

Following the appearance of the fourth issue the Students' Association Executive wrote to the Literary Club querying Mason's appropriateness as editor, on the grounds that he was not an enrolled student and therefore ineligible to hold office on a student committee.²⁸ In response, a meeting of the *Phoenix* committee on 3 July resolved to 'pay the Students' Association fee on behalf of the Editor'. At the same meeting several key members of the committee resigned, including G.B. Bertram as Business Manager, Evan Harrowell as Treasurer, and Jean Allison as Secretary.²⁹ The following day the Literary Club committee failed to ratify the payment of Mason's fees, further indication of the deep division in the club over his editorship.

Martin Sullivan, lobbying in Mason's defence, moved that responsibility for the publication of the magazine be transferred to 'an affiliated society', a change which would presumably place it beyond the control of the Students' Association Executive. This motion was defeated and in its place John Mulgan and Robert Lowry successfully moved that 'no editorial be published, that all articles be signed, that the literary matter be not less than half of the contents, and that political articles be written to show differing points of view'.³⁰ Mason's response to this attempt to rein in his editorial policy is not recorded. It is known that, in the face of the Students' Executive insistence that the bona fide rule be enforced, Mason considered moving *Phoenix* off campus.³¹

This did not, however, eventuate and, while the periodical was not in fact suppressed, mounting financial and student political problems ensured its demise. The final blow was the sudden departure of Lowry from Auckland, in debt to the Students' Association and soon to be effectively declared *persona non grata* on all campuses of the University of New Zealand. Fellow students Blackwood Paul, Sam Leatham and Evan Harrowell rallied in Lowry's defence, soliciting donations and loans from a variety of supporters and successfully negotiating with creditors to reduce the debt against both Lowry as an individual and *Phoenix* itself. Lowry's personal debt of more than £85 was largely offset by a loan of £50 from Blackwood Paul. The balance and the debt against *Phoenix* were both successfully defrayed by discounts obtained from creditors, the sale of type, and smaller donations from supporters including Allen Curnow, G.B. Bertram, Evan Harrowell, R.P. Anschutz, Sam Leatham, and Rona Munro, plus £10 from Lowry's parents.³² Mason recalled the end of *Phoenix* in the following terms.

Ultimately, partly as a result of an abortive affair with one of the girls connected with *Phoenix*, partly owing to his [Lowry's] general capacity for getting his business to an unsupportable state, he departed suddenly.

He came to me and said, rather shamefacedly, that he was leaving. I pointed out that the fifth issue was already in galley form, that, if we could get that out, we might have a chance, the way public