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Hong Kong Rotarian Sir Robert Hormus Kotewall
Senior Chinese Unofficial Member of the Executive and Legislative Councils

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Dr. The Honourable Sir Robert Hormus Kotewall (羅旭龢爵士), Kt, CMG, *Hon*LLD (*HKU*), JP (14 February 1880 - 23 May 1949), was Charter Member of the Rotary Club of Hong Kong (香港扶輪社) since 1931, Classification "Business Promotion Service", during the early decades before the Club was disbanded after the Imperial Japan's occupation years due to outbreak of the Pacific War in 1941.

In 1949, his daughter Maisie Nora Kotewall (羅璇基) married Dr. George Choa (蔡永善醫生) who was President 1971-1972 of the Rotary Club of Hong Kong and later District 345 Governor 1979-1980 of Rotary International.

Kotewall was a Hong Kong-born Eurasian civil servant, businessman, and legislator of Chinese-Parsi descent who rose to prominence in the British Crown Colony Hong Kong (英國殖民地香港), and represented the Chinese community at that time.

Robert was the son of Chinese mother Cheung A-Cheung and Hormusjee Rustomjee Kotewall, an Indian Parsee merchant who came to the British Hong Kong in the mid-19th century. Robert was educated at the Diocesan Boys' School and Orphanage (拔萃男書室) and Queen's College (皇仁書院). Forced to leave school in order to support his family after his father died, Kotewall began work at the age of 16 as a junior clerk in the Police Department after obtaining first place in a competitive examination. He rose quickly in the Government, often filling positions previously held only by Europeans, including first clerk in the Colonial Secretariat, first clerk of the Magistracy, and acting chief clerk of the Government Service.

In 1916 Kotewall resigned from the Government and to establish R. H. Kotewall & Co. (旭龢洋行), a successful trading firm specializing in imported textiles and paper.

Kotewall was appointed acting unofficial member of the Legislative Council (定例局) in 1923, serving three consecutive terms until 1936, and then two terms as unofficial member of the Executive Council (行政局) from 1936 to 1941, becoming a key Chinese representative in the colonial governance.

Knighted for his contributions, Kotewall exemplified the integration of local Eurasian elites into Hong Kong's administrative structure, bridging British rule and Chinese community interests through his business acumen and public service.



The Kotewall Story

Early life and education

Birth and family background

Robert Hormus Kotewall was born in Hong Kong in 1880 to a family of mixed Eurasian heritage. His father, Hormusjee Rustomjee Kotewall (also spelled Kotwaj), was a Parsi merchant originally from India who had migrated to Hong Kong in the mid-19th century, establishing himself in trade during the early colonial period. The Parsi community, Zoroastrian descendants from Persia who settled in India, formed a small but influential mercantile diaspora in British colonial ports like Hong Kong, often engaging in shipping, finance, and commerce. Robert Kotewall's mother, Cheung A-Cheung (張亞祥) (also rendered as Ching Yung-Kan 程容根), was of Chinese descent, reflecting the intercultural marriages common among Eurasian families in colonial Hong Kong, where European, Indian, and local Chinese communities intermingled. This biracial background positioned Kotewall within Hong Kong's diverse elite, bridging Indian-Parsi and Chinese elements in a society stratified by colonial racial hierarchies.

The family resided in the Hong Kong Island, where Kotewall grew up amid the port city's expanding economy, supported by his father's mercantile activities.

Formal education and early influences

Kotewall received his formal education at two prominent local institutions: the Diocesan Boys' School and Orphanage, an Anglican mission school established in 1869, and Queen's College, a government-operated secondary school founded in 1862.

These schools emphasized English-language instruction, British colonial values, and classical subjects, which were typical for preparing Eurasian and elite Chinese youth for administrative roles under British rule.

At age 16 in 1896, Kotewall was compelled to abandon his studies prematurely upon his father's death, assuming responsibility for his family's financial support. This early interruption, while limiting advanced formal training, exposed him to practical necessities

and the colonial bureaucracy, shaping his subsequent entry into government service as a junior clerk. His schooling nonetheless instilled a foundation in discipline, bilingual proficiency, and loyalty to imperial structures, influences evident in his lifelong public service orientation.

Kotewall's Eurasian heritage---combining Chinese maternal lineage with Parsi paternal roots from Bombay---further influenced his worldview, positioning him as a cultural bridge in a stratified colonial society where such mixed identities often facilitated access to elite networks while navigating ethnic ambiguities. No records indicate specific mentors or extracurricular pursuits during his brief school years, but the era's emphasis on merit-based colonial opportunities likely reinforced his pragmatic approach to advancement.

Civil service career

Initial entry and police service

Kotewall entered the Hong Kong colonial civil service in 1896 at the age of 16, following the death of his father, which necessitated him supporting his family. He secured the position by achieving first place in a competitive examination for junior clerical roles. His initial posting was as the fourth clerk in the Police Department, marking the beginning of approximately two decades in government service.

During his tenure in the Police Department, Kotewall advanced through clerical and administrative roles, eventually contributing to magisterial functions, which were typically reserved for European officials prior to his appointments. This progression reflected his competence in handling routine police administration and legal proceedings amid Hong Kong's diverse and often tense multicultural environment. By the time he departed government service in 1916, after roughly 20 years, he had become the first Chinese individual to occupy the position of Assistant Registrar General, though his foundational experience remained rooted in police-related duties.

Administrative and advisory roles

Kotewall entered the Hong Kong civil service in 1896 at age 16, having placed first in a competitive entrance examination for clerical positions. He began as a fourth clerk in the Police Department, where his duties included administrative support amid routine law enforcement operations. This entry-level role marked the start of a career trajectory that allowed him to provide for his family following his father's death.

Advancing through positions often reserved for Europeans, Kotewall served as first clerk in the Colonial Secretariat, handling correspondence, records, and coordination between departments. He later held the role of first clerk in the Magistracy, managing court documentation and procedural administration, and acted as chief clerk in broader government service, overseeing clerical staff and workflow efficiency. These roles emphasized his bilingual capabilities in English and Chinese, facilitating communication in a colonial administration reliant on accurate record-keeping and inter-departmental liaison.

By 1913, Kotewall was appointed Clerk to the Magistracy, a senior administrative post involving oversight of magisterial proceedings and case preparation. Concurrently, he received a Justice of the Peace commission, enabling him to perform advisory functions such as witnessing affidavits and minor dispute resolutions outside formal courts. He departed full-time government service around 1916 to pursue business ventures, though his prior administrative experience positioned him for subsequent unofficial advisory appointments.

Business and entrepreneurial activities

Establishment of R. H. Kotewall & Co.

Kotewall established R. H. Kotewall & Co. in 1916 upon resigning from his position in the Hong Kong civil service, transitioning from public administration to private enterprise focused on import-export trade.

The firm initially specialized in importing textiles and paper products, capitalizing on Hong Kong's role as a trading hub in the early 20th century.

The company expanded into gramophone and record importation, becoming a key distributor for brands like Columbia Gramophone (歌林留聲機), which reflected Kotewall's acumen in identifying demand for emerging consumer technologies amid post-World War I economic recovery. Operations were based in central Hong Kong locations, including premises on Po Wa Street (寶華街) and later the fifth floor of China Building (華人行), where R. H. Kotewall & Co. shared space with affiliated entities under Kotewall's ownership.

Under Kotewall's leadership, the firm prospered through diversified trade lines, including textiles, paper, and audio equipment, establishing him as a prominent merchant and enabling further involvement in local commercial networks such as record companies.

This venture marked a successful pivot from bureaucratic roles to entrepreneurship, leveraging his networks in government and business to secure agency roles and import licenses.

Involvement in broader commercial networks

Kotewall expanded his commercial influence beyond R. H. Kotewall & Co. by assuming directorships in multiple Hong Kong enterprises across diverse sectors, including transportation, finance, telecommunications, and manufacturing. These roles connected him to prominent Chinese business networks, facilitating trade and investment amid colonial economic structures. For instance, he served as a director of the Hong Kong Telephone Co., Ltd. (香港電話有限公司), participating in infrastructure development such as the Nathan Road telephone building project in the 1920s. Similarly, his directorship in the Hongkong and Yaumati Ferry Co., Ltd. (香港油蘇地小輪船有限公司) linked him to essential maritime transport operations serving Kowloon and Hong Kong Island commuters.

In the transportation sector, Kotewall held positions on the boards of China Motor Bus (中華汽車有限公司) and Kowloon Motor Bus (九龍巴士（一九三三）有限公司), key operators in Hong Kong's emerging public road network during the interwar period. His involvement

in Shui On Wing & Co., Ltd. (肇安榮有限公司) further extended to construction-related activities supporting urban expansion. Financially, he directed China Provident Loan and Mortgage Co., Ltd. (均益按揭倉儲有限公司), which provided loans and mortgages to local businesses and property owners, reflecting his ties to credit institutions vital for Chinese entrepreneurs.

Kotewall's entertainment ventures included ownership of Wo Shing Co., Ltd. (和聲唱片有限公司), Hong Kong's earliest fully Chinese-capitalized record-producing firm, established in the 1930s at China Building on Queen's Road Central (皇后大道中). Wo Shing imported Western equipment to mass-produce Cantonese folk song records, pioneering local audio industry amid competition from foreign labels like Pathé Frères. He also directed Nanyang Brothers Tobacco Co., Ltd. (南洋兄弟煙草股份有限公司), a major player in cigarette manufacturing and distribution. Additionally, as managing director of China Entertainment & Land Investment Ltd. (中華娛樂置業有限公司), owners of China Building, Kotewall oversaw property investments listed publicly in 1929, with board members including Li Yan-Tsun (李雁津) and Chau Tsun-Nin (周埈年).

His directorship in Chinese estates positioned him within Hong Kong's property development landscape, alongside figures like Sir Shouson Chow (周壽臣爵士), with whom he co-founded the pro-colonial newspaper《Kung Sheung Daily News 工商日報》during the 1925-1926 strike-boycott to sustain Chinese community communication and commerce. These affiliations underscored Kotewall's role in bridging civil service experience with entrepreneurial networks, prioritizing stability and British-aligned business interests over radical labor disruptions.

[Note] Chau Tsun-Nin (周埈年) and Sir Shouson Chow (周壽臣爵士) were both Active Members of Hong Kong Rotary Club, as well as colleagues on the Legislative Council.

Wo Shing Company

Wo Shing Co., Ltd. (和聲唱片有限公司) was one of Hong Kong's most influential local record labels from the 1930s through the 1960s and is widely recognized for pioneering the packaging and release of early Cantonese popular music (Cantopop).

Kotewall was a fan of Cantonese opera. He wrote a Cantonese opera in English called《Uncle Kim 鑒叔》in 1921 to help foreigners understand Cantonese opera and also worked with a group of theatre owners and successfully petitioned the Governor to allow cast of both genders in Cantonese operas in 1933 (although there were no legal regulations, prior to that casts of Cantonese operas in Hong Kong were single sex). It was with this background in Cantonese opera that he started Wo Shing, which also supported the sales of his gramophones. Operating out of the China Building in Central, the firm positioned itself early on as a major hub for Cantonese entertainment. As Kotewall was very busy with his political and social engagements in the 1930s, the key executive at Wo Shing was his son-in-law Lee Shiu-Kai (李兆楷)---husband of eldest daughter Esther Mary Kotewall (羅慧基).

In its first two decades, Wo Shing maintained a powerful partnership with international giant Columbia Records (歌林唱片). Under this arrangement, Wo Shing handled local talent management and recording sessions in Hong Kong, while the physical shellac discs were pressed at Columbia's facilities in Shanghai (上海). During the mid-20th century, Wo Shing became synonymous with high-quality Cantonese opera and instrumental music, acting as a crucial bridge between local artists and major distributors like EMI (百代唱片) and Odeon (高亭唱片). On 26 August 1952, Wo Shing made music history by releasing a batch of eight songs across four albums that explicitly marketed and packaged the tracks under the concept of Cantonese popular songs (粵語時代曲). This initiative helped legitimize Cantonese pop music, which had previously been overshadowed by Mandarin pop (Mandapop) and traditional Cantonese opera. Throughout the 1960s, Wo Shing continued to release albums for local artists and comedians, documenting changing societal tastes in Hong Kong.

Political Appointments

Legislative Council

In 1913, Kotewall was appointed Justice of the Peace for Hong Kong (JP) by Hong Kong Governor Sir Francis Henry May (香港總督梅含理爵士).

Kotewall had a long political career, beginning with his appointment in 1923 as acting unofficial member of the Legislative Council. Although colonial officials often insisted that Eurasians and other mixed-race persons were despised by the 'pure' Chinese and thus not suitable for positions in the two colonial councils, Kotewall appears to have been widely respected by Hong Kong's different communities.

Kotewall was appointed by Hong Kong Governor Sir Reginald Edward Stubbs (香港總督司徒拔爵士) an Unofficial Member of the Legislative Council, commencing 28 March 1923. He carried on to serve three consecutive terms until 3 October 1935.

In 1923 Kotewall served on a committee to investigate the opium monopoly in Hong Kong, an important source of government revenue. Faced with criticism from the United States in 1923 for not abolishing colonial opium monopolies, in compliance with the provisions of the 1912 Hague Convention, the Colonial Office had asked governors of Britain's South-East Asian colonies to form investigative committees. The committee concluded that abolishing the monopoly was not feasible.

Kotewall especially distinguished himself during the 1925-26 strike-boycott (省港大罷工/粵港大罷工), when he and Sir Shouson Chow helped the Government prevent the strike from crippling Hong Kong's economy. A gifted orator, Kotewall presented a plan for a trade loan of £3 million from the British Government in order to weather the storm. As the loan helped keeping the Colony from going under, Kotewall's speech calling for the loan became known in the Hong Kong press as the "£3 million Speech". Kotewall was invited later to accompany Governor Sir Cecil Clementi (金文泰爵士) to negotiate with the Canton officials who were

mostly friends of him and the visit was very successful.

He and Chow led an intensive propaganda campaign against what they considered the "Bolshevik threat". They formed the Counter-Propaganda Bureau, which put up posters and distributed leaflets encouraging the population to resist the strikers, and the《Kung Sheung Daily News》, a counter-propaganda newspaper circulated in Hong Kong and among overseas Chinese. Despite some concerns in the Colonial Office, they also persuaded the Hong Kong Government to establish the Labour Protection Bureau (工業維持會), a secret organization formed to protect labourers from intimidation, and to launch a counter-attack against intimidators. The two convinced the Tung Wah Hospital Board of Directors (東華醫院董事局) to raise HK$50,000 for the warlord, Ngai Pon-Ping (魏邦平), to lead a coup against the Canton regime. Kotewall's life was threatened during the strike, as was his son's.

Executive Council

In recognition of his contributions, Kotewall was elevated to the Executive Council on 12 May 1936 by Hong Kong Governor Sir Andrew Caldecott (香港總督郝德傑爵士), becoming the first Eurasian to hold such a position and serving as an unofficial member.

In the Executive Council, Kotewall's fellow Rotarian Sir Shouson Chow was the Senior Chinese Unofficial Member. Upon Chow's 7 times of leave absence during the years between October 1929 and November 1935, Kotewall was appointed by the Governor to vice temporarily Chow's seat on the Council. Sir Shouson Chow was finally retired from the Council on 8 July 1936. To succeed the seat of Senior Chinese Unofficial Member, Kotewall was appointed by Governor Sir Andrew commencing 9 July 1936 until 25 December 1941 (outbreak of the Hong Kong Battle against the Imperial Japan's invasion followed by three years and eight months of Japanese occupation).

The Executive Council advised the governor on executive decisions, and Kotewall's tenure coincided with Hong Kong Governor Sir Geoffry Northcote's (香港總督羅富國爵士) administration (1937–1941), during which he occasionally acted in higher capacities amid evolving colonial governance structures. His appointments underscored the colonial government's strategy of co-opting influential local figures to maintain stability and incorporate community input, though unofficial members held limited veto power.

[Note] Sir Andrew Caldecott was Charter President 1929-1930 of Kuala Lumpur Rotary Club, Federated Malay States.

Civic engagement and public service

Founding of key organizations

Kotewall co-founded the League of Fellowship (博愛會) in 1921, an organization aimed at promoting good fellowship within Hong Kong irrespective of race, class, or creed, reflecting his efforts to foster interracial harmony in the colony.

In 1930, Kotewall served as a founding member of Hong Kong Rotary Club, contributing to a platform for professional networking and community service among local elites.

Kotewall also co-founded the Hong Kong branch of the League of Nations Society (國際聯盟香港學會), supporting internationalist ideals and advocacy for global cooperation during the interwar period.

In collaboration with Lady Bella Sidney Southorn (wife of Colonial Secretary Sir Wilfrid Thomas Southorn 輔政司修頓爵士), Korewall co-founded the Women's International Club (香港國際婦女會), which sought to advance cross-cultural exchanges and support for women in colonial society.

Kotewall played a leading role in the creation of the Welfare League (同仁會) around 1929–1930, a charitable body initially formed by prominent Eurasians to provide relief for destitute community members and later expanded to broader welfare initiatives.

Additionally, he co-founded the Aberdeen Industrial School (香港仔兒童工藝院), an institution dedicated to vocational training for underprivileged youth, underscoring his commitment to educational and rehabilitative public service.

Responses to social and political challenges

In response to social challenges like child vulnerability and public health crises, Kotewall actively supported the Society for the Protection of Children (香港保護兒童會) and co-founded the Aberdeen Industrial School to rehabilitate and educate at-risk youth, addressing issues of juvenile delinquency and poverty in early 20th-century Hong Kong. He served on the Po Leung Kuk Committee (保良局總理會), which combated human trafficking and protected orphaned or abandoned children, and contributed to the Tung Wah Hospital Advisory Board (東華醫院顧問局) to improve charitable medical services for the Chinese population. Through involvement in the St. John Ambulance Association (香港聖約翰救傷會) and the Chinese Public Dispensaries Committee (華人公立醫局委員會), Kotewall advanced emergency response training and accessible healthcare, mitigating risks from urban density and disease outbreaks.

On the Housing Commission (香港房屋委員會), Kotewall addressed overcrowding and sanitation challenges affecting working-class residents. In 1923, as part of a committee investigating the opium monopoly---a social scourge tied to addiction and revenue---he helped determine that immediate abolition was impractical due to economic dependencies, recommending gradual suppression instead. These engagements reflected a pragmatic approach prioritizing stability and welfare within the colonial framework.

Apart from the above, Kotewall also devoted to youth service by serving as President for 8 years from 1926 to 1934 of the Boy Scouts Association Hong Kong Branch (香港童子軍總會). Excerpted below is a piece of news coverage on《Hong Kong Daily Press》4 April 1934:

Boy Scouts Association Hong Kong Branch
CHIEF SCOUT PRESIDES AT ANNUAL MEETING
Departure of Commissioner and President's Retirement

Presiding at the annual meeting of the Hong Kong Branch of the Boy Scouts Association, His Excellency the Governor (Sir William Peel) as Chief Scout, commended the work of the local movement and appealed for funds to clear the overdraft incurred in connection with the Saiwan Camp.

The impending departure of the Colonial Commissioner (Rev. G. T. Waldegrave), the retirement of Dr. The Honourable Robert Hormus Kotewall from the position of President which he had held for eight years, and an invitation to local Scouts from Australia in connection with the visit of the Chief Scout, Lord Baden Powell, were referred to at the meeting.

Commissioner Expresses Thanks

The meeting was held at Sandilands Hut.

His Excellency was met by Dr. Kotewall (President), the Rev. G. T. Waldegrave (Commissioner), and other members, and proceeded to perform the ceremony of presenting the Prince of Wales' Banner to the No. 10 (St. Paul's College) Hong Kong Troop, the winner in last year's competition. His Excellency was supported by Lady Southorn, Colonial Commissioner of the Girl Guides.

In the course of his speech which he prefaced with the intimation of his departure shortly, the Rev. G. T. Waldegrave, the Commissioner stressed the help he received in particular from the Assistant Commissioner, the Rev. N. V. Halward, Mr. Champkin, Colonel Robertson, Mr. Christian, Mr. A. White, Mr. S. Mitchell, Mr. Wayman and others who in different ways had loyally done their bit, and to these gentlemen he expressed his sincere thanks.

He also recalled the services rendered by Sir Henry Pollock, Sir Henry Gollan, Sir Joseph Kemp, and Sir William Shenton, and referred with regret to the retirement of Dr. Kotewall from his office as President of the Association.

The Commissioner referred with gratitude to the interest taken by His Excellency the Governor and Lady Peel, remarking that by the kindly nature of that interest a fatherly and motherly touch had been given to humanise the more formal inspections and parades which His Excellency from time to time had been good enough to hold.

Steady Development

After the Commissioner had closed his address, His Excellency commented on the report as being both interesting and eminently satisfactory, the Hong Kong Branch of the Association having steadily developed from year to year until it had reached a very high standard indeed. His Excellency attribute this to the work of the Commissioner, which has been closely associated with the development of the local movement.

His Excellency spoke of the imperial and international aspects of the movement. To this he added a third, that of the family aspect which it was sought to develop also between the two branches of the local movement.

After thanking the Commissioner and the Chief Scout for their kind references to his work, Dr. Kotewall said that he was relinquishing his office as President with a certain amount of relief, but mingled also with a feeling of genuine regret, for he would miss the amiable association of the active workers from the Commissioner downwards. He referred to the great advancement made during his eight years of office, the result of combined energy and good work of the officers and committees, and above all the Commissioner, the Rev. G. T. Waldegrave, who has been the fibre of the Association, and had endowed it with his example and ideals.

Saiwan Camp Debt

After further reference to the good work done by the Commissioner in turning the boyhood of the Colony into useful citizens, the President said that one way to demonstrate appreciation was to make a special endeavour to raise at least HK$6,000 in order to liquidate the debt contracted in the purchase of the Saiwan Training Camp site before the Commissioner leaves.

In closing the President wished the Association ever increasing success.

Dr. Kotewall's retirement from office was marked by the presentation of a memento. The Vice President, Mr. Edward Cock, was elected to the position of President.

Educational and Cultural Services

Although Kotewall took great pride in having accomplished so much without having a college diploma, he was deeply committed to scholarship and learning. He maintained a large library of Chinese and English-language works in his home, and was a member of the Court and Council of the University of Hong Kong (香港大學校董會/校務委員會), from which he received an honorary doctorate degree of laws in 1926.

Kotewall also helped to establish the Fung Ping Shan Chinese Library (馮平山中文圖書館) in the University of Hong Kong by persuading Mr. Fung Ping-Shan (馮平山), who was close friend and business associate of him, to make donations.

Over a number of years he worked with Colonial Secretary Norman Lockhart Smith (輔政司史美) on translations of Chinese poetry, selecting what they liked from 600 BC to the early 20th century. The selection was published by Penguin in 1962.

Fully bicultural and bilingual, Kotewall believed in the value of the Chinese classics in maintaining social harmony. During the strike-boycott of 1925-1926, for example, he recommended that more emphasis in schools be placed Confucianism as an antidote to the revolutionary nationalism engulfing China. The prominent intellectual Hu Shih (胡適), who visited Hong Kong shortly after the strike-boycott, was impressed by how Kotewall and other local community leaders were eager to help the colonial government improve the teaching of Chinese studies, but was disappointed by their conservative approach to Chinese studies.

World War II period and controversies

Conduct during Japanese occupation

On the same morning as the attack on Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941, forces of the Japanese Empire attacked the British Crown Colony Hong Kong around the same time that Japan declared war on Britain. Following the Japanese capture of Hong Kong on 25 December 1941, Kotewall was appointed chairman of the interim Rehabilitation Advisory Committee (香港善後處理委員會) in January 1942, a body formed to address immediate post-invasion recovery needs for the Chinese population. In this capacity, he advocated against proposed increases in tram fares, water rates, and electricity tariffs, seeking to alleviate economic pressures on residents amid wartime disruptions.

Kotewall participated in official ceremonies endorsing Japanese authority, including a January 1942 luncheon, at the Peninsula Hotel (半島酒店), hosted by Lieutenant General Sakai Takashi (陸軍中將酒井隆) where he praised the invading forces and exclaimed "banzai" (萬歲) for the Japanese Emperor. The following month, he presided over a February 1942 event welcoming Military Governor Isogai Rensuke (香港佔領地總督磯谷廉介), likening Japanese rice distributions to a paternal act of benevolence. He later delivered a radio address on 25 December 1943 commemorating the second anniversary of the occupation.

Subsequently, the Japanese established the Chinese Representative Council (華民代表會) and Chinese Cooperative Council (華民各界協議會) as advisory bodies for managing Chinese affairs, to which Kotewall was appointed, serving as chairman of the former. These roles positioned him as a liaison between occupiers and locals, leveraging his pre-war status as a Eurasian intermediary familiar with both British colonial and Chinese elite networks. Kotewall later maintained that his involvement thwarted four pro-Japanese initiatives and averted a potential massacre of British personnel during the initial invasion, framing his actions as pragmatic efforts to mitigate harm rather than ideological alignment.

By 1944, citing deteriorating health and the shifting tide of the Pacific War, Kotewall withdrew from public duties, limiting his visible collaboration as Japanese control weakened. His Eurasian background exempted him from internment applied to most Europeans, enabling continuity in such administrative functions, though this drew postwar scrutiny from Nationalist Chinese and some British observers who viewed his compliance as accommodationist.

Serious suspicion as "quisling and collaborator"

Following the Japanese surrender in August 1945, Kotewall faced allegations of collaboration due to his prominent roles during the occupation, including chairmanship of the Rehabilitation Advisory Committee in January 1942 and subsequent membership in the Japanese-established Chinese Representative Council and Chinese Cooperative Council, bodies intended to administer the Chinese population. Critics, particularly among Europeans interned by the Japanese and elements of the Nationalist Chinese, accused him of

excessive compliance, citing instances such as his public praises of Japanese forces at events in early 1942, a radio broadcast honoring the occupation's anniversary on Christmas Day 1943, and perceived deference that they viewed as treasonous support for the occupiers.

Kotewall defended his actions as pragmatic efforts to safeguard the Hong Kong Chinese community amid occupation hardships, asserting that he had thwarted several pro-Japanese initiatives proposed to him, including a goodwill mission to Japan, donations of warplanes, mass rallies against Allied bombings, and campaigns for Sino-Japanese peace. He also claimed to have contributed to averting a potential wholesale massacre of British personnel during the December 1941 invasion and facilitated post-surrender cooperation with Japanese authorities for an orderly British restoration. In October 1945, British colonial authorities temporarily barred him from public roles, including the Chinese Advisory Council, pending clearance, reflecting initial scrutiny amid broader post-war reckonings.

By late 1945, endorsements from senior colonial officials---Roland Arthur Charles North, Secretary for Chinese Affairs (華民政務司那魯麟), former Acting Governor; John Alexander Fraser, Secretary for Defense (防衛司傅瑞憲); and Sir Chaloner Grenville Alabaster, Attorney General (律政司魏伯達爵士)---affirmed that Kotewall's cooperation had been at their pre-occupation behest to protect local populations through liaison with the Japanese.

Later years and death

Post-war activities

In October 1945, Rear Admiral Cecil Harcourt (夏慤海軍少將), Military Governor of Hong Kong had initially requested Kotewall's temporary withdrawal from public life pending investigation of his record, but clearance allowed limited involvement in immediate post-liberation matters. The Colonial Office formally exonerated Kotewall of pro-Japanese activities in spring 1946, issuing letters of appreciation from figures including Roland A. C. North, Rear Admiral Cecil Harcourt, and Governor Sir Mark Young (香港總督楊慕琦爵士), while emphasizing the British directive for local leaders to engage occupiers for civilian welfare.

As Harcourt wrote in a confidential letter, "your directions were to stand by the Chinese community, even though this might involve the appearance of co-operation with the Japanese". In spite of that, Kotewall's health deteriorated tremendously after the trial.

Kotewall resigned from the Executive Council in May 1946 citing health issues and did not resume public office, though subsequent analyses, such as Anthony Sweeting's 2015 study, suggest lingering criticisms may stem partly from intra-Eurasian community rivalries rather than unequivocal evidence of disloyalty.

His activities in the remaining years appear to have been confined to private business interests, including oversight of R. H. Kotewall & Co., though no specific post-war commercial expansions or initiatives are documented in available records.

Personal circumstances and passing

Robert Kotewall, of Parsi-Chinese descent, first married Grace Hung, a Chinese woman, in 1901. He remarried in 1907 to Edith Lowcock (郭懿德) (1889–1936), daughter of an English businessman Henry W. Lowcock, with whom he had eight children.

Following the controversies surrounding his wartime activities, Kotewall retired from public life and did not resume official roles in the post-war period. He died on 23 May 1949 in Hong Kong at the age of 69 from heart failure.

Long-term impact and evaluations

Kotewall's enduring influence on Hong Kong's Eurasian community underscores his role in fostering social cohesion among mixed-race populations during the colonial era. As a prominent leader, he championed the rights and dignity of Eurasians through initiatives like the Welfare League, which addressed discrimination and promoted integration into broader society. His efforts helped shape the community's self-perception and resilience amid racial hierarchies, contributing to a legacy of interracial advocacy that persisted into the post-colonial period.

In administrative and educational spheres, Kotewall's pre-war contributions to policy formulation influenced Hong Kong's governance structures, emphasizing pragmatic cooperation between British authorities and local elites. Historians note his involvement in bridging Chinese and Western interests, which stabilized the colony during labor unrests like the 1925–1926 strikes. However, his long-term impact is tempered by the scarcity of institutions directly named after him, though a statue in the Hong Kong Central Library commemorates his public service as of the late 20th century.

Evaluations of Kotewall's legacy are mixed, with praise for his loyalty to Hong Kong's multicultural fabric overshadowed by persistent debates over his wartime conduct. Post-war British inquiries did not result in prosecution for collaboration, viewing his advisory position under Japanese rule---where he relinquished his British title and adopted a Chinese name---as a strategic measure to protect civilians and maintain administrative continuity. Yet, some Chinese nationalist perspectives criticize these actions as compromising colonial allegiance for personal gain, reflecting broader tensions in Hong Kong's historical narratives.

Academic reassessments, such as those by historian Anthony Sweeting, contend that collaboration accusations relied on incomplete evidence and overlook Kotewall's intent to alleviate population suffering during occupation hardships.

The 2006 biography《Robert Kotewall: A Man of Hong Kong》by Dr. Ronald Leslie Zimmern, his grandson, portrays him as a principled figure prioritizing local welfare over ideological purity, though familial authorship invites scrutiny for potential bias. Overall, contemporary scholarship increasingly frames Kotewall as emblematic of the Eurasian elite's adaptive pragmatism in navigating imperial transitions, rather than a polarizing traitor.

Honours

(1) 1926 – Conferred the Degree of Doctor of Laws *honoris causa* by the University of Hong Kong

(2) 1927 – Appointed Companion of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George (CMG) by George V, King of the United Kingdom and the British Dominions, and Emperor of India

(3) 1938 – Invested Knight Bachelor by George VI, King of the United Kingdom and the Dominions of the British Commonwealth

(4) Kotewall Road (旭龢道) -- The road was named after Sir Robert Hormus Kotewall who privately built and financed the construction in the 1910s.

Kotewall Collection – Hong Kong Public Libraries

The Collection comprises over 16,300 volumes of books in English and Chinese with wide and varied subject coverage, many of which are now virtually unobtainable. They include thread-sewn books on Chinese classics and books in English on Chinese history and literature.

Location: Central Reference Library, 9/F of Hong Kong Central Library

Type: Reference Material, available for public use in the library

Introduction:

Sir Robert Kotewall was a prominent figure in the Hong Kong community in the first half of the twentieth century. His untiring efforts in promoting education and community affairs are well remembered. He was a well-read man and had built up a valuable collection of Chinese and English books. The book collection of Sir Robert Kotewall was bequeathed to the Hong Kong Government in 1957 and was housed in the City Hall Public Library for public use in 1962. A special fund was established by members of the Kotewall family to maintain and further strengthen the collection. The collection was subsequently transferred to the Hong Kong Central Reference Library for public use in 2001.

Kotewall Collection – The University of Hong Kong

This collection comprises over 2,200 items including letters, reports, manuscripts, speeches, news clippings, photos and artifacts documenting the life and work of Sir Robert Hormus Kotewall and and his daughter, Dr. Bobbie Kotewall (羅怡基博士). It covers topics of General Strike during 1925-1926, Japanese Occupation, public services and HKU-related occasions. Others are materials about private lives involving autobiography, diaries and private library's collections.

Format : 13 linear feet of shelf space (8 boxes).

Dates : 1895-1996

Sir Robert Kotewall Professorship in Public Health

The [Sir Robert Kotewall Professorship in Public Health] was established at the University of Hong Kong (HKU) in December 2007. The origin of the endowed professorship stems from a familial legacy of philanthropy and community service:

- The Donor: It was established by Dr. Ronald Leslie Zimmern through the Doris Zimmern Charitable Foundation. The Foundation was originally set up in 1992 by Dr. Zimmern's mother, Mrs. Doris Zimmern (施羅艷基), to serve the people of Hong Kong.
- The Namesake: Dr. Ronald Zimmern is the grandson of Sir Robert Hormus Kotewall who had a deep lifelong connection to HKU, serving on its Court and Council. The professorship was named in his grandfather's honor.
- Academic Purpose: Dr. Ron Zimmern, an international pioneer in public health genomics, funded the endowment to boost what was then a relatively neglected academic area. The professorship's mission is to expand the global understanding of the genetic and molecular determinants of health and disease, and how they interact with environmental factors

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香 港 大 學
THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

Congregation 1926

Robert Hormus KOTEWALL

Doctor of Laws *honoris causa*

The Vice-Chancellor Sir William W. Hornell (康寧爵士), Kt, CIE, MA(*Oxon*), wrote and delivered the following citation:

Mr. Robert Hormus Kotewall was educated at Queen's College and the Diocesan Boys' School, Hong Kong. He entered Government Service in 1896 after winning the first place in a competitive examination. As a civil servant he was given posts which were always held before and have ever since been held by Britishers, viz: Chief Clerk in the Colonial Secretary's Office, First Clerk in the Magistracy (a post usually held by men of legal training) and officiating Justice of the Peace. Mr. Kotewall's exploits in the soul-destroying pursuit of budget preparation were such as to attract the attention of H. M.'s Secretary of State for the Colonies. Mr. Kotewall has always taken an interest in education, especially vernacular education. He is a member of the Court and Council of the University, a University honorary examiner in Chinese, president of the University Football Club and a Patron of a Roving Troop of Boy Scouts. He translated His Excellency's Latin University Anthem into Chinese verses of such erudition that it is said that no one but His Excellency can understand them.

A lover of books, Mr. Kotewall has a fine library of Chinese and English authors. He has written on "Forestry" and "Government" and is the author of two Chinese plays, one of which was performed on the occasion of the recent visit of H. R. H. the Prince of Wales. Now a director of companies and a harassed man of business (most business men appear to be harassed now-a-days; I can' think why. If they have nothing to do, why not do it gracefully?), Mr. Kotewall somehow finds time not only to serve the public with a devotion which is literally amazing, but also to attend to the troubles of his friends. And I doubt whether there is any one in the Colony who has more friends than Mr. Kotewall. To all of us in the University, whether teachers or students, Mr. Kotewall has ever been a friend, who has never failed us in the hours of our respective needs. And all this has been done, and done without ostentation, in the midst of domestic anxieties before which the most public-spirited of men might reasonably have succumbed. In welcoming Mr. Kotewall into the goodly fellowship of honorary graduates, I cannot refrain from quoting what Dr. Johnson wrote of his friend, Henry Thrale the brewer:

"Simple, open, and uniform in his manners,
His conduct was without either art or affectation.
In the senate steadily attentive to the interests of his king and country.
He looked down with contempt on the clamours of the multitude:
Though engaged in very extensive business,
He found some time to apply to polite literature:
And was ever ready to assist his friends labouring under any difficulties,
With his advice, his influence, and his purse.
To his friends, acquaintances, and guests,
He behaved with such sweetness of manners as to attach them all to his person:
So happy in his conversation with them as to please all, thee"

***** ***** ***** ***** *****



在香港中央圖書館的羅旭龢像

Sir Robert H. Kotewall statue and Kotewall Collections locate in the Hong Kong Central Library

審訊野間重要証人
羅旭和爵士今出庭



關於審訊殺人王野間賢之助，今晨由羅旭和爵士親自登堂作証，各方至爲重視，著日昨特往拜訪，爰誌下文。（本報記者鮮宗）

羅旭和爵士——香港橋牌會理事名字，大都耳熟能詳。戰前，他是立法局的首席華人議員，首席華人代表，香港政府最高行政機構行政局的唯一華人職員。

在香港社會稱爲有勁的人，無有不認識他老人家的大名。香港政府對他，更是十分倚重；許多重要政策和華人有關的事情，都向他徵求意見，一般「民情」，也經由他陳述政府看來，他就是香港華人的最高領導者。

香港光復以來，羅爵士的名字，似乎漸漸生疏了。行政局議員的職務已經卸除，就是社會大衆事情也很少見他參加。如果不是趁近開審戰犯野間提及他的名字的話，恐怕許多人對中間這位曾經煊赫一時「領袖人物」，就要慢慢淡忘下去。

大家知道，在香港淪陷後，日本人成立一個所謂「華人代表會」的機關，用巧妙的手法，通過這機關而逐到向香港人民壓榨的目的。而羅旭和爵士在香港淪陷後不久，便接受了日本人的任命，而成爲華人代表會的首腦人物了。羅爵士自己看來，他爲了維持這不出香港的數十萬市民着想，使不敢過于痛苦，因此「委曲求全」。在三年零八個月中，他的工作表現如何？他是否協助日本人統治香港，像對英國統治時期的香港政府一樣盡忠？明眼人當可明白，我們不必妄加批評。不過，由于最近開審戰犯野間案件中，提起當年日寇強迫疏散政策，華人代表會曾經反對無效，因而羅爵士的功罪問題，就引起一般人注意。同時，偶起記者訪問羅爵士的動機。

在談話中，羅爵士對於出任華人代表會主席的經過，不大願意多提，然而報章是曾經這樣紀載過的：「英廷授意羅氏出任此職」。這究竟是什麼一回事呢？當記者提及這一問題時，羅爵士承認：「這都是事實」。他還說出當時授意他接受日本人任命的，是英政府的三位高級長官。當時三位長官的意思，認爲他瞭解該地，在香港政府看來，他就是香港華人的最高領導者。

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羅爵士曾任香港立法局議員，行政局議員，太平紳士，現任華人代表會的工作。至於那三位長官的名字，羅爵士曾告訴記者，但他希望暫時不要宣佈。這事情還有夏慤總督的動作證明，他表示在適當時機來臨時，會把它原原本本的公開發表，使社會人士得明白其相。

談到日本人，羅爵士認爲當時頗付相當困難，原因一方面要應酬日本人的無厭苛求，一方面又要顧慮到人民的痛苦。而事實上，事情是決難兩全的，因此漸漸便以「不大服從」的原故，引起日本人的猜疑。既是日本人還要假獵作態，凭地兇狠，表面上也要做得好看，因此對于這位「華人領袖」也不爲已甚。然而實際上，已經有若干日本高級軍官，嘖嘖對他表示不滿。羅爵士拿出月前審訊附敵犯李褒士的一則新聞作爲例証，在搜獲李褒士文件裏，發現李褒士和日本軍官的來往書信，信裏明白地說出，對羅爵士的行爲表示不信任，懷疑他和澳門的反日機關有秘密聯絡。從這時期起，日本人就經常派出便裝特務人員，隨時跟隨他的行踪，直至日本投降的一天，他還給日本人監視着。

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在野間案審訊過程中，羅爵士是一個重要的証人，當年日敵強迫疏散，做成空前大慘劇，無辜平民橫遭慘死，當時的華人代表會位卑對這措施提出反對，然而日本人一意孤行，草菅人命，縱使野間的罪惡史中，加上重要的一頁。爲証明當時華人代表會曾提出反對，因此羅爵士就成爲案中一位重要的證人。他不想對本案進行有所妨碍，在出庭作供以前，對這事的經過，暫不願發表。羅爵士今天出庭。他會將經過情形，原原本本告訴給社會人士了。

表面上與日本人週旋，維持社會秩序，免得人民過於受苦。因此，他就毅然接受了這「委屈」，担任華人代表會的工作。至於那三位長官的名字，羅爵士曾告訴記者，但他希望暫時不要宣佈。這事情還有夏慤總督的動作証明，他表示在適當時機來臨時，會把它原原本本的公開發表，使社會人士得明白其相。

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香港扶輪社員--羅旭龢爵士

香港行政/立法兩局首席華人非官守議



羅旭龢爵士(Dr. The Honourable Sir Robert Hormus Kotewall, Kt, CMG, *Hon*LLD (*HKU*), JP)(1880 年 2 月 14 日-1949 年 5 月 23 日)是香港扶輪社(Rotary Club of Hong Kong)1931 年的創社社員，職業分類「商業推廣服務」，直至 1941 年日本帝國佔領香港期間，扶輪社因太平洋戰爭爆發而解散。羅旭龢爵士是帕西/華裔混血兒，香港行政/立法兩局首席華人非官守議員，華人太平紳士，對香港教育及文化事業貢獻不少。當年與何東爵士、周壽臣爵士、羅文錦爵士、曹善允等是為上流社會成員，在香港社會地位超然。加入扶輪社之前，羅旭龢已經熱心青年服務，於 1926 年至 1934 年擔任香港童子軍總會會長。

1949 年，他的女兒羅璇基(Maisie Nora Kotewall)嫁給了蔡永善醫生(Dr. George Choa)。蔡永善醫生於 1971-1972 年度擔任香港扶輪社社長，後來於 1979-1980 年度擔任國際扶輪 345 地區總監。

生平略傳

早年歲月

羅旭龢生於香港，是香港歐亞混血兒。祖上從商，但家世並不顯赫。羅旭龢年少時肄業於皇仁書院(Queen's College)及拔萃男書室(Diocesan Boys' School)兩所西式書院，又延請老師宿儒講授國學，西學中學兼修。事實上羅旭龢年方十六已經嶄露頭角，獲警隊聘為四等文員。羅旭龢入職之初，警署同僚以其年幼，相率以孩童待之；及後見羅旭龢辦事頭頭是道，能力不讓成人，於是莫不肅然起敬。

在警隊工作多年之後，羅旭龢的才華為上級賞識，破格升任裁判署首席文案。羅旭龢以中學學歷處理地方法院文書，居然遊刃有餘，工作水平堪比法學專才。未幾羅旭龢獲政府委任為官守太平紳士，以期委以更大重任。果然不出兩年，羅旭龢再次獲破格擢升為輔政司署首席文案。羅旭龢所草擬政府預算，條理分明，細緻精密，深得英國殖民地部大臣讚許。羅旭龢在香港政府中扶搖直上，但他毅然於輔政司署任內急流勇退，轉往商界發展。

商界發展

羅旭龢離開政府之後，1916 年創辦旭和洋行(R. H. Kotewall & Co.)，開拓紡織品、紙張、留聲機出入口貿易，發展蓬勃。創辦香港和聲唱片公司，促進粵語時代曲；華人置業、香港電話，香港雪廠等也委任他為董事；至於聘請羅旭龢當顧問的公司則有南洋兄弟煙草公司、油蔴地小輪、中華汽車(中巴)、九龍汽車(九巴)等。

和聲唱片

和聲唱片（Wo Shing Company / Wo Shing Records）是香港歷史悠久的著名本土唱片公司，1928 年由羅旭龢創立，公司辦事處早期設於中環華人行。

早期主要灌錄粵曲，並與英資歌林唱片（Columbia Records）合作製碟，至 1976 年正式解散。和聲唱片於 1952 年率先推出香港第一張粵語時代曲，對香港流行音樂史有重要意義。50 至 60 年代旗下著名歌星包括呂紅、周聰、鄭君綿及許豔秋等。著名藝人譚炳文於 1962 年灌錄的第一張唱片亦由和聲出品。經典專輯有《快樂家庭》、《多多福》、《雙喜臨門》、《家和萬事興》、《青春的情侶》等。

參政議政

羅旭龢的政治生涯相當漫長，始於 1923 年被任命為定例局(立法局前稱)署理非官守議員。從這時候到 1940 年，羅旭龢一直以政府的華人代表的身份，作為中英及官民之間的橋梁。儘管殖民地官員經常堅稱，歐亞混血兒和其他混血兒不受「純種」華人重視，因此不適合在兩個殖民地議會任職，但羅旭龢似乎受到香港不同社群的廣泛尊重。

羅旭龢於 1923 年 3 月 28 日獲香港總督司徒拔爵士(Sir Reginald Edward Stubbs)任命為定例局非官守議員，連任三屆，直至 1935 年 10 月 3 日。

在行政局中，羅旭龢的扶輪社友周壽臣爵士擔任首席華人非官守議員。周壽臣於 1929 年 10 月至 1935 年 11 月期間，七次休假。期間，羅旭龢獲總督委任，暫時代理周壽臣在議政局的席位。周壽臣最終於 1936 年 7 月 8 日從議政局退休，羅旭龢獲總督郝德傑爵士(Sir Andrew Caldecott)委任，接任首席華人非官守議員一職，任期自 1936 年 7 月 9 日起至 1941 年 12 月 25 日（香港保衛戰爆發，隨後香港被日軍佔領三年零八個月）。

早年，鴉片銷售是政府收入的重要來源。1923 年，美國批評英國未依據 1912 年《海牙公約》的規定廢除殖民地鴉片專營。於是殖民地部要求在東南亞所有殖民地的總督，成立調查委員會。羅旭龢加入委員會，調查香港鴉片壟斷問題。委員會得出結論，廢除鴉片專營並不可行。

羅旭龢在 1925-26 年的省港大罷工（粵港大罷工）中表現尤為出色，他和周壽臣爵士協助政府阻止了罷工對香港經濟的重創。羅旭龢是一位才華橫溢的演說家，他提出了一項計劃，要求英國政府提供 300 萬英鎊的貿易貸款，以渡過難關。羅旭龢這篇演詞獲得在場的官紳一致讚許，稱羅旭龢之舌為「銀舌」。由於這筆貸款幫助香港避免了經濟破產，羅旭龢呼籲貸款的演講被香港媒體稱為「價值 300 萬英鎊之演說」。

隨後，羅旭龢受邀陪同總督金文泰爵士(Sir Cecil Clementi)與廣州官員（大多是羅的朋友）進行談判，這次訪問非常成功。

回到香港，羅旭龢和周壽臣領導了一場密集的宣傳運動，反對他們所認為的「布爾什維克威脅」。他們成立了反宣傳局，張貼海報和散發傳單，鼓勵民眾抵制罷工者。並利用《工商日報》反宣傳，該報紙在香港和海外華人中發行。儘管殖民地部對此有所擔憂，他們還是說服香港政府成立了「工業維持會」(Labour Protection Bureau)。這是一個秘密組織，旨在保護勞工免受恐嚇，並對恐嚇者發動反擊。兩人又說服東華醫院為軍閥魏邦平籌集五萬港幣，以發動推翻廣州政權的政變。

羅旭龢協助政府維持治安，又到廣州斡旋，最終使粵港恢復交通。到了 1930 年代，香港受經濟大蕭條影響，民生日苦。羅旭龢於是向政府提出減收差餉的請求。最終政府同意取消以前全幢樓宇繳納差餉的規定，改為每層樓獨立徵收，小業主能夠得以紓解困難。

在文化和教育上的貢獻

儘管羅旭龢未曾獲得大學文憑學歷，對取得如此成就深感自豪。但他對學術研究卻矢志不渝，在家中藏有大量中英文書籍。他擔任香港大學校校董會和校務委員會成員，並於 1926 年獲該校授予名譽法學博士學位。羅旭龢也說服其好友兼商業夥伴馮平山捐款，協助在香港大學建立了「馮平山中文圖書館」---以促進中國學術文化，支援香港大學的研究及學習需求為目的。收藏以中、日文書籍為主，亦有少量韓文書籍。

1921 年羅旭龢撰寫英語話劇《Uncle Kim 鑒叔》；1933 年，促成粵劇男女同台演出；1934 年 6 月籌辦首屆全港校際運動會。

多年來，羅旭龢與香港輔政司史美(Norman Lockhart Smith)合作翻譯中國詩歌，挑選了他們最喜歡的公元前 600 年至 20 世紀初的詩歌；這些選集於 1962 年由企鵝出版社(The Penguin Publishing Group)出版。羅旭龢精通雙語文化，深信中國古典文學在維護社會和諧上具有重要價值。例如，在 1925-1926 年的省港大罷工運動中，他建議在學校中更強調儒家思想，以此作為對抗席捲中國的紅色革命民族主義的良藥。大罷工後不久，著名學者胡適訪問香港。他對羅旭龢等當地社團領袖熱心協助殖民政府改善國學教學的舉動，印象深刻。但對他們保守的國學研究態度，感到失望。

「通敵賣國」重大嫌疑

1941 年 12 月 7 日，太平洋戰爭爆發。很快，香港在保衛戰中淪陷。1942 年日本帝國成立香港佔領地政府，為落實對香港的全面管治，佔領地總督磯谷廉介成立「兩華會」。當中的「華民代表會」由羅旭龢出任主席，為日本佔領地政府提供華人政務的意見，協助日軍管治香港。1945 年 8 月香港重光，翌年楊慕琦爵士(Sir Mark Aitchison Young)返回香港並於 5 月續任香港總督。羅旭龢便提交長 66 頁的報告，解釋其在日佔時期擔當華人代表的前因後果，但其論述不獲英國政府接納。

在戰時曾經與日軍合作的華人，雖然於戰後普遍獲得香港政府的寬大處理，羅旭龢亦未有被追究其叛國（叛逆英國）行為，但被政府列入黑名單。終身永不錄用，不得再出任公職。他同時也被中華民國廣東省政府列入追緝的漢奸之一，所以自此甚少出席公開活動。1949 年 5 月 23 日羅旭龢病逝。(更詳細的歷史事實和評論，可閱讀第 22-27 頁。)

榮 譽

(1) 1926 年--香港大學授予名譽法學博士學位
(2) 1927 年--英國國王佐治五世授予聖米迦勒及聖喬治最傑出同袍勳章（Companion of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George (CMG)）
(3) 1938 年--英國國王佐治六世授予下級勳位爵士（Knight Bachelor）
(4) 旭龢道(Kotewall Road)---約於 1910 年代由羅旭龢自資興建，是香港港島西半山的一條街道。全長 400 米，是上下山的雙行車路之一。

羅旭龢爵士特藏---香港公共圖書館

羅旭龢爵士特藏現庋藏 16,300 多冊中、英文書籍，其中大部分已成絕版珍本，如《繡像小說》(1903 年）、叢書《萬有文庫》(1929-1934 年)、《China in decay: the story of a disappearing empire》(1900 年）等。
存藏地點：香港中央圖書館九樓中央參考圖書館
藏書屬性：參考資料，可供市民在館內參閱。

簡介：

羅旭龢爵士在二十世紀初期是香港社會之傑出人士，他以熱心推動教育事業及社會公益而譽滿香江。羅爵士喜愛閱讀，並搜羅不少有價值的中西典籍。其特藏於 1975 年贈予香港政府，並於 1962 年移至大會堂公共圖書館供市民參閱；羅氏家族更設立一個特別基金用作維持及添購羅旭龢藏書。至 2001 年，特藏再移遷至香港中央圖書館繼續供讀者在館內參閱。

羅旭龢爵士特藏---香港大學

該特藏涵蓋超過 2,200 件藏品，包括信件、報告、手稿、演講稿、新聞剪報、照片及文物，記錄了羅旭龢爵士及其女兒羅怡基博士的生平和工作。藏品涵蓋 1925-1926 年省港大罷工、日治時期、公共服務、以及香港大學相關活動等主題。此外，藏品還包括羅旭龢私人生活的資料，包括自傳、日記和私人圖書館藏品。
尺寸：13 英尺（8 個盒子）
檔案年期：1896 年-1996 年

羅旭龢基金教授席（公共衛生學）---香港大學

「羅旭龢基金教授席（公共衛生學）Sir Robert Kotewall Professorship in Public Health」是香港大學李嘉誠醫學院公共衛生學院設立的明德教授席。該教授席旨在表彰及支持在公共衛生領域取得卓越成就的學者，特別是透過傳染病流行病學模型、統計分析以及大數據應用，為全球及個人健康防護制定實際防控策略的科學家。

誠如劍橋健康科學專家 Dr. Ron Zimmern 所言，公共衛生範疇在傳統學術醫學界有時容易被忽視。而此教授席的成立不僅印證了醫學院將公共衛生列為策略研究重點的遠見，更能有效深化學界對基因、分子決定因素與環境因素相互作用的理解，轉化為造福全球的公共衛生政策。

Dr. Ron Zimmern 是羅旭龢的外孫，該教席由 Dr. Ron Zimmern 透過母親施羅艷基女士(Mrs. Doris Zimmern)的[施羅艷基基金會 Doris Zimmern Charitable Foundation]設立。

羅旭龢爵士與香港大學有著深厚的淵源，曾任香港大學校董會和校務委員會成員，該教席遂以其外祖父的名字命名，於 2007 年十二月創立。

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國史館 Academia Historica

李培德主講

「戰時香港華人菁英與對日合作—以羅旭龢個案為例」紀要

李宗洋 國史館修纂處研究助理《國史研究通訊第六期》2013 年 6 月 1 日

一、前言

本（003）年 2 月 25 日，邀請到對商業史卓有研究的李培德教授蒞館演講。主題為「戰時香港華人菁英與對日合作—以羅旭龢個案為例」，探討香港華人菁英在二戰期間在中、日、英三國政府間夾縫求生的歷程。

李培德教授是日本東京大學博士，師事濱下武志教授。曾在香港大學亞洲研究中心進行為期兩年的「中國商業史論壇」研究，與該校的黃紹倫教授共同以中國近代的家族企業為中心，探討臺灣鹿港辜家、香港何東家族、上海榮氏等 3 個家族企業的發展過程。本次演講主題是李培德教授研究羅旭龢的初步嘗試，透過在英國國家檔案館所發現的「自辯書」切入，從中探究羅旭龢在二戰期間的立場轉換與戰後如何擺脫「通敵」罪嫌的過程。

二、演講內容摘要

李教授對羅旭龢的研究，始於在英國國家檔案館查閱殖民部檔案時，意外發現羅旭龢在戰後寫給英國政府的自辯書。之後在參與日本學習院女子大學的研討會中，對羅旭龢有了更進一步的探討。其後，曾主持羅旭龢後人捐贈檔案給香港大學的事務；並與濱下武志教授共同編纂日港關係史料，在相關史料上已有所掌握，於是開始著手研究二戰期間的羅旭龢。此次演講便是其對羅旭龢研究的初步成果。

香港作為英國殖民地，統治者與被統治者之間存有鮮明的社會分層，華人菁英則是這兩個階層中間的「夾心層」。他們一方面是華人社會的領袖，同時也充當港、英政府「以華治華」的代表。面對這一特殊的處境，香港的華人菁英往往採取「分離的效忠」。一方面應付香港的

英國殖民政府，另一方面也應付深刻影響香港的廣東地方政權、南京國民政府。到了二戰期間，更要應付日本政府。造成他們總是在二至三個政府之間游走，以維護自身的利益與生存。

在英國殖民香港期間出生的歐亞混血兒，對於香港的政治、經濟、文化、社會、宗教等方面，都曾發揮重要的影響力。主要原因在於這些混血兒具有雙重的文化認同，使他們能游走於華洋社會之間。根據余志穩就香港的混血族群進行的分析來看，香港的混血兒大體可以分為三類：葡裔、華裔及英裔，尤以葡裔的歐亞混血兒人數最多。這些歐亞混血兒在文化認同上，又可分為四類：取華人名字，以中華文化為本位；取華人名字，以歐洲文化為本位；取歐人名字，以中華文化為本位；取歐人名字，以歐洲文化為本位。其中，又以取華人名字，以中華文化為本位的混血兒最為重要。他們之中的菁英在世紀之交異軍突起，透過獨特的文化背景與個人努力，爬升到社會頂層。同時，為了維護本身獨特的地位，他們往往會彼此通婚，例如何東家族便是一個知名的混血兒家族。雖然作為混血兒，但他們大多以華人自居。例如何東家族便以母系的寶安人自居，而非父系的荷蘭人。也由於他們具有社會地位與可觀的財富，因此在香港的公共事務上也扮演著重要的角色。

羅旭龢出身於一個普通的家庭，父親 Hormusjee Kotewall 是巴斯人（Parsi）（註 1），是來自印度的商人。羅旭龢並沒有接受過大學教育，16 歲便進入公務體系服務，歷仕於警署、裁判司署、布政司署。因工作表現出色，獲委任為定例局非官守議員。1925 年省港大罷工是他起家的關鍵，當時他代表港英政府前往廣州，與廣州國民政府進行談判。順利解決罷工問題，自此深受香港政府的器重。1936 年起，便擔任行政局的非官守議員。在此之前，曾先後成為行政、立法兩局議員者，只有周壽臣一人。由此可見，羅旭龢的事業當時正如日中天。

正因為羅旭龢妥善處理了省港大罷工，使香港的英國人認定他是不可多得的華人領袖，被港英當局視為是處理華人事務的專家。1938 年，他到港督官邸接受爵士勳銜，這是戰前香港華人中的第三位。其他兩位是何東和周壽臣，顯示他深受港英當局的器重。

香港華人菁英中，混血兒能爬升到社會高層，並非是因為他們的種族與英國較為接近。而是他們相對於其他華人來說，在文化上更接近英國，這使他們更易於接受西方式的教育。如果拿羅旭龢與羅文錦、周壽臣兩位華人菁英相比，便能從中發現，族群因素並非關鍵因素。以出身來說，羅旭龢、羅文錦同為混血兒；以教育背景來說，他們三人都受過西方教育，但羅旭龢是三人中唯一不曾赴海外留學的。以這三人在香港政界的發展來看，羅旭龢可說是僅次於周壽臣，而羅文錦又緊追於羅旭龢之後。他們在香港與中國內地同樣都具有可觀的人脈，都具有雄厚的財力，因此成為英人施行「以華治華」的樣板人物。

香港本身並無天然資源，日本占領香港的目的顯然不在於此。香港具有作為支援中國內地作戰的轉運站之功用，為了使香港不再對中國內地發揮作用，日軍便將矛頭指向香港。占領香港後，日本並無意在香港投注太多心力，希望以最少的資源管理香港。於是採取「以華制華」的策略，羅致香港各界華人菁英 26 人，組織總稱為「兩華會」的華民代表會與華民各界協議會。香港的華人菁英中，除周埈年一人外，其餘全被日本網羅到兩華會中。

在英國國家檔案館典藏的殖民地部檔案中，編號 CO968/120/1 的檔案是戰後英國政府處理羅旭龢通敵問題的檔案。其中包括了一份長達 66 頁，由羅旭龢本人於 1945 年 9 月 12 日親自撰寫的自辯書。戰後英國政府對於戰爭期間與日本合作的華人菁英不曾以「通敵」罪名予以起訴，但這份自辯書提供了瞭解羅旭龢於戰時與日本人合作的動機與過程。從這份自辯書與

檔案中相關人士的供詞，可以知道羅旭穌留港主要是受到時任華民政務司的 R. A. C. North、防衛監督 J. A. Fraser 與律政司 C. G. Alabaster 的請託。希望他「為了廣大華人社會的好處，應答應日本人的要求，與日本人合作會對社會有好處」，這一證詞也受到 R. A. C. North 等人的肯定。加上在他周遭朋友的勸說下，羅才留港與日本人合作。二戰期間，日本人對於立場向來親英的華人領袖並不信任，甚至加以監視或刻意留難。羅旭穌曾因此謀劃離港，但為友人所阻。這些行動，也成為他日後得以擺脫「通敵」罪嫌的原因之一。

1945 年 9 月英軍重返香港，為了迅速恢復對香港的統治與秩序，採取了與日本統治香港期間同樣的手法，意圖以華人力量來維持局面。因此在面對香港華人菁英的通敵問題上，採取了變通的手法。凡是不涉及軍事方面的嫌疑者，都不加以搜捕或審判。不過港府為了保全自身顏面，還是要求羅旭穌等人「退出公眾生活」，低調地離開政界，安渡餘生。

戰後，香港華人菁英除了來自英國政府的通敵追究外，也面臨國民政府的漢奸指控。國民政府成立「肅奸委員會」，負責處理戰爭期間的漢奸審判。廣州行營向香港政府提出的 83 人名單中，羅旭穌與周壽臣、羅文錦等華人菁英都名列其中。然而香港政府出於自身立場，對於這些名單上的人物大多採取拖延態度。最後因國共戰爭爆發，中華民國政府再也無心力於此議題上而不了了之。

【註 1】臺灣一般譯作帕西人。巴斯人是伊朗裔的印度人，他們大約在 8-10 世紀間自伊朗移居印度，仍保有其傳統的瑣羅亞斯德教（祆教）信仰。因此在國籍、語言與歷史上是印度人，但在宗教、血緣與文化上又與一般的印度人不相同。

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明報

香港淪陷時期史料解密 羅旭穌「奉旨」通敵

鄭明仁《明報》2015 年 9 月 18 日

香港歷史檔案館數以萬計藏品之中，「羅旭穌爵士檔案」堪稱研究香港史的上佳材料。羅旭穌乃上世紀港英年代和日佔時期的傳奇人物，在政壇上，他經歷了由天堂跌落地獄的不歸路；在個人名聲上，他從港英政府最信賴的盟友，變成英國政府眼中的「殖民地叛徒」。因為他在香港淪陷期間充當了首席華人代表，積極和日本軍政府合作，成為頭號附敵者。英國政府於香港重光後把他打入地獄，一度要以「賣國」罪名起訴他，羅最終可能被問吊；羅旭穌在危急關頭亮出「免死金牌」，證明他是獲港英高層授意跟日本人合作。英國政府最後決定不起訴他，但要他絕迹官場，永不錄用。本文是筆者根據英國政府開立的羅旭穌爵士檔案，重構英政府如何清算羅旭穌，而羅旭穌如何替自己辯護的經過。

羅旭龢（Sir Robert Hormus Kotewall, 1880-1949）雖然是歐亞混血兒，但以華人自居。在官府任職時因表現出色而獲英國殖民地部賞識，官至布政司署首席文案。羅旭龢離開官場後，擔任多間公司董事。他因居中斡旋協助港英政府解決 1925 年省港大罷工，成為港英政府寵兒。以後很多涉及華人的重大事務，他都參與決策，很快便躍居首席華人代表。日軍侵港前，他曾一度與國民政府駐港代表商討聯手保衛香港的可能性。香港淪陷後，以羅旭龢為首的百多位華人領袖很快便被日軍控制起來，指使他們組成華民代表會協助日本軍政府「以華制華」。自此，羅旭龢便經常以首席代表身分出席官方場合帶領會眾高呼「天皇萬歲」，且帶頭聯署通電催促重慶蔣介石政府盡快和日本議和，實際是叫蔣介石投降。羅旭龢在日佔期間的所作所為，當時的報章都有詳細記載，風頭一時無兩。然而，這亦埋伏了戰後英人對他的殺機。戰後英國重新接管香港，不少曾經「落水」的華人領袖紛紛返回港英政府身邊。當時正值用人之際，政府也就寬待他們，沒有作出大範圍的秋後算帳。不過，英國政府指身為首席華人的羅旭龢，身懷「通敵賣國」重大嫌疑而要接受調查。

遠東區殖民地叛徒？

英國殖民地部於香港重光之始，便特別為羅旭龢開設了一個專檔（CO968/120/1），名為「Colonial Renegades in the Far East Individual Cases : Hong Kong Sir Robert Kotewall」（遠東區殖民地叛徒。個案：香港，羅旭龢爵士）。這個機密檔案長達 163 頁，內容包括殖民地部與港英政府交換對戰後處置羅旭龢的進展、羅旭龢提交的自辯書等等。這個檔案給人的印象是，戰後殖民地部亟欲以「賣國」罪名將羅旭龢繩之於法，數次催促港英政府答覆如何處置羅旭龢。其中，殖民地部於 1945 年 11 月 21 日向港英政府拍發電報：「殖民地部希望知道是否已對羅旭龢爵士採取了任何行動，及有何建議……」而在此之前的 10 月 4 日，英國「欽差大臣」麥道高向殖民地部助理次官 Gerald Gent 提交的報告中，指出羅旭龢在淪陷期間的所作所為，確已激怒了很多人，建議殖民地部根據英國法律處理。不過，在更早之前的 9 月 15 日，麥道高已去信 Gerald Gent，表示暫時沒有證據可以對付羅旭龢，只能讓他慢慢消失。而麥已告知羅，必須解除所有公職，等候進一步調查。

麥道高（D. M. MacDougall）在戰後出任華民政務司，並曾署任輔政司，他在處理羅旭龢事件上扮演舉足輕重角色。1945 年 8 月，日本投降後，英國夏慤少將搶先回港接管政權，而早在 1944 年英國殖民地部已成立「香港計劃小組」（Hong Kong Planning Unit）為收復香港後重建民政鋪路。麥道高被委任為小組主任，負責安排和統籌光復香港後的補給和政務事宜。1945 年 10 月，麥道高向 Gerald Gent 提交了一份「香港整體狀況報告」（General Report on Hong Kong），就香港各方面情況作出報告和評估。麥道高在報告中特別撰述「內奸與附敵者」（Quislings and Collaborators）一章，他在附件中開宗明義說：「表面證據顯示，幾乎所有社會領袖都和日本人有這樣那樣的同謀合作。只有一個人雙手是完完全全乾淨的，他就是周峻年。因為他在香港淪陷後，很快便逃離香港前往澳門。」麥道高在報告書中特別點名羅旭龢，指他在淪陷時期的行為，事後招來很多非議和指控。

律政司與「叛徒」會面？

殖民地部把羅旭龢列為第一號打擊對象，因為他是整個淪陷期間和日本人最積極合作的一

位。羅旭龢自知大禍臨頭，早於重光後一個月的 9 月 12 日向港英政府呈交了長達 66 頁的自白書。細述早於 1920 年代已協助政府化解省港大罷工困局，證明自己忠於英國、有功於英國。最重要的是，他在自白書公開了他為何被迫和日本人合作的秘密。原來他和周壽臣、羅文錦、羅文惠等華人領袖，在香港淪陷後很快便被日軍軟禁起來。羅旭龢憶述，1942 年年 1 月 1 日，他們在華人行李忠甫的辦公室討論日方提出的合作建議時，有人走進來說 North 先生（那魯麟，淪陷前港英華民政務司）想見羅旭龢。羅旭龢走出房間，見到 North、Alabaster（魏伯達，港英律政司）、Fraser（傅瑞，港英防務主任）在一起。之後，大家進入一個擠滿人的房間。羅旭龢憶述，North 低聲向他和周壽臣說：「為着香港市民的利益，我們必須照着日本當局的要求去做。」North 並表示日方會邀請羅旭龢等人合作，這對社會有好處。羅旭龢向 North 出示一份草擬稿，這份草稿的內容是根據日本人較早前提出的建議所寫成的。內容大致是：「過去 5 年我們親眼目睹同胞經歷戰爭的慘況，我們很痛心，我們渴求和平到來。因此，任何能促進日本與中國的和平友好的事，我們都誠意盡力協助。同時，我們願意盡力協助香港日本政府去維持治安，保護市民的生命和財產。」

在 Alabaster 和 Fraser 面前，羅旭龢向 North 讀出這份草稿。North 同意內容「無害」，大家應該簽名作實。Fraser 插嘴道：「為了香港社會的利益，他們（日本人）叫你們做什麼就做什麼。」「間中還可以跟日本人玩一玩詭計。」並揚言：「不用怕，我們幾個月就會回來。」

「叛徒」與日本合作

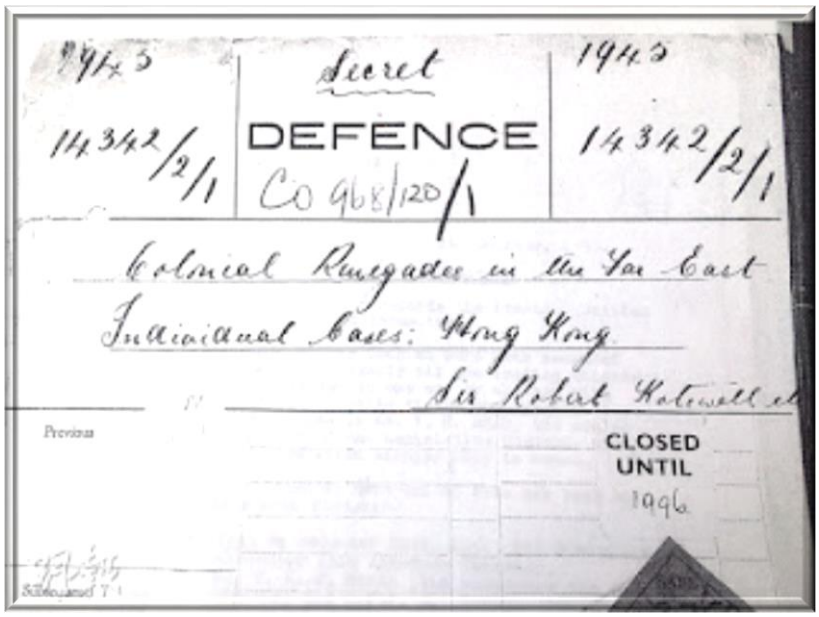
羅旭龢等人的合作方案很快便被日本軍政府接納，沒有任何修改。1 月 2 日，合作方案在羅旭龢等 7 位華人領袖下簽署生效。簽署儀式後，日本人表示從今以後大家合作做事，大家是朋友了。翌日羅旭龢與周壽臣再次談起和那魯麟等三位港英高官會面經過，羅、周都相信這三位最高級官員是代表英國政府說話的。之後，這批社會領袖便按着這些指示去跟日本人合作了。但英國人並未能像想像般「幾個月就會回來」，羅旭龢坦言沒想到這樣一合作竟然持續了近 4 年。羅旭龢在自白書裏用了不少篇幅訴說他「寄人籬下」、不時受到日本人奚落的苦況，但仍竭力為華人請命。他用了這段話作為自白書的結語：「And now, I have told my story -- not in defence of my actions, but in hope that truth and justice may prevail.」（現在，我講完我的故事。我不是要為自己過去所做的辯護，而是希望事實與公正得到彰顯。）

死後再成為新聞人物

有份授意羅旭龢跟日本人合作的那魯麟於戰後離開集中營，復任華民政務司，他於 1945 年 10 月離任。在返英前夕分別會見了中西傳媒，發表聲明正式替羅旭龢及周壽臣平反。《華僑日報》當時是這樣報道那魯麟的聲明：「余（那魯麟）當時（遭日本人扣押時）曾希望日當局許以自由，俾可稍竭綿薄，負責折衝，冀為華人稍減其痛苦。無如事與願違，最後亦須被押於集中營。不得已於未押之先，與前防務主任傅瑞先生，前律政司魏伯達爵士，一同往晤羅旭龢和周壽臣兩爵士及其當日諸同事，代余肩其責任。羅周諸君子，因此而忍辱出任艱鉅，受盡日人無數壓迫與凌辱……不知者非徒不表同情，反因是而發生誤會，諸多譭謗。加以不堪入耳之言，令余對於羅周兩爵士，暨其當日諸同事中心抱歉之深，實非褚墨所能形容。誠以此中誤會，是不應有也。今此中真相已水落石出，此種誤會當能煥然冰釋。茲當臨別贈言，謹籲請全港民

眾努力合作，以克復當前困難。共謀本港之復興，『與中英之親善，進而保持世界之和平』。是則余深切之期望。」那魯麟一錘定音，英國政府認為不應對羅旭龢再窮追猛打，決定不起訴他。條件是要他從此絕迹江湖，羅旭龢案就此了結。根據檔案披露，英國政府其實早已知道羅旭龢等人是獲港英高官授意和日本人合作，為何於重光不久仍要追殺羅旭龢？筆者認為這是英國政府「棄車保帥」策略，旨在迫使這位頭號附敵分子下馬。好讓其他附敵代表過關，對從日佔時期走過來的平民百姓也好交代。

1945 年 10 月開始，日佔時期排名第二位的華人代表周壽臣，便取代羅旭龢成為首席華人。羅旭龢從此退隱山林，直至 1949 年 5 月 23 日心臟病發死亡，才再度成為新聞人物。5 月 25 日出殯當天，致祭的中外名流官紳及親友達二千餘人。港督葛量洪特派代表送殯，對羅旭龢作最後敬意，也算是對其生前為殖民地服務的肯定。



1945 年英國政府為了清算羅旭龢，
特別為他開立「殖民地叛徒」檔案，此照片為該檔案封面。

■後記：香港歷史檔案館所存的羅旭龢檔案，乃英國檔案局原件副本。英方一直列為機密文件，至 1996 年始解密。筆者獲嶺南大學劉智鵬博士的提示，得睹檔案的全文，特此鳴謝。

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禮堂上的羅旭龢爵士

鍔下人（聖保羅男女中學）2015 年 9 月 21 日

中學時，幾乎每日都會到禮堂 morning assembly，會上全體唱聖詩，諗主禱文和學會通告。其餘節目不定，有時老師校長訓話，有時其中一班會準備 class performance 表演給全校欣賞，有時會有嘉賓演講。早會有時長，有時短，有時精彩，有時悶到想瞓。但無論早會的節目如何千變萬化，禮堂講台的格局始終不變。講台的兩側，端正和低調地標示着禮堂的全名：Sir Robert Kotewall Hall，羅旭龢爵士堂。

讀書時期，間中會聽過 Miss Kotewall（Dr. Bobbie Kotewall，羅怡基博士），不過內容多是老師自己想當年，甚少和 Miss Kotewall 有關。「Miss Kotewall 嗰陣」只是強調年份久遠，意思等同上一輩講的「咸豐年」。香港甚少人姓 Kotewall，大概 Kotewall 校長和 Sir Robert Kotewall 是家族關係吧？後來知道 Kotewall 校長是 Sir Robert Kotewall 的女兒，幾乎一生都獻給聖保羅男女中學。但何以學校禮堂是 Sir Robert Kotewall Hall 呢？禮堂不是古蹟紅磚屋部分，似乎在羅旭龢死後多年才落成，所以一直懷疑羅旭龢和聖保羅男女的關係，不止是前校長父親這樣簡單。中學時代的疑團早已拋諸腦後，直至今年母校大鑼大鼓大陣仗慶祝百週年，才再度浮現。

羅旭龢出身歐亞混血家族（Eurasian），出身不算顯赫，但足以供書教學至中學畢業。教育改變命運，中學畢業後由政府基層文員一直做到布政司署首席文案，更被任命為官守太平紳士。後來從商，然後被委任進立法局，和周壽臣並列華人立法局議員。周壽臣是清廷洋務運動時留美幼童之一，當時年事已高。相反羅旭龢正值壯年，未過五十，前途無可限量。任內最成功的事跡，莫過於對省港大罷工的處理。1927 年，廣州國民政府在香港和廣州英租界策動大罷工，香港經濟幾乎全面停頓。廣州政府支持的罷工勢力，不乏三教九流之人，香港不少工人被威迫參與罷工。羅周兩人以毒攻毒，為政府請同樣三教九流的人去保護他們免受罷工勢力威迫。兩人又策動文宣反制支持罷工的輿論，爭取美加澳紐華人的支持港府。最後代表香港政府和廣州政府談判，罷工結束，香港經濟秩序得以恢復。省港大罷工令羅旭龢聲名大噪，後來更晉身殖民地最高機關行政會議。

省港大罷工前幾年，聖保羅男女中學的前身聖保羅女書院（St Paul's Girls' College）已經有逾 300 女生就讀。堅道校舍不敷應用。時任校長胡素貞博士看中麥當奴道現址這塊地，但屢次寫信去輔政司（後來的布政司、大致等同現在的政務司）不果，請商界友好幫忙也不得要領。後來胡博士在羅旭龢主辦的晚會上，和副輔政司談起新校舍一事。他甚感興趣，逐安排胡博士見時任署理輔政司符烈槎（Fletcher）。符烈槎答應撥出這塊地和港幣五萬元，條件是學校另籌 10 萬。而新校舍委員會的主席，正是羅旭龢。學校得到當時富商利希慎、馮平山等富商捐助，相信亦和羅旭龢的商界人脈和政治地位有關。1924 年，港督司徒拔伉儷主持動工儀式。

司徒拔任內香港廣東局勢動盪，適逢海員大罷工和省港大罷工，有得震無得瞓。難怪他事後憶述聖保羅女書院新校舍動工儀式是其任內最開心片段之一。好景不常，興建新校舍期間撞正省港大罷工，導致工程停頓，連向銀行融資都有困難。最後港府接受學校以校舍作抵押，延至 1927 年才完成，但學校已負債 26 萬港元，是當時的天文數字。

羅旭龢家族似乎同胡博士和聖保羅女書院關係密切。除了羅旭龢辦晚會令胡博士結識到輔政司促成新校舍之外，胡博士的回憶錄在其他地方亦有提及羅旭龢。胡博士曾考慮婉拒英皇喬治五世的授勳，但被羅旭龢說服改變主意，結果成為首位獲授勳的華人女性。為了償還新校舍的負債，胡博士要赴美籌款，長達一年。赴美期間，校務由羅旭龢妹妹 Esther Kotewall 辦理。當時報紙亦有報道羅旭龢本人出席學校大大小小的活動，例如華北振災、抗日義賣等。

1941 年太平洋戰爭爆發，日佔香港。羅旭龢和其他華人領袖一樣，被迫和日本當局合作。今日的歷史研究都認為羅旭龢等華人和日本合作，是為世所迫。何況華民組織皆無實權，無力賣港。不過由於羅旭龢的附日漢奸形象太過深入民心，重光後港府下令他絕迹官場，政治影響力告一段落。幾年後鬱鬱而終，比年長得多的同僚周壽臣先走一步。其大力支持的聖保羅女書院捱過日佔時期後，卻發展成香港首間男女中學。戰後七十年來，校友者眾，遍佈各行各業，全球各地。母校百年歷史，除了金壁輝煌的校友名單外，亦少不了羅旭龢家族這一頁。稍為回顧一下羅旭龢家族對母校的貢獻，大概都會同意，學校禮堂名為「羅旭龢爵士堂」，實至名歸。



