

ECONOMICS at UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, CARDIFF (UCC) 1899-1988

The teaching of Economics originated in the Department of Political Science in 1899. (UCC itself was founded in 1883) The first lecturer in the department was S J Chapman (1899-1901) He resigned on being appointed to the Stanley Jevons Chair of Political Economy at Manchester University. He was later knighted in recognition for his services as Permanent Secretary to the Board of Trade.

Chapman was succeeded as lecturer by C J Hamilton (1901-1905) and during this period the departmental title was changed to 'Political and Commercial Science'. Hamilton was in turn succeeded by Harry Stanley Jevons (1906-1910), the son of William Stanley Jevons. Harry Jevons was an economist and during his tenure the departmental title was once again changed, this time to 'Economics and Political Science'. During his final year at UCC Jevons was appointed Professor of Economics and Political Science. He later (1915) completed his work on '*The British Coal Trade*', following in the footsteps of his illustrious father, who fifty years earlier had published his work-'*The Coal Question*'.

In 1911 Jevons was replaced by W J Roberts (1911-1943) who was appointed Professor of Economics and head of the department. Roberts was something of a polymath. In 1903 he had lectured in the History department, and in 1905-06 in the departments of Philosophy and Welsh. He was also an accomplished mathematician. He taught both economics and political science single handedly until 1922 when he was joined by an assistant lecturer in political science. The latter was replaced in 1927 by Stanley Parris who was much later (1962) to become the first Dean of the newly formed Faculty of Economic and Social Studies.

During the period 1920-1938 there was a four-fold increase in the number of students taking courses in economics- from 37 to 134. The pressure on teaching resources was intense but was eased a little during the 1930s by lectures given by Professor Marquand of the Industrial Relations Department. In 1938 Professor Roberts reiterated a plea which he had been making for many years that 'the Department...is still a large one and in view of the ground to be covered is quite inadequately staffed', and 'the heavy teaching work of the department prevents any rapid prosecution of research work by the members of the staff'. The department did however contribute to two major enquiries into the depressed state of the region's economy - '*An Industrial Survey of South Wales*' (1932), conducted by the College on behalf of the Board of Trade, and '*Second Industrial Survey*' (1937), directed by Professor Marquand for the National Industrial Development Council of Wales and Monmouthshire. Roberts himself wrote a book on the principles of economics which was published in Welsh by the University of Wales - '*Egwyddorion Economeg*' (1929). In it he asked whether economists should pay greater attention to the work of psychologists on what motivates human behaviour.

In 1946 Brinley Thomas was appointed Professor and Head of Department. His appointment gave a huge boost to the Department's research profile with his outstanding contributions to the study of population migration and economic growth. During the 1930s he had studied in Sweden and developed an early insight into the 'new economics' of the Stockholm School of Economics from the work of Wicksell, Lindahl, Myrdal and Ohlin. He brought the ideas of Wicksell and others to the attention of the English-speaking world through his book, '*Monetary Policy and Crisis: a study of Swedish experience*' (1936).

Up to 1962 the Department of Economics and Social Science included lectureships in sociology, psychology, law, accountancy, and politics. Sociology and Psychology became separate departments with the creation of the Faculty of Economic and Social Studies. Law, Accountancy, and Politics remained within the Economics Department until the early 1970s.

The first ten years in the life of the new Faculty witnessed a steady expansion of Economics. In 1961-62 there was one professor and seven lecturers; by 1972-73 there were two professors and eleven lecturers/senior lecturers. The second 'established' chair was filled in 1972 by Sir Bryan Hopkin, who had retired from the Treasury as Deputy Chief Economic Adviser. He was granted an extended leave of absence to return to the Treasury as Chief Economic Adviser (1974-1977) after which he returned to his Professorship until his retirement in 1982.

Brinley Thomas retired in 1973 and was replaced as Professor and Head of Department by Ken George (1973-1988). For the previous nine years he had been a lecturer at Cambridge University and a Fellow of Sidney Sussex College. In 1970-71 he had a sabbatical year as Associate Professor at McMaster University, Canada. His main research interests were in the study of business behaviour, industrial economics, and the allocation of resources.

In line with national trends the period 1973-88 witnessed a big expansion in the number of economics students, together with an increase in the range of courses on offer. At UCC there was increased emphasis on the use of quantitative methods in economic analysis which included, for instance, a compulsory course in Applied Economics for all single honours students. Most important, however, was the greater emphasis placed on the Cambridge-type system of supervisions for second and third year students.

The expansion in student numbers, the wider range of courses, and the more labour-intensive teaching methods would not have been possible without a big expansion in teaching resources. From thirteen staff members in 1973 the Department had increased in size to twenty two members of staff by the early to mid 1980s. A third established chair had been created in 1976, the first incumbent being Professor David Metcalf (1976-1977). He was succeeded by Professor Ray Rees (1978-1987). In addition, in 1984 the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders endowed a Chair in Motor Industry Economics which was filled by one of the members of staff- Garel Rhys.

This expansion led to a great strengthening of the Department's research and publications record across a wide field but particularly in micro-economic theory and policy, industrial and labour economics. Several members of staff also became members of, or advisers to, various government departments or agencies. Of the lecturers appointed after 1973 several were, after leaving UCC, appointed to chairs at other universities - Lynn Mainwaring (Swansea), John Bennett (Swansea, Brunel), Chris McKenna (Guelph), Chris Heady (Bath) and Steve Broadberry (Warwick)

The Department had the usual arrangements for staff seminars, but in addition there was an Economics Colloquium for all the economics departments in the University of Wales which was held at Gregynnog Hall - a University facility located near Newtown in Mid-Wales (Frank Hahn remarked that its remoteness made it an ideal location for a centre of mathematical economics!!!). The colloquia were held annually, usually during the first weekend in May, and the University Colleges (Aberystwyth, Bangor, Cardiff, and Swansea) took it in turns to organise the meetings. The guest speakers, when it was Cardiff's turn to

organise the meetings, included Joe Stiglitz, Tony Atkinson, Frank Hahn, Orley Ashenfelter, Wynne Godley, Geoff Harcourt, Sam Hollander, and John Llewellyn.

On a lighter note, some readers with an interest in rugby union will be aware of , what some people regard as, the greatest try ever scored - the Gareth Edwards try in the Barbarians vs New Zealand game in 1973. The following UCC economists could say “ I was there” - Brinley Thomas, Bryan Hopkin, Roy Thomas, John Shorey, Colin Baber.

Over the period 1973-88 the Department turned out many students who went on to make their mark in their chosen profession. The alumni include - Professor David Blanchflower (Dartmouth College and member of the Bank of England Monetary Policy Committee) , Ms Sue Owen (Treasury), David Smith (Economics Editor of “The Times”), Spencer Dale (Chief Economic Adviser to the Treasury and member of the Bank of England Monetary Committee),Professor Bruce Lyons (University of East Anglia).

In 1988 ,UCC and the University of Wales Institute of Science and Technology (UWIST) were merged to form Cardiff University and UCC’s Economics Department was absorbed into the Cardiff Business School.

Members of the teaching staff 1973-1988: Ken George, Bryan Hopkin, Hamish Richards, Lionel Demery, Roy Thomas, Graham Hockley, Graham Hallett, Colin Baber, Don Barry, John Barry, Bruce Curry, Garel Rhys, Gerald Harbour, Michael Phelps, Caroline Joll, Sue Owen, Lynn Mainwaring, John Bennett, Bob McNabb, Chris McKenna, Chris Heady, Chris Barclay, David Metcalf, Ray Rees, Steve Broadberry, Trevor Boyns.

The account of the period 1899-1973 draws heavily on Colin Baber’s section in S.B.Chrimes *‘University College Cardiff : A Centenary History 1883-1983.* KDG