

A HISTORY OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

VOLUME 1, 1911–1945

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Photographs appearing in Bernard Mellor's *Lugard in Hong Kong* (1992) have also been used in this volume, but in some cases the original copyright owners could not be identified. I will therefore be glad to acknowledge the copyright owners of the following photographs in all future editions of this book: Figures 3.4, 3.6, 3.9 and 4.17.

PREFACE

The University of Hong Kong has been well served by its past historians. A long tradition of recording the University's history can be traced back to the very beginning of the institution's existence, with the copious writings and archival collecting of, respectively, Sir Frederick Lugard and Sir Henry May, the first two Chancellors, forming the bedrock on which all later histories have been written. While the first formal history was not published until 1933 by our third Vice-Chancellor, Sir William Hornell, and the next did not appear until the golden jubilee volume edited by Brian Harrison in 1962, recent decades have witnessed a veritable explosion in the chronicling of the University's history.¹ Especially important was the archival work completed in the 1970s and 1980s by Bernard Mellor, a former Registrar of the University, which led to the publication of his *Informal History* (1980) and *Lugard in Hong Kong* (1992).² In 1977, Mellor was commissioned by the University Council to write a 'general history' of the University in time for publication during the seventieth anniversary celebrations in 1981. It was to be a short work 'of a public relations nature' with a large number of photographs, but the two-volume *Informal History* turned out to be far more ambitious than originally expected. The Council's intention had been to commission a second, more 'extensive academic study' of the University's history that would both 'take stock of the University's total role as an international tertiary institution of high standing' and address the importance of HKU's place 'in the context of modern Hong Kong'. It was decided to defer the second more ambitious project until a later date, but after 1981 neither the finances nor an author could be found to enable the commissioning of the book.³

More recent books on the history of the University have ranged from reflections by former students on their experiences during the Second World War and several faculty histories to the 2002 'impact study' titled *Growing with Hong Kong*.⁴ There have also been a large number of autobiographies written by graduates over the last twenty years, which have provided important personal perspectives on events in the University's more recent history. Unfortunately, few of these books provide a full scholarly apparatus and their usefulness is therefore somewhat limited for researchers who wish to explore further the history of the University. In the last ten years, some attempt has been made to render historical accounts of the University more technically robust. *An Impossible Dream* (2002) and *HKU SPACE and its Alumni* (2008), both associated with the Centenary History Project, have attempted to show what can be achieved given the current archival resources of the University.⁵ Despite all the recent research on the University's history and the numerous publications which have appeared over the last twenty years, however, no attempt has been made to write a comprehensive history of HKU since the late 1970s.

Not only have many new books on the history of the University appeared over the last two decades, but more recently great strides have also been taken to build upon the

work of William Hornell, Stanley Boxer and Bernard Mellor in collecting, preserving and making available the archival records of the University.⁶ To write a comprehensive history of any university requires access to all the records of the institution, and this task is always made immeasurably easier when those records are gathered together in a single archive. Until 2006, HKU had no centralised archive; only the official Registry records and those other unofficial records which had been collected together in the Special Collections of the Main Library were easily accessible for research. Discussions about forming a university archive began during the University's ninetieth anniversary celebrations in 2001–2002. In 2003, an Archives Working Group was established under the Registrar. Visits from the archivists of the Universities of Melbourne and Birmingham were followed by a more formal consultation report by Randall Jimmerson in 2004. At the same time, Lawrence Tam and Cheung Mo-ching of the University Libraries prepared a preliminary assessment of the whereabouts and state of preservation of the University's records.⁷ These developments eventually led to the appointment of Ms Stacy Belcher Gould as HKU's first University Archivist in 2006, and the setting up of the University Archives with its mission of 'documenting and promoting knowledge and understanding of the history of the University of Hong Kong and its people'. As will become clear from the chapters that follow, the records and staff of the University Archives have been a godsend to the author of this volume. It simply would not have been possible to write a comprehensive history of HKU without them.

That a professional historian should take a scholarly interest in the history of his own university will come as no surprise to anyone reading this volume. In my case, I was introduced to the history of HKU by the late Professor Mary Turnbull at a dinner in Cambridge shortly before taking up my appointment in 1993. That brief introduction was enough to whet my appetite, but it was some time before I began to pursue proper historical research on HKU's past with any determination. Our former Vice-Chancellor, Professor Wang Gungwu, unknowingly started me along the path towards writing this history, but my erstwhile colleagues Professor Chan Lau Kit-ching and Dr Alfred H. Y. Lin were the two mentors whose encouragement led to the publication in 2002 of *An Impossible Dream*, an attempt by the Department of History to show that a rigorous scholarly history of the University could be written.⁸ That volume had its genesis in a 1999 call by the then Registrar, Professor Ian Davies (later Vice-Chancellor, 2000–2002) for projects to mark the ninetieth anniversary of the University, but *An Impossible Dream* (and the series of research seminars in 2001–2002 that preceded its publication) was always aimed at the more distant prospect of the centenary of the University which we are now celebrating. The present volume is therefore the result of a long gestation and has been planned to coincide with the centenary celebrations.

As we discovered in 2002, however, the 'foundation' of the University was a process rather than an event, so it is no simple matter to decide a single date on which to celebrate the centenary. For this reason I have avoided calling this book 'a centenary history', but that still leaves the question of where to begin. Did HKU and its history start with Sir Frederick Lugard's call in 1908 for an imperial university in the colony, or was it the 'foundation' ceremony on 16 March 1910, heralding the start of building works, that marked the real genesis of HKU? What then is the significance of the 1911 Ordinance which created the University as a corporate body, and where does the opening of the University in March 1912

or the arrival of the first students in the autumn of 1912 fit into the larger story of our beginnings? A further complication arises from the Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine's tendency to observe 1887 as its 'foundation' date, a practice that the rest of the University has steadfastly resisted. Unlike the National University of Singapore, which dates its foundation from the establishment of its predecessor, the Straits Settlements and Federated Malay States School of Medicine (later the King Edward VII College of Medicine) in 1905, HKU does not consider the founding of the Hong Kong College of Medicine in 1887 to be the start of its own institutional history.⁹ Yet it is difficult to imagine writing about HKU's history without making some reference to the College of Medicine, for in our early years the two institutions were closely connected in terms of both undergraduates and staff if not in professional recognition. Moreover, most modern university histories try to contextualise the beginnings of the institution in the wider educational milieu of the time, so in order to place HKU's history in its proper context one needs to consider contemporary developments in higher education in Britain and her colonies, as well as the impact of the British Empire on East Asia from the early years of the nineteenth century. For this reason, the start date for this history is not in the early twentieth century as many would expect, but rather with the arrival in China of the British protestant missionary Robert Morrison in 1807.

Another feature of modern university histories is that they attempt to be as comprehensive as possible, focusing on every aspect of the institution's history and not being limited to a purely 'institutional' account of the main decision-making bodies within the university. The day-to-day sporting and social life of undergraduates, the research of academic staff in all its bewildering variety, the financing of the institution, and the role (or lack thereof) of women all find a place in the modern university history, but this very comprehensiveness leads to the unavoidable problem of size. While it is perhaps acceptable for such ancient institutions as Oxford and Cambridge to boast official histories which run to eight and four volumes respectively—even a nineteenth-century creation such as the University of Sydney needed two large volumes to cover 150 years of history—most twentieth-century institutions limit themselves to a single volume, and this was the approach initially adopted for HKU's history. Unfortunately this decision limited coverage of a number of important areas and meant that the story would not be as comprehensive as we had originally desired. Ultimately, therefore, the decision was taken to produce a two-volume history that allowed a very full coverage of the University's history. This first volume covers the 'gestation' of the University from the late nineteenth century until its near destruction during the Second World War and is published during the University's centenary year. The second volume will cover the history of the University from 1945 until the present day and will be published in the near future. I have tried to touch upon as many aspects of the University's development as can be squeezed within the admittedly generous limits allowed by University finances and the publisher's sense of proportion and taste. Despite the two-volume format, it was nevertheless necessary to reduce the length of the original manuscript by more than one-third, and much material relating to university finances, buildings, matriculation, curriculum development, graduates, staff and research has been excised. The extracted material will be found in a fuller manuscript which will ultimately be deposited in the University Archives as part of the Centenary History Collection.

How does one write an institutional history that satisfies the interests of so diverse and intellectually refined a group of people as those who inhabit HKU, let alone a more general reading public which perhaps has a very limited knowledge of the institution? I have discovered that it is simply not possible to please all of my university audience all of the time, but I hope there is something of interest in this book for everyone who reads it. This history of the University of Hong Kong certainly aims to be comprehensive, but is not intended to be encyclopedic in its coverage of the multiplicity of issues and events which have affected the University's development. Nor does this volume pretend to be in any sense a *definitive* history of the University; it is very much 'a' history of HKU rather than 'the' history, and it is most certainly not an 'official' history. Like all university histories it is sometimes rather quirky in its treatment of the past. Some issues are dealt with more fully while others are passed over in a rather summary way. Some personalities are discussed in greater detail while others are barely mentioned. There is no real rhyme or reason to these inconsistencies in coverage, except that as an historian I found some issues and people in the University's past to be of more interest or significance than others, and in numerous cases I found myself feeling more competent to deal with certain issues at greater length while others presented challenges that I was less able to overcome. In this sense, the book before you would have been much better were it to have had multiple authors who could have focused on particular areas and brought their specialist skills to bear on these issues, but this was not possible. As originally conceived this book would have been written by two scholars, but the untimely death of Professor Tony Sweeting in the summer of 2008 robbed me of a partner in this project whom I very much regret losing. The resulting book is very much the poorer for not having had the benefit of his input.

The history of any university should try to focus, at least in passing, on the ordinary things in the lives of those who are touched by the institution. Academics spend most of their working lives concentrating on the day-to-day activities of teaching and research; students spend many hours at lectures, or in the library, on the sporting field or simply studying in their hostel rooms; and the support staff go about their repetitive duties week after week, year after year, whether they be in the laboratories, offices or outdoor areas of the University. Unfortunately, these 'ordinary things' are seldom remembered in detail because of their very ordinariness, but, in the words of Fergus Cronin, 'it is the ordinary life that has most effect on our development'.¹⁰ I have therefore tried to include wherever possible some account of the 'ordinary life' of members of the University during its first thirty years, and I would like to thank Professor Geoffrey Blowers for making this suggestion to me nearly ten years ago. I am painfully aware, however, that my attempts to address the day-to-day routines of the University have proven woefully inadequate, largely because of the paucity of evidence surviving in our institutional archives.

A Note on Sources

Some mention has already been made of the University Archives and the importance of its documentary holdings for the Centenary History Project, but it should also be noted that many records are still waiting to be transferred there from other areas of the University and

will eventually be available for consultation by future scholars. Where faculty or other non-central records have been used I make it clear in my endnotes and the Bibliography where these sources are currently located. Many of the earliest records will in fact be found in the Special Collections of the University Libraries, having been transferred from the Registry by Bernard Mellor in the 1970s or returned to the University by Lady May Ride in the 1990s. The most important set of original sources dealing with the establishment of the University are bound together in a manuscript volume entitled ‘The Conception and Foundation of the University of Hong Kong: Miscellaneous Documents’.¹¹ This volume was assembled by Bernard Mellor around 1974 from a file of papers returned to the University in 1952. These papers were used extensively by Mellor in his *Informal History* and *Lugard in Hong Kong*. The papers appear to have been collected together at the instruction of Sir Henry May in 1912–13, and represent only a small part of a larger collection which he considered to represent ‘the real history of the University’, two copies of which he ordered to be deposited for safe-keeping in the library of the Colonial Secretariat. Even in 1913 the various civil servants involved in searching for documents found it very difficult to assemble a full set of papers; May considered it ‘extraordinary’ that such important records could not be located with ease.¹² Sir Henry May’s full compilation of documents does not appear to have survived the Japanese occupation of 1941–45.

Other archival repositories outside the University that have been consulted for this project are listed in the Bibliography. Of particular importance are the very large deposits of papers relating to HKU which are currently held in the British National Archives in London, mostly to be found in the record class known as CO129. This document class contains the dispatches sent to the Colonial Office in London by successive governors of the colony up to the Second World War. They are invaluable because their counterparts in Hong Kong were mostly destroyed during the Japanese occupation. Important records have also been consulted elsewhere in London—especially at SOAS (the London Missionary Society archives) and the Wellcome Trust (Sir James Cantlie’s papers)—and in Birmingham (the Church Missionary Society), Cambridge (Leo Amery’s papers) Oxford (the papers of Lord Lugard and Lionel Curtis), New York (the Rockefeller Archives) and Canberra (Sir Lindsay Ride’s BAAG papers). I am very grateful to my colleague Priscilla Roberts, who has gone far beyond the demands of friendship in rooting out and generously sharing with me archival materials from repositories on three continents. These documentary sources have been supplemented where possible by a series of interviews with former staff and students of the University, and lengthy correspondence with others. All the materials which have been collected in the course of the project will be found in the Centenary History Collection, which will be deposited permanently in the University Archives.

While an attempt has been made to trace all archival collections containing HKU materials it has not been possible to consult all of the documents which we identified. One unfortunate but unavoidable omission has been a portion of the records of the Hong Kong College of Medicine, which are deposited in the Kuomintang Party Archives in Taipei. These records were originally owned by the University after the closure of the College of Medicine in 1915 but were later surrendered by the British Ambassador to the Chinese Nationalist government during the Second World War. They are highly valued by the KMT because of

the early association of Dr Sun Yat-sen with the College of Medicine, but they are equally important for HKU as the only source of reliable data on the early students of the College. I hope that someone will one day have an opportunity to study these records in detail. Another important class of records which seem to have been lost to the University are the 'Chungking cards' maintained by Gordon King and Man-wah Bentley during the war years in China. I have found only a small number of these cards in the early student records of the Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine and would be grateful to hear of the whereabouts of others. There are no doubt other archival collections holding documents relating to the history of the University which we have not been able to identify, and I would be grateful to hear from anyone who has found such materials not listed in the Bibliography. Likewise, the University Archives is always happy to accept archival donations from organisations and individuals who may hold materials of historical significance to the University.

Acknowledgements

There is a sense in which even authorised histories of universities really represent nothing more than the personal opinions of the historians who write them, and this is certainly the case with this 'unauthorised' volume. I have been fortunate to have been given free rein to write the history of HKU however I liked; for this freedom I am very grateful to successive Vice-Chancellors and members of the University's senior management who have provided funding and encouragement for the work. It is a mark of an institution's maturity that its leaders are prepared to allow its history to be written without imposing any controls on the content or interpretation of past events. I am particularly grateful to Professors Ian Davies and Lap-chee Tsui for their generous support of this project from inception to completion, and to Professor Wang Gungwu, a fellow historian, for his continuing interest and encouragement. The assistance given by Henry W. K. Wai, Philip B. L. Lam and John G. Malpas at various stages of this project has been critical to its completion. I would also like to acknowledge with deep gratitude the enthusiastic support of Michael Martin at the earliest stages of planning and throughout the project.

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There are many others who must be thanked for their advice and encouragement at various stages of this project stretching back more than ten years. Foremost among these is the late Tony Sweeting whose knowledge of the University's history was broad and deep. I have missed his company and counsel while I have been completing an endeavour which we started together. I have already acknowledged my great debt to Chan Lau Kit-ching and Alfred H. Y. Lin, who were towers of strength during the editing of *An Impossible Dream* and who have continued to provide encouragement and support since their retirement from the University. I would also like to express my thanks to several other colleagues for their contributions to this project: Bert Becker, John Carroll, Lawrence M.W. Chiu, Patricia Chiu, Frank Dikötter, Stacilee Ford, Fung Chi-ming, Marie-Paule Ha, Ron Hill, Norman Owen, Michael Share, Elizabeth Sinn, Tom Stanley, the late Mary Turnbull, Leigh Wright and Hans W. Y. Yeung. I would additionally like to thank one of our most senior History graduates, Mrs Ellie Alleyne, for her unfailing grace in answering a never-ending barrage of questions. A large number of former postgraduate students in my own and other departments have assisted me by generously sharing information from their research projects. I would particularly like to thank Christopher Cowell, Nelson Fong, Fr Louis Ha, Franco David Macri, Scarlet Poon, Fion So, William Tai Yuen, Carol Tsang Chiu-long and Calvin Wong Hoito. Throughout the early stages of the project the History Office staff were of enormous assistance in many ways that are hidden from view and yet were imperative for the ultimate completion of this book. I would therefore like to thank Iris Ng, Michelle Wong and Andy Leung for their assistance. I also wish to acknowledge my heads of School, Dr Stephen Matthews and Professor Daniel K. L. Chua, who ensured that the project was provided with adequate space for accommodating the ever-growing archive of materials collected during the course of research.

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Dedication

To dedicate a book such as this to any one person or group of people seems rather inappropriate, given its broad coverage of the entire institution's early history, but during the course of my research one generation of students has stood out from the rest for its courage and determination to live through hard times and build a better world. The HKU students of the first thirty years were undoubtedly aware of the tumultuous events that were occurring around the world and closer to home in China, but they lived relatively sheltered lives and were largely protected from the worst excesses of international aggression. Little did the undergraduates who were preparing for their examinations in late 1941 realise that their lives were about to change forever. The Japanese invasion of Hong Kong on 8 December 1941 was an event that few of them expected and which indeed caught the whole colony poorly prepared. It was an experience that would test them in ways that they could not have imagined. The year 2011 marks the seventieth anniversary of the Battle of Hong Kong, in which so many of our staff and students fought, some of them losing their lives or health in the process. As I say in Chapter 9, this really was a defining moment for the University, and I count myself fortunate indeed to have had the opportunity to interview so many of our alumni who lived through that dark period in our history. It is to them, therefore, that I wish to dedicate this book, in the hope that their inspiring example will always be in the eyes of future generations.

8 December 2011

ESTABLISHING THE UNIVERSITY, 1908–1912

Although Sir Frederick Lugard had secured a decision from the 1908 University Committee to proceed with his scheme, Hormusjee Mody made it clear that he would not commence construction of the university buildings until an endowment fund had been raised which would produce £6,000 per annum to meet the initial costs of financing the university. The issue of endowment had been problematic from the very beginning, but Lugard tried to put off a fund-raising campaign for as long as possible. While there was a suggestion that Hong Kong might follow the example of the English universities, many of which had attracted ‘pious endowments in real estate’ as perpetual sources of funding, the proposal that a large tract of crown land in the southern district of Hong Kong Island should be granted to provide a permanent income for the university never seems to have been seriously considered by Lugard.¹ The immediate task of Lugard’s newly constituted 1909 University Committee, sometimes referred to as the ‘General Committee’, was therefore fund-raising on a scale hitherto unknown in Hong Kong. The target was £110,000 or \$1.25 million, a substantial amount at any time but infinitely more difficult to raise during a period of economic distress such as was being experienced by the colony in 1908–9.

The first few months of fund-raising were not as successful as Lugard had hoped. It was not until the middle of the year that the endowment fund was assured—even then it took some time before Mody gave his approval for the building programme to start. Once the construction did begin, there was no turning back; the serious financial problems which arose even before the University enrolled its first students in late 1912 were only a taste of far worse difficulties still to come. This chapter follows the course of events between early 1909 and the institution’s formal opening in 1912, examining how the founders managed the daunting task of raising the initial endowment, and how they went about securing the University Ordinance of 1911. The physical fabric of the new university will also be considered, especially the construction of the Main Building and the other structures donated by Sir Hormusjee Mody.

The Problem of Financing the University

From the very beginning of discussions about the university scheme in early 1908, Lugard had recognised that raising a sufficiently large endowment fund was the key to his project’s success, for neither the Hong Kong government nor the Legislative Council would ever agree to subvent such an institution in the way that local governments in England and elsewhere in the colonies had done during the early years of the twentieth century. While he admitted that it was likely there would be ‘a period in which the expenses will be great and the receipts small before the university is fully established’, he was nevertheless optimistic

about the eventual success of their fund-raising activities.² The initial estimates proposed an endowment of \$1 million. It was hoped that this capital would produce an income of around \$60,000 per annum. Lugard initially wanted to make a start at fund-raising as soon as he had set up his first University Committee in March 1908, but no attempt at a public appeal was made at that time, probably due to the economic difficulties which the colony was experiencing.³ Alfred Rennie's estimates for the operational costs of the university were considered at the first meeting of the planning sub-committee on 7 April 1908. These estimates later proved to be wholly inadequate, but they give a good idea of the relatively modest scale of the university which Mody initially suggested, with a teaching staff of only ten (a principal, three European professors and six Chinese lecturers) and a non-academic staff of thirty-six (including ten coolies and ten 'boys').⁴

Rennie's estimates showed that a shortfall of \$16,300 per annum would have to be met from endowment fund income if the university scheme were to proceed, so he recommended a capital fund of \$500,000 which would generate enough interest to provide a small credit balance of \$13,700 per annum. It was also suggested that the government be called upon to contribute \$10,000 per annum.⁵ Lugard had already made it clear that the government would not make up any shortfall in the university's finances and countered with a suggestion that student fees might be set at \$60 per month in order to bring the tuition income (\$72,000) closer to the amount required.⁶ These estimates and suggestions were referred to three sub-committees representing the proposed faculties of Medicine, Engineering and Law; when they reported, it became clear that greater provision would need to be made for both accommodation and endowment.⁷ For medical instruction, it was recommended that at least two 'expert teachers' in anatomy and physiology were needed, at a cost of £600 per annum each, and a further fourteen part-time lecturers would have to be recruited locally at a cost of between £60 and £120 per annum for each position. The total cost of medical lecturers would therefore be £2,580 per annum. The legal sub-committee likewise found that the costs of a Law faculty would be higher than the original estimate, at around \$15,000 per annum.⁸ For engineering, the revised cost of teaching was estimated at £6,110 per annum, a considerably higher figure than anticipated by Mody or Lugard. The total annual expenses of the university would therefore be around \$80,000. Perhaps more importantly, there seems to have been general agreement that student fees should not exceed \$240 per annum, significantly lower than the \$600 budgeted by Rennie, or one-third of the \$720 suggested by Lugard. Moreover, Ho Kai predicted that the first cohort of students would probably number no more than sixty, and that only around twenty new students a year could be expected for the foreseeable future.⁹

These new estimates were discussed at the second meeting of the sub-committee on 20 July 1908, when it was also realised that a building to accommodate all the lecturers and students would cost approximately \$200,000, or one-third more than Mody's original offer. Even more worrying was the lower calculation for tuition fee income, leaving a deficit of approximately \$65,000 in the first year of operation. To fund such a shortfall, an endowment of at least \$1.1 million would be required if all three faculties were established, or \$850,000 if the Law faculty were left until later.¹⁰ This represented something of a crisis in the early phase of preparations: it was clear that neither Mody's donation nor the proposed endowment

fund would be adequate to meet the accommodation and recurrent financial needs of the university. In these circumstances, some feared that the scheme might be ‘impracticable and premature’. It was for this reason that Ho Kai proposed a pre-matriculation department teaching classes in Chinese to attract up to 300 additional students. These students would pay tuition fees sufficient to secure an income of \$72,000 per annum, but the scheme would also open the way to collect large donations from districts and provinces throughout China for both the endowment fund and the building of student residences on the university campus.¹¹

Lugard did not like Ho Kai’s fund-raising scheme, but nevertheless wanted the university buildings erected as soon as possible. He therefore pressed the sub-committee at its meeting on 29 October 1908 to accept an alternative plan which envisaged the College of Medicine and the Technical Institute being temporarily housed in the university buildings until such time as an endowment for the two foundation faculties of the university could be raised, and the university became self-supporting. The College of Medicine and the Technical Institute together had an annual income of around \$21,900: with interest at seven per cent from Mody’s \$30,000 endowment donation, a sum of \$24,000 per annum would be available to start university teaching. Lugard’s amended scheme presumed that students would be charged a higher tuition fee of up to £200 (\$2,286) per annum; he was certain that these tuition fees would more than cover the \$44,500 deficit in teaching costs. Although his amended scheme reduced the teaching staff to four professors (£2,500 per annum), one demonstrator (£480) and local lecturers in medicine (£1,380) and science (£480), the total recurrent costs of £6,000 (\$68,500) per annum were only slightly lower than the estimates for the previous three-faculty scheme.¹² The beauty of the new scheme was that it did not require an endowment fund immediately. Lugard was adamant that it was premature to begin fund-raising when much of South China was in a state of economic distress and many parts of Guangdong were still reeling from the floods and typhoon damage of 1906. Another powerful typhoon hit Hong Kong in late July 1908, causing further economic loss among the very people who would be targeted for fund-raising. Lugard recommended waiting some time before launching the appeal. Although Ho Kai eventually supported the amended plan, he could not agree with the unrealistically high level of fees which Lugard proposed, nor did he see eye to eye with the Governor about the appropriate timing of the endowment fund appeal and the manner of soliciting subscriptions.¹³

Ho Kai was not alone among the members of the University Committee in doubting the Governor’s optimistic appraisal of the university’s financial needs. The most effective opposition to Lugard’s amended plan came from his own Colonial Secretary, Henry May, and the Director of Public Works, William Chatham, who regarded the estimates as being far too low. Chatham made reference to the recently completed Bacteriological Institute building in Tai Ping Shan, concluding that the university buildings as planned would cost at least \$290,000 to construct and a further \$38,000 to furnish, excluding any provision of machinery in the engineering workshop. Moreover, the cost of maintaining the buildings would be \$10,120 per annum rather than the \$2,000 estimated by Lugard.¹⁴ Henry May was equally concerned about the estimates of the university’s recurrent expenditure, not just ‘on business grounds’ and in his role as guardian of the colony’s financial resources, but also as Rector of the College of Medicine. He felt that the university scheme should be ‘properly financed and

should not prove abortive', leaving the colony to pick up the pieces and the College without a home in which to train badly needed doctors.¹⁵

Henry May's recalculated figure for the annual staffing and operating expenses of the three institutions (\$129,958) was much higher than Lugard's estimates. Revenue for the combined College of Medicine, Technical Institute and university was estimated at no more than \$83,800 per annum. While the income figures for the College (\$5,344) and the Institute (\$16,565) were largely the same as in Lugard's estimates, and a further \$3,600 per annum would be provided by the already promised Mody and Ng Li Hing endowment funds, the income generated from tuition and boarding fees for 100 students was much lower. May felt that £30 (\$342.85) per annum for tuition and \$240 per annum for board would be the maximum that Chinese parents were prepared to pay, and so these two sources of income would generate no more than \$58,285 (\$34,285 in tuition fees and \$24,000 in boarding fees).¹⁶ It was clear that expenditure would exceed revenue by the enormous sum of \$46,158 per annum, but May was reluctant to include fee income in his calculations when he could not be certain that the university would attract as many as 100 students in its first years. He therefore recommended that the scale of the building be drastically reduced, so that construction costs would not exceed the \$150,000 donation promised by Hormusjee Mody. He also proposed that an endowment fund producing interest of not less than £6,000 per annum ought to be raised before any university students were accepted.¹⁷

Henry May had recently been involved with fund-raising for the YMCA and had even longer experience as Rector of the College of Medicine, so he knew the difficulties of raising funds by public subscription in Hong Kong. He pointed out that, even after twenty-one years, the College of Medicine still lacked an adequate endowment fund; he felt that the Governor's optimistic proposal to build first and collect an endowment later was not a prudent course to follow. Like Ho Kai, he favoured an immediate start to the fund-raising campaign and suggested that, until sufficient funds were raised, the College of Medicine and Technical Institute should be housed in the new buildings provided by Mody.¹⁸ May's eighteen resolutions, which were considered by the University Committee on 11 and 18 November 1908, were therefore far more pessimistic than Lugard's original seven resolutions, but they undoubtedly reflected a more level-headed appreciation of the local economic situation. They also sought to ensure that the College of Medicine, having given up its own building and endowment plans, would not find itself without a permanent home if the university endowment fund failed to reach the required level of capital.¹⁹ May nevertheless



FIGURE 4.2

Sir Henry May, Colonial Secretary (1901–11) and Rector of the Hong Kong College of Medicine (1902–15). May acted as Lugard's right-hand man in the formulation of the University scheme, but his long involvement with the College of Medicine created a conflict of interest which both men found difficult to deal with. [HKUA]

conceded that, if an adequate endowment fund were raised by the time the buildings were completed, the College and Institute should 'cease to exist' and their endowments transferred to the new university together with their existing government grants. This new set of resolutions was much more businesslike and logical than the 'omnibus' version proposed by Lugard at the previous meeting of the Committee. When Mody heard of the revisions in the estimates he immediately offered to pay whatever was necessary over and above the \$180,000 already promised to ensure that the three buildings (Main Building, recreation pavilion and caretaker's lodge) would be completed to the designs already prepared by Leigh and Orange.²⁰ It therefore seemed that the buildings could proceed without any further discussion, although Mody made it clear that he would not be responsible for equipping the building, and that these costs would have to be met from other donations.

Lugard recognised that May's more cautious approach to the question of financing the university had its strengths, but he also felt that his colonial secretary had been rather liberal in estimating some of the likely expenditure. He thought that an endowment of \$760,000, producing an income of £4,000 per annum, would be sufficient, but he left the final decision on the size of the endowment fund to the Committee.²¹ The Committee agreed at its 11 November meeting that an immediate start should be made to the fund-raising campaign and that an income of £6,000 per annum was required, but discussion broke down when the issue of using this endowment income to support the College of Medicine was considered.²² When the Committee reconvened on 18 November, Lugard's annoyance at the difficulties created by the College's demands was obvious. The meeting passed an amended resolution hastily proposed on behalf of the College of Medicine, which acknowledged that the College would discontinue its own fund-raising appeal in order to assist the larger university scheme so long as endowment income could be used to secure the services of lecturers in anatomy and physiology. Lugard did not like this proviso, but was forced to accept it in order to secure agreement on the remaining financial details, including the amalgamation of the slender endowment funds of the Technical Institute and the College of Medicine when the university was finally incorporated.²³ The College readily agreed to these resolutions, but Hormusjee Mody refused to commence building until enough money had been raised both to equip the university buildings (£10,000) and to provide a regular income of £6,000 per annum. He insisted that, before he started construction of any buildings, the University Committee would have to raise at least £110,000, or \$1.25 million—he gave them six months to do so.²⁴

The Fund-raising Campaign

Mody's ultimatum meant that a great deal would have to be done very quickly if the required endowment were to be raised in time. Lugard immediately sprang into action and began drafting a comprehensive 'memorandum' explaining the origins and objects of the university scheme.²⁵ It was intended to be used as a prospectus for donors and anyone else interested in contributing to the university scheme, so Lugard went to some lengths to explain how the inaugural faculties of medicine and engineering would bring both benefits to China and prestige to Britain. With the clock ticking, Lugard was anxious not to lose any more time. He must have worked on his memorandum throughout the Christmas holiday; by 27

December, a draft was ready for circulation. On 7 January 1909, he wrote to Henry May, urging, 'Please push it forward without delay'.²⁶ By this time, Lugard was already drafting a formal dispatch to the Colonial Office, as well as letters to the Viceroy of India, the China Association in London, Sir John Jordan in Peking, the Shanghai Municipal Council, the Viceroy in Canton, the vice-chancellors of Oxford and Cambridge, and his old friend Lord Elgin. Amidst this flurry of activity in the first weeks of 1909, Lugard initiated the appointment of a new 'special committee' to co-ordinate the fund-raising campaign and bring the project to the point where construction could begin.

As Alfred Lin has shown, the fund-raising drive for the university scheme was collaborative, with both the European and Chinese communities taking an active part in the campaign.²⁷ The special committee appointed to oversee fund-raising activities (the 1909 University Committee) was, like its predecessor, broadly representative, although somewhat smaller and still dominated by government officers, despite Lugard's assurances that the university was not going to be an official project of the colonial government.²⁸ Most members were selected for their utility in various aspects of the project: Bishop Lander, May and Irving were to advise on 'the proper lines of an English University', Chatham would 'be of use in criticizing the building plans' and Pollock would take care of 'the legal constitution'.²⁹ The Chinese community was represented by Ho Kai and Wei Yuk, both of whom sat on the Legislative Council as unofficial members. Although Lugard presumed that these men were sufficient representation for the Chinese business and professional community, the Chinese felt that, if they were going to raise the lion's share of the endowment funds, they should have greater representation not just on the fund-raising committee but also on the eventual governing body of the university. Lugard acceded to this request after some initial resistance. The most outspoken of the Chinese fund-raisers, Lau Chu-pak, was added to the committee in March, to ensure that relations between the University Committee and the Chinese community remained cordial.

Lugard realised that his new committee would have only limited use in raising endowment funds among the Chinese. He had already decided, perhaps at Ho Kai's suggestion, that a Chinese sub-committee should be appointed to approach potential Chinese donors. The obvious choice of a chairman for this sub-committee was Ho Kai, who had by this time served three terms as a member of the Legislative Council and was widely acknowledged as the unofficial leader of the Chinese community in Hong Kong.³⁰ Indeed, Lugard leaned heavily on Ho Kai, deputing to him all arrangements regarding the translation of his appeal memorandum into Chinese. He even allowed Ho Kai and Wei Yuk to assemble the sub-committee themselves, with minimal government interference.³¹ It took some time to put together a comprehensive list of members for the proposed Chinese sub-committee, but when it finally reached Lugard's desk, it contained ninety-nine names 'representative of every section of the important Chinese community in Hongkong'.³² Further members were added over the next few months, including the directors of the Tung Wah Hospital, to ensure maximum success in the fund-raising venture. It would be an inclusive and powerful fund-raising committee which for the most part would act quite independently of the main committee. It quickly became very active in canvassing support for the university scheme. At its first meeting on 15 February 1909, the University Committee approved the membership of the sub-committee,

名譽本	王少高	Wong Siu Gao
廣茂泰行	劉蔭泉	Lau Yam Chuen
明順行	招兩田	Chiu U Ten
吳源興行	招畫三	Chiu Chuan San
裕和隆行	蕭遠輝	Siu Yuen Fai
恒記行	吳理鄉	Ng Lai Heung
廣安榮行	曾維謙	Sang Wai Him
捷和行	朱式如	Chu Sik U
萬祥源行	陳洛川	Chan Lok Chuan
公源行	源雲翹	Yuen Wan Kiu
昆茂行	黎遜卿	Lai Sun Heung
識德號	阮崑邨	Yuen Kun Chun
明新號	阮崑如	Yuen Koi U
寶隆金山庄	劉小焯	Lau Siu Chok
安榮金山庄	李秀軒	Li Siu Heun
明記金山庄	啟介南	Kai Kai Nam
協安公司	謝蔭屏	Tso Yuen Ping
全安公司	譚鶴坡	Tan Hok Po
同安公司	古輝山	Ko Fai Shan
人和公司	陳作屏	Chan Chok Ping
集威公司	陳蘭軒	Chan Lan Heun
北安輪船公司	譚子剛	Tan Si Kong
普安公司	周少岐	Chau Siu Ki
	梁悟之	Leung Wai Chi
	唐子修	Tang Siu Siu
	陳杰臣	Chan Kit Sun
	盧佐臣	Lo Cho Sun
	周少凡	Chau Siu Fan
	胡若雲	Hu Cho Yuen

FIGURE 4.3

Part of the list of 99 men nominated by Lugard to be members of the Chinese fund-raising committee. [HKUL]

many of whose members were present at Government House that day, and Lugard took the opportunity to address the assembled supporters of his project, outlining the important task which lay ahead of them.³³

The Chinese sub-committee began its work on 21 February, with a large public meeting at the Tung Wah Hospital which attracted a diverse cross-section of Chinese who wished to become supporters of the university scheme. Ho Kai chose a fellow lawyer, Tso Seen Wan, to be the secretary of the sub-committee. Tso was from a prominent family of landowners in Macau and Hong Kong; his father had been the leader of the Chinese community in Macau until his death in 1896. Tso had been educated in England and, after many years of supporting important charitable and educational projects, would later serve on the Legislative Council (1929-37).³⁴ Ho Kai realised that he and Tso would need a great deal of help to raise the large amount of money which Lugard expected from the Chinese community: he therefore devised a plan which involved the appointment of fifteen vice-chairmen, three honorary secretaries and a treasurer to assist in collecting donations.³⁵ The first meeting of the sub-committee agreed with Lugard's contention that, as the Chinese community would gain the greatest benefit from the university, it was right that they should make a large contribution to the endowment fund, but the meeting was not entirely plain sailing. Lau Chu-pak raised a number of worries regarding the scheme, including the issue of representation on the main committee, whether the new university would be on a par with English universities, the number of faculties to be established, and the fees to be charged. He was particularly concerned that the university might end up being 'no better than those in India',

and wanted an assurance that donations would be refunded if the fund-raising campaign did not succeed in raising an adequate endowment.³⁶ Ho Kai reassured the members of the sub-committee on all these points. They agreed to print 10,000 copies of Lugard's memorandum in Chinese as well as to find a method of recognising donors in such a way as to encourage large donations.³⁷ Within a few days, Ho Kai had written to Wu Ting-fang (Ng Choy), a leading member of the Hong Kong Chinese community in the late nineteenth century who had now become the influential Chinese Minister in Washington, and several other 'high officials' in Peking. It was not long before the Peking officials replied, 'expressing their entire sympathy and promising personal support'.³⁸

At its second meeting on 28 February 1909, the Chinese sub-committee approved 'Regulations for Inviting Subscriptions'. They decided that the best approach would be for a select group of sub-committee members to canvass subscriptions 'from house to house' in Hong Kong, while other members would communicate with well-known philanthropists in China and elsewhere, asking them to nominate 'their own gentry and merchants who are enthusiastic in the scheme to co-operate in raising subscriptions locally'. Lugard would seek a 'substantial grant' from the Chinese government, and write to 'all gentlemen of position and influence' in China's provincial cities and out-ports, including viceroys, governors, consuls and chairmen of municipalities. It was recommended that donors of \$10,000 or more would be entitled to nominate one scholar for every \$10,000 given; donors of \$50,000 or more would each be entitled to have a framed portrait hung in the great hall; and donors of \$100,000 or more would be made honorary life members of the university council.³⁹ Lugard was delighted with 'the practical and businesslike methods' adopted by the sub-committee.⁴⁰

Unfortunately, before fund-raising even began, Chinese officials in Canton objected to the appointment of two suspected revolutionaries to the fund-raising sub-committee, so a thorough investigation had to be initiated by Henry May.⁴¹ Kwan Sum Yin, the senior licentiate of the College of Medicine, had been put on the sub-committee to help raise funds from the medical sector, and was quickly cleared of any revolutionary charges. Chan Siu Pak, another former student of the College of Medicine who was responsible for much of the translation work for the Chinese fund-raising prospectus, was known to have been a reformist since his student days. Moreover, he was closely involved with Sun Yat-sen's revolutionary movement, though he was not thought as dangerous to Chinese political stability as Dr Sun. May made the alarming discovery that one or two other members of the sub-committee were probably more revolutionary in their political beliefs than Chan, but Lugard suppressed this information and assured the Viceroy that no-one on the sub-committee was involved with Sun Yat-sen or any other revolutionary group.⁴²

The Chinese sub-committee appointed three special committees to assist with fund-raising. One would distribute pamphlets and subscription regulations in Hong Kong and elsewhere; another, consisting of the Tung Wah directors, would communicate with trade guilds abroad; and the largest of these special committees would collect subscriptions in Hong Kong by walking from door to door.⁴³ More members were gradually added 'who could either give substantial assistance in money or use their influence in getting big donations'; the Guangdong officials, Admiral Li Chik Shing and Totai Kwok Yan Cheang, were elected as vice-patrons of the appeal.⁴⁴ It was agreed that each sub-committee member would

contribute \$10 to help defray initial expenses, and door-to-door fund-raising would begin on 23 March.

The initial results of the appeal were quite encouraging. In early March, a letter was received from Tseng Shek Chau in Saigon, promising a personal donation of \$10,000 and expressing his hopes that a further \$100,000 might be raised among the Chinese merchants there. At the same time, Ho Kai received confidential assurances that \$200,000 or \$300,000 would be collected in Canton.⁴⁵ At the sub-committee meeting on 14 March, two subscriptions of \$10,000 were promised by Chiu Yu Tin and Au Chak Man, and, at the 21 March meeting, Lai Kwai Pui promised a contribution 'worthy of his position' in the community once collecting began in Canton. By the end of March, donations totalling \$101,300 had been promised but progress slowed after this date, with only \$134,759 raised by the end of April.⁴⁶ While door-to-door collections continued in Hong Kong, Ho Kai was hoping to gain support from Chinese donors in Singapore, even though it was recognised that the protracted period of financial difficulties which Malaya had recently experienced meant that it was hardly the best moment to ask for subscriptions for a Hong Kong educational project.⁴⁷ Ho Kai therefore asked Dr Lim Boon Keng, who had raised \$100,000 in Singapore for his own medical school project in Amoy (Xiamen), to divert this sum to the Hong Kong scheme in return for ten free scholarships at the university. Unfortunately, their meeting on 29 March did not go at all well. After 'a very long argument between the two doctors', Lim promised only to consult with his friends in Amoy and assist in raising further subscriptions in Singapore.⁴⁸ Henry May became more and more pessimistic about the chances of reaching the desired target of \$500,000 from the Chinese community without some support from Singapore, and was even less optimistic that any of Hong Kong's British merchants would subscribe to the endowment appeal.⁴⁹

While the Chinese sub-committee prepared to raise funds in Hong Kong, Lugard was hard at work trying to secure larger donations from elsewhere. Information from Sir Cecil Clementi Smith that wealthy Chinese in the Straits Settlements (Singapore, Malacca and Penang) would be 'glad to avail themselves' of a university in Hong Kong spurred him to write to Sir Arthur Young in Singapore, asking for contributions from the governments of the Straits Settlements and the Federated Malay States.⁵⁰ This was a bad time to come begging, however, for the colonial governments of Malaya were already contributing to the growing costs of the new medical school in Singapore and were generally more concerned with supplying the secondary education needs of their own territories than with contributing to higher education in Hong Kong. The Governor of the Straits Settlements therefore replied that he was not able to make any contribution to Lugard's scheme.⁵¹ A similar response was received from the government of India.⁵² The Shanghai Municipal Council likewise gave no guarantee of financial support, even though it noted that the British residents of Shanghai were unanimous in feeling that Lugard's scheme was 'entitled to the cordial support of all who have the maintenance of British prestige at heart'.⁵³ Even the British government, which Lugard had taken such pains to convince of the 'imperial' importance of his scheme, gave a lukewarm reply to his request for support. While a grant of land was readily approved in April 1909, Lord Crewe regretted that, 'in view of the heavy calls upon the Imperial Exchequer I fear that I could not with any prospect of success invite the Lords Commissioners of the

Treasury to ask Parliament for a contribution'.⁵⁴ These were disheartening but perhaps not totally unexpected rejections; they no doubt convinced Lugard that the Hong Kong fund-raising campaign was more important than ever.

Lugard's approaches to Chinese officials in Canton and Peking produced more positive results. Working through Harry Fox, the acting British consul-general in Canton, Lugard eventually received an optimistic message from Viceroy Chang Jen-chun (Zhang Renjun), stating that he had 'great respect and admiration' for Lugard's scheme and it was his 'earnest desire to assist in the accomplishment of this project'. Chang agreed to consider the question of contributions from the Canton provincial government and made a great show of wholehearted support.⁵⁵ Once the Viceroy was reassured that no revolutionaries were involved with the project and that the degrees offered would be of a similar standard to those obtained at British universities, he made good his promise: on 9 June 1909, he wrote to Lugard informing him that \$200,000 would be contributed from the Canton provincial government, although for diplomatic reasons this sum was later referred to as a personal contribution from the Viceroy.⁵⁶

Lugard had also contacted Sir John Jordan in Peking, informing him of the Hong Kong project and asking him to lay it before the Chinese imperial government, 'with a view to enlisting their co-operation and financial support' to the same extent that they had supported the establishment of the German college at Tsingtao (Qingdao).⁵⁷ In his enthusiasm to promote the scheme, Lugard inadvertently breached the normal rules of diplomatic procedure. In order to head off further diplomatic problems, he had to remind the Chinese sub-committee that his letter to Sir John Jordan had been written in a private capacity and not as Governor.⁵⁸ The Colonial Office was aghast at Lugard's disregard for the normal rules of diplomatic communication, and referred the matter to the Foreign Office. Lugard was consequently rapped over the knuckles for communicating directly with the British Ministers in Peking and Tokyo, and told plainly that his actions risked inviting foreign powers to interfere in the internal affairs of a British crown colony.⁵⁹ Lugard's petition to the Chinese imperial government nevertheless succeeded in eliciting a token donation. Once an offer of support had been made to Hong Kong by the Chinese foreign office (the Waiwupu), it was realised that rejecting the money would cause a far greater scandal than accepting it. The donation was therefore accepted on the condition that the Chinese authorities received no concessions from the colonial government in return



FIGURE 4.4

Fund-raising activities in 1909 for the endowment fund took many forms. While the main thrust of the campaign sought subscriptions from local residents and businesses, the fund-raising sub-committee also resorted to more novel methods, including Chinese theatrical performances. [HKUA]

for the grant.⁶⁰ So while Lugard received a very handsome donation from the Canton provincial government, his attempts to interest the Peking imperial government in his scheme were fraught with diplomatic difficulties and ultimately yielded only \$13,608 (10,000 taels), half of which was provided by the Board of Education and the other half by the Waiwupu. Likewise, attempts to raise awareness of the scheme and secure donations from wealthy Chinese in the Portuguese enclave of Macau had only limited success (\$8,422).⁶¹

While fund-raising efforts among the Chinese residents of Hong Kong got off to an encouraging start in March–April 1909, the response from British firms and individuals was initially rather disappointing. Lugard had already sent home copies of his memorandum and the London fund-raising committee of the Hong Kong College of Medicine agreed in November 1908 to collect subscriptions on behalf of the university project, but very little appears to have happened until the middle of 1909. Lugard also worried about competition from Lord William Cecil's United Universities scheme for Hankow (Hankou). Cecil was hoping to raise £100,000 in Britain, and had managed to secure the Lord Mayor's patronage for a fund-raising event at the Mansion House in London on 16 March, but despite having many influential backers this scheme also had difficulties raising funds. Lugard was assiduous in his attempts to point out the benefits of combining the Hong Kong and Hankow schemes for the sake of British prestige in China, relying on other supporters in London to do some of this work for him. Lady Lugard's old *Times* colleague, R. S. Gundry of the China Association, was particularly helpful in recommending Lugard's scheme to the British public in preference to Cecil's Hankow project. Lugard had earlier written to seek support from the China Association, and he spoke about the university project at their annual dinner in Hong Kong on 17 March 1909 after meeting privately with their President, James Scott (at that time senior partner of Swires in London), and Sir Paul Chater. Lugard urged the wealthy members of the Association to support the scheme as a means of promoting the colony as 'a great industrial centre' which could provide expertise for the development of China's railways, mineral resources and agricultural products.⁶² The China Association was also approached by the College of Medicine's London fund-raising committee, but Scott wisely advised Lugard to wait until he returned to London to make personal advances to the capital's wealthy merchants who had made their money in the Far East.⁶³ This waiting game was not to Lugard's liking, however, and with Mody's deadline fast approaching, he became a little desperate for more and larger donations.

Even in Hong Kong, there was a reluctance among the British community to contribute to the Governor's 'imperial' scheme. There appear to have been three main reasons for the poor response from British firms. While some expatriates in Hong Kong doubted that a university in the colony would produce any better results than those in India, there were others who feared that higher education would create a class of Chinese who would challenge the superior position occupied by British residents in Hong Kong.⁶⁴ Moreover, there can be little doubt that many of the British firms in the colony worried that the university's programme of higher and technical education for the Chinese would 'raise up keen competition and rivalry to Europeans' seeking work in Hong Kong. The Chinese graduates would certainly be hired more cheaply, undercutting the market for professional services. Such fears were later denied by Mr E. A. Hewett in the Legislative Council when the university had become

a certainty, but his declaration that 'Competition is the life of business, and no business would succeed were it not for competition' had a hollow ring.⁶⁵ Although they were the most important traders in China at the time, British firms would go to great lengths to protect their interests. Their silent criticisms of the project were recognised by Lugard as a 'solid opposition in certain quarters, not the least troublesome because voiceless'. He was deeply hurt by the failure of his compatriots to support his imperial scheme: 'Never I think in my life have I received such consistently hostile and sneering criticism without even the credit for good intentions'.⁶⁶ Many of the British traders even boycotted the ceremonial laying of the foundation stone in March 1910, as a last act of defiance to the Governor and his dangerously liberal ideas.

The University's Endowment Fund Established

The turning point in the British fund-raising campaign came at the end of May 1909, when Lugard received news that three of the firms controlled by John Swire and Sons had together promised to donate securities valued at £40,000. These donations, which had been arranged by James Scott, would be delivered once the university buildings were completed. While the Swire contribution was made partly because Scott approved of Lugard's policies in Hong Kong and could see future benefits for the three Swire firms, the handsome size of the donation was undoubtedly due to the *Fatshan* Incident of November 1908, in which a Swire employee allegedly kicked to death an elderly Chinese passenger on board the *Fatshan*, a coastal ferry owned by Swire. As a consequence of this incident, the Butterfield and Swire shipping firm had been boycotted when the Self-Government Society of Canton fanned anti-British feelings; the Swire shipping business ground to a halt for nearly six months.⁶⁷ The donation arranged by Scott was an effort to end the Chinese boycott and return the firm to profitability. Lugard was delighted. He wrote to Scott on 25 May, saying that he was 'immensely elated' with such a 'princely donation' which was likely to 'set the standard for other Firms who have made money in the Far East'.⁶⁸

Indeed, Lugard felt certain that this one donation, valued at more than \$457,000 in Hong Kong dollars, would more or less assure the success of the whole fund-raising campaign. He hoped that further donations would swell the endowment to such an extent that further chairs and faculties could be established, 'so that the Chinese can recognize that this is a University in the full sense of the term at which every branch of education will receive attention'. These were vain hopes. Lugard would later express himself as being 'greatly disappointed' that the Swire donation did not produce 'a more generous response from among those in England who owe a good deal of their fortunes to commerce in the Far East'.⁶⁹ Mody also wrote to Scott, acknowledging that the Swire donation virtually assured the colony of its university. More importantly, Mody informed the University Committee that he would extend his offer for a further six months in order to give them the additional time needed to raise the remaining funds and finalise plans for the university.⁷⁰

Lugard continued to rely on Scott and the China Association to spearhead the fund-raising campaign in London. Their efforts soon bore substantial fruit, although not as substantial as Lugard had initially hoped: donations of \$50,000 from the Hongkong and Shanghai

Banking Corporation; \$25,000 from Jardine Matheson; \$10,000 each from David Sassoon & Co, E. D. Sassoon & Co, the Chartered Bank and Chater & Mody; and \$7,174 from individual members of the China Association. Donations from British firms and individuals eventually totalled \$584,255. Although it ultimately proved impossible to collect all the subscriptions promised locally, donations from the Hong Kong Chinese community amounted to more than \$253,880, while Chinese donations from the Canton and Peking governments (\$213,608) and the residents of Waichow (\$92,764), Canton (\$16,971), Saigon (\$10,000), Macau (\$8,422) and Australia (\$1,259) brought the total Chinese contribution to well over \$600,000. Further donations of approximately \$15,750 were received from Parsees and other donors in Hong Kong.⁷¹ Slightly more than \$1 million had been subscribed by the beginning of July 1909; by the end of the year, this sum had grown to \$1,183,640 (including subscriptions promised but not paid). This was more than enough to assure the success of the endowment appeal. On 2 December 1909, Hormusjee Mody agreed to start construction work on the university buildings as soon as the site could be prepared.⁷²

Fund-raising efforts continued throughout 1910 and 1911 while the university buildings were being erected, but these were less successful than the main campaign in 1909. Lugard's appeal for funds in the United Kingdom, through seventy-three leading London and provincial newspapers, seems to have fallen on deaf ears, while attempts to raise funds in America from the Rockefeller Foundation and the Standard Oil Company through Wu Tingfang were unsuccessful, no doubt because the Americans were at this time investing heavily in their own educational projects in China. A fund-raising mission to Shanghai, headed by Ho Kai in 1910, likewise proved unsuccessful, although the Committee continued to hope that large donations might eventually come from Shanghai and Nanking (Nanjing) once the financial crisis had abated.⁷³ Even in Hong Kong subscriptions dried up in the course of 1910–11. A more serious setback was the anti-Manchu Revolution in China from October 1911, which diverted funds away from local projects in the colony and re-directed them to the establishment of a new republican government in China. From this time and for several years to come, it would prove extremely difficult to raise further funds from the Chinese community in the colony and elsewhere.

Despite the fund-raising difficulties from the end of 1911, when the University opened in March 1912 the subscriptions had grown to approximately \$1,300,000, with a further \$74,460 promised but not yet paid.⁷⁴ Individual Chinese donors contributed \$473,789 (36%), the Canton and imperial Chinese governments a further \$213,608 (16%) and British firms and individuals \$595,465 (46%). Further funds were raised during the week-long opening bazaar in March 1912 to help pay for the furnishings and fittings of the Main Building. Conspicuous by their absence from this list were the Hong Kong and the imperial British governments, although it ought to be noted that the value of the two original plots of land on which HKU was constructed was estimated at \$159,609.⁷⁵ This represented a not inconsiderable loss of revenue for the colonial government, and was considered by the mandarins of the Colonial Office to be an overly generous contribution to the university scheme.

Lugard had made it very clear from the beginning of the fund-raising campaign that the government could not be expected to subsidise the university scheme; he nevertheless continued to hope that either the Legislative Council or the imperial authorities in London would

make a monetary contribution to a project which promised so much for British prestige. Unfortunately, the Colonial Office resisted Lugard's repeated requests. The argument that the British Treasury should follow the example of the German imperial government, which had generously supported the Tsingtao college, failed to convince the Colonial Office: 'This example of German enterprise would not move the Treasury; in any case the scheme has been started and should, I think, be carried through by private enterprise without help from Government funds, if that can in any way be managed'.⁷⁶ Lugard refused to be shrugged off so easily. In early June 1909, he asked Lady Lugard, who had been forced to return to England through illness, to intervene with Lord Crewe, the Secretary of State for the Colonies.⁷⁷ Crewe seems to have had a genuine desire to help advance a project which might produce 'valuable results in the future' and 'greatly increase British prestige and advance British interests, both commercial and political, in the Empire of China'. After much behind-the-scenes lobbying, Crewe wrote to the Treasury suggesting that 'a grant should be made to the university from Imperial funds', if only to give a clear indication to the Chinese that the British government was 'anxious for the success of the undertaking'. Crewe agreed that without such imperial support the university project might 'suffer in the popular estimation'. He suggested that Britain could ensure the success of the scheme either by granting 'a gift to the University fund, or the endowment of a professorship in one or more faculties, or even the creation of a scholarship to be held by Chinese British subjects'.⁷⁸ The Treasury was concerned that no precedent existed within the Empire for 'a grant of this kind', but ultimately agreed to provide £300 per annum to support scholarships for 'British subjects of Chinese extraction, born either in Hong Kong or the Straits Settlements'. These scholarships received royal patronage as a special mark of prestige and were known as the King Edward VII Scholarships.⁷⁹ They were awarded as entrance scholarships annually to the most academically distinguished first-year students and continued to be the most prestigious of all the University's scholarships until the Hong Kong office of the British Council discontinued the funding for them in 1997.

Although the King Edward VII Scholarships were applauded in the local press, everyone in Hong Kong recognised that the small sum of £300 per annum was something of a snub to Lugard and his committee. Thwarted by Colonial Office mandarins who had little time for his university project, the Governor now turned to the Legislative Council for a contribution which would crown the fund-raising campaign. In December 1909, he convinced the unofficial members of the Council to make a grant of \$50,000, but this was once again disallowed by the Colonial Office, which argued that Hong Kong could not afford such a large contribution at a time when the colony's opium revenue had collapsed.⁸⁰ Lord Crewe's suggestion that a grant might be made when the colony's financial situation improved perhaps spurred Lugard's attempt to secure a more modest contribution from the Legislative Council in October 1911. The unofficial members readily agreed to allocate \$9,000 per annum to establish a 'Regius' chair, but this proposal was criticised by the Colonial Office, on the grounds that the 'present generation' should be made to pay for its own luxuries rather than burdening its successors in perpetuity. The grant was considered neither necessary nor desirable, and the proposed salary was thought to be far too high for a professor in 'a new and small university', but the Colonial Office ultimately gave way and allowed the subvention.⁸¹

A later proposal by Lugard to increase the government contribution to \$14,000 per annum was greeted in Whitehall by howls of dismay, with officials complaining that ‘This University is being started on the most extravagant lines’. The maximum grant allowed by the Colonial Office for the new university was \$10,000, and permission was refused for establishing a ‘Regius’ chair.⁸² At the end of more than three years of fund-raising, Lugard’s strenuous efforts resulted in only a small annual contribution from the imperial government, a slightly larger annual subvention from the Hong Kong government and a substantial endowment fund contributed by the various stakeholder groups in Hong Kong and abroad.

The endowment fund would prove to be both the bedrock of university finances during the first thirty years of HKU’s existence and a regular source of worry for the University Council. Its management was put in the hands of Sir Paul Chater, who acted as Treasurer from the beginning of the fund-raising campaign in 1909 until the University formally came into existence in March 1911. From that time, Chater continued to supervise the University’s investments as a member of the Council and later as Chairman of the Finance Committee until 1926. He proved to be a very canny investor. The Swire securities were held in London and generated about £2,000 per annum (5% return), but the rest of the capital funds were initially invested in Hong Kong as local mortgages at a rate of not less than six per cent per annum.⁸³ By the end of 1911, a sum of \$792,500 (94% of the endowment funds received at that time) was invested in local mortgages, generating \$50,950 income per annum (6.4% return). These and other investments were expected to generate an income of \$82,437 in 1912–13. Together with a government grant of \$10,000 per annum and student fees of \$10,500, it was hoped that the University’s limited income would cover the expected expenses of \$107,000 for the first full year of operation.⁸⁴ With the endowment fund secured and safely invested, the University Committee was now able to move forward with the building project.

Choosing a Site for the University

One of the very first questions which had arisen with regard to the university project in early 1908 was the provision of a suitable site for the new institution. As soon as they heard about Mody’s offer, the Court of the College of Medicine immediately suggested that the university building be erected adjacent to its own buildings, which were about to be constructed in Tai Ping Shan, just below the newly completed Bacteriological Institute.⁸⁵ The two areas of land suggested by the College were unassigned plots of crown land in a steeply sloping corner to the east of Blake Garden bounded by Ladder Street, Bridges Street, Tank Street and Po Hing Fong, and intersected by Rozario Street.⁸⁶ These were plots which had proven unattractive to other buyers when the area was resumed by the government after the 1894 plague, and while perhaps suitable from the College’s point of view, the sites proposed would have resulted in a hopelessly cramped set of buildings wedged between the YMCA and American Board of Missions, with no space for extension in the future. Moreover, the place was considered to be ‘a hot-bed of plague and shunned by the Chinese who would not send their sons there’.⁸⁷ Mody was not impressed, asking his agent Rennie to tell Lugard, ‘I do not approve of the site’.⁸⁸ Mody was perhaps aware that new universities were being established throughout

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