Appreciation

A valedictory address by Tony Eggleton, on the occasion of the retirement of the Founding Professor, David A. Brown, in 1981

Look then at what you have built, stone on stone,
From nothing to high repute, known
Even beyond great circles you have navigated
Through students who have graduated.
Not content with a rock to begin your creation
You took a whole Cliff as the solid foundation.
He's held it up firm, and it's never gone slack.
The bones of the building came out of his back.
Geologists must have the proper type-section
Miss Healy first handled that job to perfection.
Then books must be shelved, and the journals collected
You might say it was double Val-ue¹ selected.
To demonstrate science needs great dedication
You added a Chappell for your congregation
And asked him to analyse one bit of granite,
It seems he won't stop ’til he's done the whole planet.
At first Brown, D. A., had to do all the teaching
And then Brown et Al.² gave a change to the preaching.
If adding some colour was what you expected,
With White you got purple as words interjected.
Now wisdom, ye ken, might be found in a Scot
Along with philosophy, science, the lot.
But someone from Queensland? A dangerous gamble
Which paid off as usual, so you got Campbell.
The next, started off into sedimentation
And gradually drifted to tectonisation.
He studies orogenies (when the Earth shook)
It’s what you’d expect from a Quaker, Keith Crook.
To teach about structure needs one you can trust
To quickly distinguish a fold from a thrust

¹ Val Herbst, librarian and draughtswoman.
² Alan White.
When cleavage and bedding are at the right spacing
Mike Rickard can tell which way up he is facing.
Next was Ken Williams, an epicurean
Who’s tasted of sulfides from Stanford to Zeehan.
You struck the good oil when you found Eric Conybeare
Still one more space, so you added a Tony there.
Rocks that have value deserve to be fondled.
None loves them better than J. A. McDonald.
Buchites and boninites both need a hammerin’
That’s why you brought over Warrington Cameron.
One who will make a new graptolite synthesis
Came with a beard, but we’ve since found a chin for Chris.
Some call him a tutor, some call him slave
Teaching nine courses, still grinning, is Dave.³
Now Alan and Bruce had an X-ray machine
Which had to be run, to be fed, and kept clean
And Jack got the job, and his work was quite stunning
Except that he thought he should do all the running!
The photos from X-rays are made without light,
(Astronomers take all their pictures at night)
But photos of fossils are taken con brio
So next from Otago you imported Leo.
It seems in a workshop each job’s labelled ‘RUSH’,
And those in the queue should be given the brush,
A toolmaker needs to be part referee,
You turned up a master, the crafter Gil Lea.
But what matters more than machines so infernal?
Why, Min Mag, and Palaeontology Journal.
You cared for the library, kept it well funded
And saw that no centralist pillaged or plundered.
As libraries grow, all their books try to hide
To find them, you need an experienced guide
And guidance you got from the Rhodesian whiz
Mrs Jones (with her bike, and her violets, and Liz).⁴
Australia’s Geology needed uniting,
You had all the staff, it was time to start writing
And poor Mrs Oliver typed the whole book

³ Demonstrator Dave Feary.
⁴ Mrs Jones was a Girl Guide Commissioner who had a picture of the Queen on her office wall.
Appreciation

That everyone knows as Brown, Campbell, and Crook.
But who'd do the diagrams, who's so intrepid?
Crafts girl extraordinary, young Judy Shepherd.
Some have quite newly learned Geologese
Like Radi, and Liliane. Judy, Louise,
And top of her class, Mrs Webber nee Rees
Who'll answer your questions on rocks, goats, or geese.
Minding machines needs a well-balanced team-man,
None does it better than rugby-fan Freeman.
And waiting for jobs gives you no cause for sorrow,
Joe did today what you'll ask on the Morrow.
To manage the chem lab you'll no need to fossick,
From over the creek you struck gold with Jack Wasik.
The slides that we get are so good they're phantasmic
When sectioned by Radi and Henry Zapasnik.
Minding Departments needs great elasticity
Sureness of touch without egocentricity
Being a Prof. is a piece of simplicity
When there's a girl at the front like Felicity.
Now the collections were growing colossal
With lots of nice minerals, even a fossil.
Specimens came from all over the place:
Australia, Westphalia, Sparta and Thrace.
From Greenland and Russia, from London and Salford,
Collected, curated, and labelled by Halford.
But many who came have since drifted away
Keith Ellis, Keith Massey, Paul Willis, Bob Grey,
Wendy and Sheralee, Barbara, and Anne,
Tall Mrs Drury and sweet Marianne.
Pam ran your office with great circumspection
While Greg drafted lines in her general direction.
How did the continents fit in Pangaea?
Belbin found out, he had UNIVAC's ear.
And don't we all miss that most loyal retainer
Who urned our affection with tea, Mrs Rayner?
And then Mrs Whyte, also quite indispensable
Even though usually incomprehensible.\(^5\)
All of these people, and all of these words,

\(^5\) Mrs Whyte spoke broad Scots.
Geology at ANU (1959–2009)

The rocks and the fossils, weren’t just for the birds
But rather for students, who came for your lectures
And left full of knowledge, or sometimes conjectures.

[There followed a list of all students to that date]
A Department is more than the fame some go after
It’s care and variety, learning and laughter,
At ANU ‘Brown’ means a rich polychrome
All those who passed through called geology ‘home’.