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FROM THE LIBRARY OF
THE REVEREND WILLIAM

JELLIE
1865 to 1963
WHICH HE A SCHOLAR
AND EARLY TUTOR
IN ADULT EDUCATION
BEQUEATHED TO
THE UNIVERSITY
Abstract

This thesis considers the life of William Jellie (1865-1963) and in so doing uses it as a prism with which to gain a view of history. It covers a period of ninety-eight years divided between the United Kingdom and New Zealand. His studies for the Unitarian ministry at Manchester College, removed from London to Oxford in his final year, gave him a unique education in late Victorian Britain. A course in sociology, economics and social problems which helped shape his world view. Taught by Philip Wicksteed, a Unitarian minister, economist and Dante scholar, Wicksteed would pass his passion for Dante on to William Jellie and become his friend and mentor for life.

Wicksteed’s course dealt with inequality and human suffering and in doing so made it plain that a Unitarian minister was expected to address these issues and not ignore them. Consistent with his views as an ethical socialist, Philip Wicksteed supported a former class mate of William Jellie’s, John Trevor, to found the Labour Church movement in Britain in response to the prevailing conditions. William Jellie worked in his first parish for six years in one of the poorest parts of London, experiencing firsthand the suffering and depredation of an unreformed capitalism. The relationship between a theology on the left of the spectrum and the accommodation of the political left becomes an important consideration in this thesis.

Arriving in New Zealand in 1900 to organise the Unitarian cause, William Jellie enjoyed friendships with Sir Robert Stout and Sir George Fowlds. He brought a cultured and intellectual view of liberal religion to colonial life. He founded a church in Auckland and was instrumental in expanding the cause to other centres. Having married in New Zealand, he returned to England just before the outbreak of war in 1914, remaining for the next seven years. There his feelings for his country of birth, Ireland, led him to publicly support the call for independence, a call not accepted by many of his congregants.

The return of peace saw the return of the Jellie family to New Zealand. Now his ministerial work was much more subscribed and William Jellie turned to a new occupation, tutor for the Worker’s
Educational Association in Auckland. This in many ways proved to be his forte, he was extremely popular as a teacher and while he concentrated on English literature and Dante courses, he also included political theory. Throughout his life in New Zealand William Jellie undertook a strong defence of secular education and in so doing was aligned with the rationalist movement on this issue.
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I have two acknowledgements to make to the University of Auckland: the donation plate in the front of this thesis has been reproduced with permission of Special Collections, University of Auckland Library. Permission was also granted to reproduce the following images:

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White, T.H., Proposed Unitarian Church, Auckland, N.Z. Thomas H. White Collection, WH2, Architecture Archive, University of Auckland Library.

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It is a pleasure to acknowledge the many debts I have incurred in writing this thesis, and only remains to say that any errors it contains are entirely mine.
## Abbreviations

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<td>Dunedin Public Library</td>
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<td>Harris Manchester College</td>
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<td>Member of the House of Representatives</td>
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