

THE HONOURABLE JOHN FLOOD NAGLE, QC

Citation for the conferral of a Doctor of Letters (*honoris causa*)

Chancellor, I present the Hon John Flood Nagle, Officer of the Order of Australia and a Queen's Counsel for the award of the degree Doctor of Letters (*honoris causa*). John Flood Nagle has distinguished himself within his profession. He has made a distinguished contribution to the life of the local and the wider state and national communities. He is an eminent scholar.

John Flood Nagle belongs to a family which has had a long connection with the district. His great grandfather had practised law in Dublin and both his grandfather and his father before him have practised law in Albury. He was educated at St Patrick's and the Christian Brothers' school in Albury before going to the University of Sydney at the early age of 15 years. From there he graduated in Arts in 1932 and Law in 1936.

His service to the broader national and state communities began with his taking up the practice of law, and his interruption of that practice to engage in war service. He joined the defence forces as a Gunner in 1939 and served throughout the Second World War in the Middle East and New Guinea, rising to the rank of Major in the First Parachute Battalion.

After the war he resumed his legal career. He had gone to the Bar in 1939. In 1959 he took silk: he became a Queen's Counsel. In 1960 he was appointed to the Bench of the Supreme Court and in 1979 he was appointed Chief Judge at Common Law.

Two special commissions brought his work under wide notice. He conducted a searching Royal Commission Inquiry into the NSW Prison System (28 June 1976 - 30 March 1978), which resulted in radical and enlightened changes to that system. Professor Tony Vinson of UNSW observes that wherever he has travelled throughout the world he has found leading prison administrators invariably know of and allude to the Nagle Report as an important benchmark in the last several decades. The Nagle Report had impact within and beyond New South Wales - and even beyond Australia.

In 1986 he conducted a Special Commission of Inquiry into the disappearance of Donald Bruce Mackay. That inquiry had a particular interest to the people of the Riverina and Border districts.

His career on the bench brought him renown for his insightful and careful judgements. Principally for his work on the bench and for his work in education he was in 1981 inducted into the Office of the Order of Australia.

Judge Nagle has been a long term patron and benefactor of the Arts, and has been an active promoter and supporter of higher education. He has retained connection with his college, St Johns, at the University of Sydney and has been a college benefactor. In 1960 he was appointed a Member of the Art Gallery of NSW and from 1979 to 1983 served as Chairman. He played a major role in promoting its public education programs. He was a member of the Riverina College of Advanced Education, giving particular service in assisting with the establishment of the By-laws.

In 1987 he was appointed by the Ministers for Education in New South Wales and Victoria to head a Board planning for the provision of higher education in Albury - Wodonga.

In retirement, since 1983, he has lived in the Albury district, working at his cattle property at Brae Springs, near Walla Walla. In very recent times he has completed a book on David Collins, who as judge advocate at the founding of the British settlement of New South Wales, shaped the initial legal processes of the new colony. Nagles scholarly work throws fresh light on the beginnings of the legal system of New South Wales.

In his career, in his public life and in his retirement, John Flood Nagle has demonstrated the attributes of mind and of spirit of a scholar who seeks to contribute for the public good.

Acceptio eius huius gradus honoris causa tam honorem universitati quam addictio honorem viro ipsi, iudici bono ac iusto, reddit. His acceptance of his degree honoris causa (that is for the sake of honour) brings as much honour to the University as it does to the man himself a good and just judge.

Chancellor, I present the Hon Justice John Flood Nagle QC for the award of the degree Doctor of Letters *honoris causa*.

Dated this Twenty Eighth Day of April One Thousand Nine Hundred and Ninety Five