

Fritz Joseph Ernst (note only)

Fritz Joseph ERNST

Graduate of University of Tasmania: BSc 1904 (admitted 22 Dec. 1904) in geology and chemistry, MSc 5 Sept 1907 (in absentia)
Admitted to matriculation February 1902 by virtue of examinations passed in Germany by a special resolution of the University Council of 4 Feb. 1902.

Honorary Assistant Lecturer in Geology 1905 - 1906.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Fritz Joseph Ernst was German. He had a certificate from a German Realschule I (? Worms) and also attended the Military School at Hanover, passing the exams for a commission in the German Field Artillery, and was appointed a Lieutenant in the Artillery (probably about 1884 as he said in 1901 it was some seventeen years ago). In 1901 he had been "for some years connected with the Tasmanian and Australian press", and his English was fluent. In 1901 he was living in Zeehan. He wrote to the Registrar of the University of Tasmania in June 1901 to inquire about his qualifications for matriculation to study for a science degree and the University Council on 4 February 1902 accepted his German qualifications subject to production of documents and proof of identity. The documents referred to were his Realschule certificate, a letter from the Registrar of Sydney University, a letter from the Proprietor of the Zeehan and Dundas Herald (returned by Registrar 11 Mar. 1902) and proof of identity from the Chief Secretary's Office [Govt.] (Council 18 Feb. 02).

From third term 1904 he was gratuitously acting as demonstrator to first year geology students (approved by Council 22 Sept 1904) and continued this in 1905 while attending postgraduate lectures (approved Council Feb. 1905) and in 1905 he also assisted with lectures (approved by Council 23 March 1905) and was listed in the *University Calendar* as Honorary Assistant Lecturer in Geology. He was also an examiner for which he was entitled to fees but donated them towards the cost of a field trip for students. He donated a petrological microscope in 1905 and in 1906 a collection of geological specimens (Council July 1905, Feb. 1906). On 21 February 1906 he notified the Vice Chancellor that he would be leaving for Europe at the end of the month owing to the health of some members of his family and so would not be able to offer his services for the year as expected. Council recorded its thanks for his "whole hearted and valuable assistance in the University especially in the Geological School. It also granted him leave of absence for a year while retaining his name in the *Calendar* for 1906 as Assistant Lecturer in Geology (absent on leave). In his letter of thanks to the Council written from Lucerne in May he assured the University he would always be willing to give the University any information or assistance that he could. Later in 1906, writing from Basel he proposed to donate to his "Alma Mater" a model of the Jura Mountains made by Professor Dr. A. Heim, Professor of Geology at Zurich University, which arrived in 1907 (Registrar's correspondence Oct. 1906, 1907, Council minutes Oct. 1906, May 1907, Sept. 1907). F.J. Ernst was admitted to the degree of MSc by Council in Sept. 1907 as he was eligible two years after his first degree. The fee of £5 was waived in view of the freight he had paid on the geological model. However the Council had received a letter from Mrs E. E. Ernst enclosing £5. 2. for freight on model presented by her husband (Council minutes Sept 1907, original letter not found).

As an honorary member of staff Fritz Ernst took part in meetings of the Faculty of Science (Faculty minutes) and he appears to have been respected. Even as an undergraduate (but of mature age) he wrote letters commenting on or criticising the amount of teaching and laboratory facilities available (it was of course a very new and underfunded university at the time) and making suggestions for improvements, including some comments on West Coast students in

February 1904, and information on German university regulations for matriculation of foreign students (Registrar's corresp). The University Council always returned courteous thanks for the information or suggestions made. Fritz Ernst also continued his journalist activities and apparently some unsigned reports of University Annual Commemoration Days and articles on geology etc in various Tasmanian newspapers were by F.J. Ernst, samples being enclosed with his initial letter of inquiry and his letter of resignation.

In all records, including the matriculation roll and the graduation roll which had to be signed with the full name, the name is written as Fritz Joseph Ernst. This is also the name in the list of graduates in the *Calendars* until 1933 (after which it is omitted, presumably known to be deceased). There is nothing to indicate that Fritz Joseph Ernst was the same person as Frederick Joseph Ernst-Carroll except a pencil note in the margin of the students qualification register (which unfortunately contains no personal details): "Ernst-Carroll, Frederick Joseph". There is no record of date or place of birth, parents or other personal details. Nor is it known when he came to Australia. It is possible there might be some record in the State Archives As the Chief Secretary's Office provided proof of identity (Archives Office of Tasmania, 91 Murray Street, Hobart, Tas. 7000). Perhaps Sydney University Archives might have a copy of the letter from the Registrar referred to as one of his documentary proofs. It is also possible that the German Archives might have army records (if they survived the wars).

A Frederick Joseph Ernst-Carroll, of Neuchatel, Switzerland, was elected a fellow of the Royal Society of Tasmania on 6 March 1908 (See *Papers & Proceedings* of Roy. Soc. Tas) but there is no correspondence in the society's archives nor did F.J. Ernst-Carroll contribute any articles to *Papers & Proceedings*.

Photocopies of some letters of F.J. Ernst found in the bundles of Registrar's letters received are attached: letter to Registrar 16 June 1901, with presscutting of article on geological survey, Registrar's letter returning documents 11 Mar. 1902 (pressed copy), letters to Council 7 Apr. 1903, 24 May 1903, German Consul 25 May 1903, 2 Feb. 1904 with Zeehan presscutting, letter to Registrar 3 Oct. 1905 (examiners fees), letter of resignation to Vice Chancellor 21 Feb. 1906 with cutting "University Federation", letter to Council 23 May 1906 (from Switzerland (from Registrar's files of correspondence received and pressed copy books of letters sent UT87/1, UT87/3).

Information gather from minutes of University Council, Board of Studies, Faculty of Science, from Registrar's correspondence, student records and *University Calendar* s