)
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