

PROFESSOR JOHN NUNN - OUR OWN "J R" - MAY NOT BE ABLE TO TELL US WHO SHOT HIS NAME-SAKE, BUT HE CAN TELL US WHAT IT LOOKED LIKE AT RHODES 39 YEARS AGO. IT WAS IN JANUARY, 1942, THAT HE TOOK UP HIS FIRST APPOINTMENT HERE AS RESEARCH CHEMIST IN LEATHER RESEARCH, BUT IT WAS NOT A LONG STAY BEFORE HE ENLISTED FOR WAR SERVICE THAT SAW HIM IN NORTH AFRICA AND ITALY WITH THE ARTILLERY. BEFORE COMING TO RHODES, HE HAD COMPLETED THE B.Sc. AND M.Sc. DEGREES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN, AND AFTER THE WAR HE RETURNED TO UCT TO LECTURE IN CHEMISTRY. IN 1948, WHEN HE ALSO GAINED THE PH.D, HE JOINED THE STAFF OF THE NATIONAL CHEMICAL^{Research} LABORATORIES, IN PRETORIA. THE YEARS 1951-52 HE ENGAGED IN RESEARCH AT BRISTOL UNIVERSITY, IN ENGLAND BEFORE RETURNING ONCE MORE TO UCT TO TAKE CHARGE OF THE SEAWEED UNIT OF THE N C R L. FROM 1956 TO 1961 HE WAS HEAD OF THE ORGANIC CHEMISTRY DIVISION OF N C R L, IN PRETORIA, AND HE CAME TO RHODES, AS PROFESSOR OF ORGANIC CHEMISTRY, IN 1962. HE HAD THE RARE EXPERIENCE OF BEING OFFERED THE APPOINTMENT, AND ACCEPTING IT, BEFORE BEING ASKED BY RHODES TO PROVIDE A CURRICULUM VITAE. HIS RETIREMENT BRINGS TO AN END A CURIOUS PARADOX THAT HAS EXISTED FOR 19 YEARS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY, NAMELY THAT HIS SECOND-IN-COMMAND WAS DEFINITELY SECOND TO HIM, BUT COULD YET CLAIM TO BE "SECOND TO NUNN". BUT HIS RETIREMENT ALSO, UNFORTUNATELY, BRINGS TO AN END A LONG PERIOD OF SERVICE THAT REFLECTED GREAT CREDIT ON THE UNIVERSITY AS HIS EXPERTISE TOOK HIM TO MANY PARTS OF THE GLOBE AS A WORTHY AMBASSADOR. OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO THE WORLD WAS HIS RESEARCH INTO THE CARCINOGENIC PROPERTIES OF NITROSAMINES - A TASK THAT COULD ONE DAY INSCRIBE IN MEDICAL HISTORY THE NAMES OF JOHN NUNN AND RHODES UNIVERSITY. FOR THIS, WE EXPRESS OUR THANKS, AND WE OFFER OUR BEST WISHES, ALSO TO AVRIL, FOR MANY YEARS OF SUNSHINE AT BETTY'S BAY.