



## Obituary: Robert Gordon Menzies

Robert Gordon Menzies, Chancellor of the University of Melbourne from 1967 to 1972, died at his Malvern home on Monday 15 May 1978.

Prime Minister of Australia from 1939-41 and 1949-66, Sir Robert was appointed Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports in 1965 in succession to Sir Winston Churchill. He was created a Knight of the Thistle in 1963.

Sir Robert received his early education at Jeparit and Ballarat before attending Wesley College, Melbourne. He graduated from the University of Melbourne with First Class Honours in Law and was awarded the Dwight Prize in Constitutional History, the Sir John Madden Exhibition, the Jessie Leggatt Scholarship, the Bowen Essay Prize and the Supreme Court Prize.

In 1918, Sir Robert was admitted to the Victorian Bar and the High Court of Australia, and in 1929, was appointed a King's Counsel. He was appointed a member of the Privy Council in 1937, and a Companion of Honour in 1951.

Sir Robert was Deputy Premier of Victoria from 1932-34, and was elected to the House of Representatives as the Member for Kooyong in 1934.

After his retirement in 1966, Sir Robert accepted an appointment as Scholar-in-

Residence at the University of Virginia in the academic year 1966-67.

His publications were numerous. Among other subjects, he wrote on the Australian Constitution, the Commonwealth and autobiographically.

Sir Robert received the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws in the University of Melbourne in 1942, and many honorary degrees and awards.

In 1967 and 1968, Sir Robert gave approximately \$3,000 to the Baillieu Library from the royalties for his book *Afternoon Light*, and from funds remaining from a Citizen's Dinner given in his honour. In 1976, he arranged for his collection of books, some 4,500 volumes, to be given to the Baillieu Library.

Throughout his long and very distinguished life, Sir Robert was concerned for the welfare of the University of Melbourne and he served the University in many capacities from his years as an undergraduate until he retired as Chancellor in 1972.

This University will always be grateful to him, as will the other universities of Australia. The present standing of Australian universities is very largely due to Sir Robert's vision and his statesmanship while he was Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia.