



THE LEGEND OF THE MOUNT GRAVATT DRAGON

One hundred and thirty million years ago, during what geologists call the Jurassic Period, two monstrous creatures struggled together, locked in mortal combat. Leviathans of their species, huge tails thrashing, green sides heaving, horns black with blood, they filled the earth with their raging.

Day and night they continued thus, for many weeks, until the mightier of the two tore at the throat of his adversary, ripping away the valves of life until the tail crashed to the dust, the sides heaved no longer and the head dropped forward as a final pronouncement of death.

A vain victory, for the victor himself, last of his race, now lay dying. The foreboding silence which had fallen upon the land was broken only by the creature's gasps, his shudders sent tremors to the very bowels of the earth. But then the ground was shaken by something greater. Night became day. Through dying eyes the beast beheld the disgorgement of a mountain. The summit was rent as fire and ash belched forth. Then the form of a man emerged from the depths, his long white hair, outstanding against the orange glow, bore witness to his extreme age. A flowing robe, which might have been an extension of his hair, hung loosely upon his withered body.

For some time he spoke not, but fixed his shining eyes on the inert form below. Then with arm extended he cried, "Hark well mighty beast, I am Gravattus, god of volcanoes. For countless millenniums I have dominated thus, engulfing the earth with flame and molten flood. But now the gods decree that I rage no more and I am powerless to oppose their will. I must lie dormant till history ends. One chance remains to preserve my power. You great creature, you, I shall endow with all my might, you shall live forever, as protector of this mount. But with my gift I also confer responsibility. A school will rise on the very verge of this mountain - a manifestation of my dominion and supremacy. Heed well what I am about to say, for I say it once only, time is short. This school will display three colours - red, white and grey - red for the all consuming power of my flame, white for the wisdom of my timeless mind, and grey for solid steadfastness of the ash which I have spilled over the land. It will have as its emblem, a dragon. You, courageous beast, are that dragon. With your help and protection this school will rise in spirit and ability far above all others. One thing more I leave with you the power to breathe fire - a final testimony that Gravattus, god of volcanoes, once emerged in all his glory from this mountain. Heed well my words, mighty dragon!"

In an instant the earth was still; night returned, and for the dragon life began anew as it had been in his prime. He found a cave deep in the mountain, and from there watched through the centuries for the rising of the school he had pledged to protect.

At times the slow pace of history angered him and in his rage he singed the mountain top. One of his more recent outbursts resulted in the burning down of a café on the summit, which by the way has never been rebuilt. But in 1960 a school with colours red, white and grey was born on the verge of the mountain, and the dragon's wrath turned to joy.

The swift supremacy attained by the Mount Gravatt High School proves that the dragon did indeed heed well the words of Gravattus, god of volcanoes.