



J.C.M. →



Back verandah, off the Plant Room



From my room, south over Mc'Lennan Garden

"... a slight nod to the Tudor" (note wooden board-walk and unpaved street)

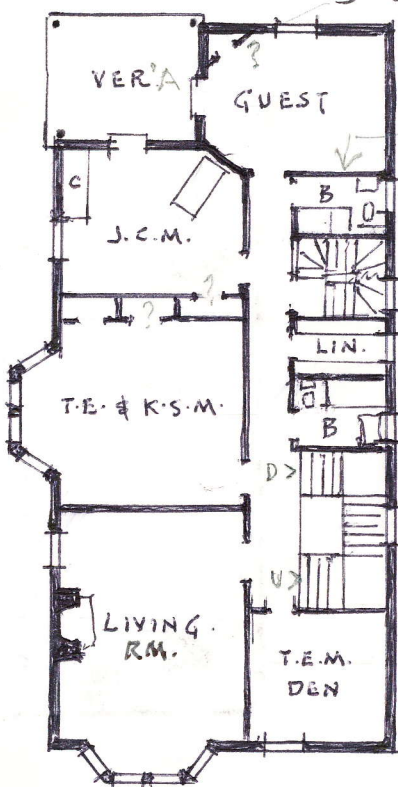
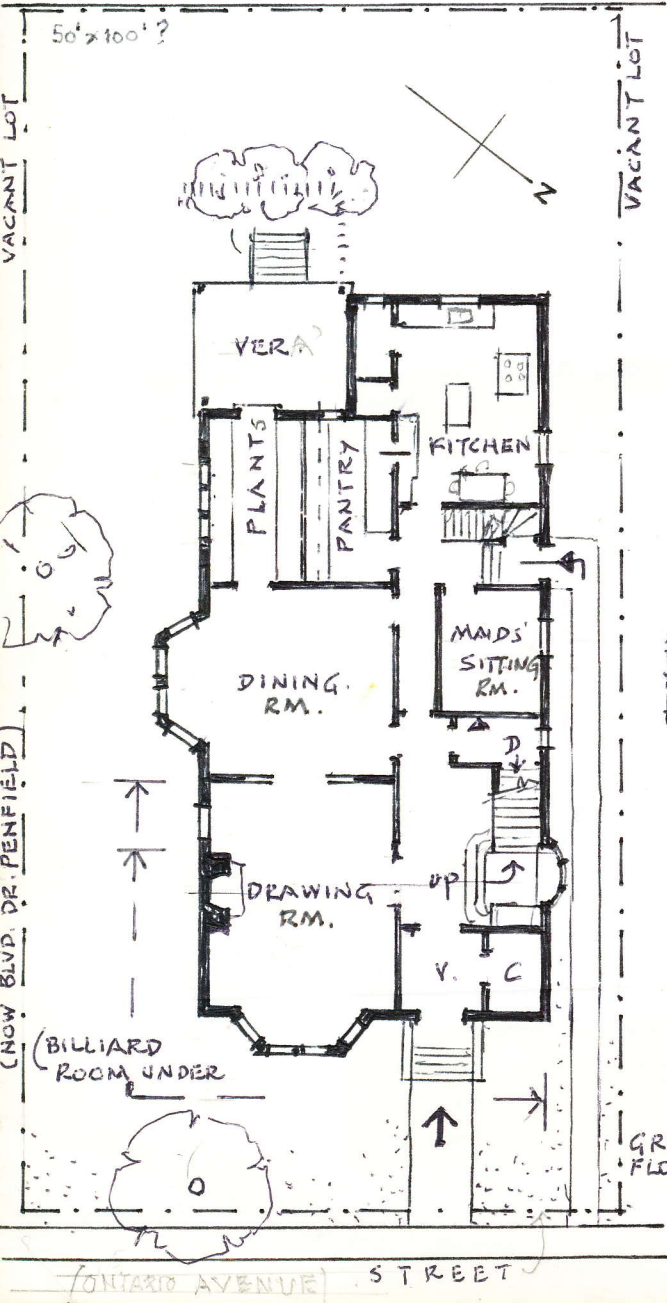
62 ONTARIO AVENUE
(Hogle & Davis, Architects)

1

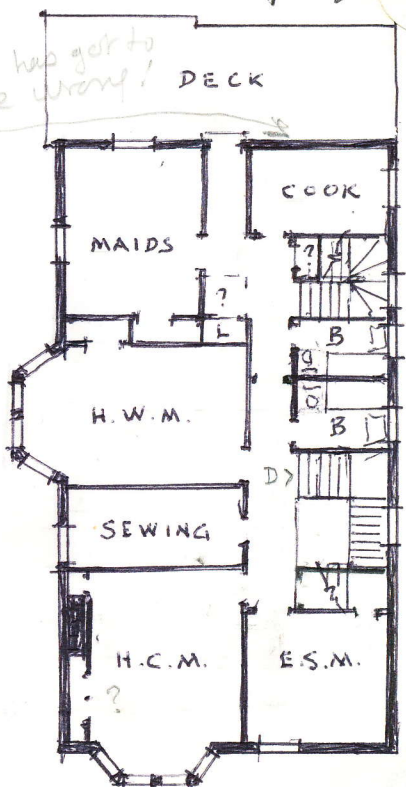
my room & verandah →



South side from Vacant lot. (which became McGregor St., then Blvd. Dr. Penfield).



1ST FL.



2ND FL.

(FROM MEMORY, '02-'84: SCALE 1/16"=1'-0" ±)

(See App. I: 14.1)*

1911-1922

62 ONTARIO AVE

After my appearance on the scene, Dad's next major achievement was building the Merrett's' new house on Ontario Avenue. It still stands at the north-west corner of Ave. de la Musée and Blvd. Docteur Penfield (which latter did not then exist east of Simpson St.)¹ It was built of buff brick, stone trimmed, with a slight nod to the Tudor: the front door had a suggestion of tracery in the side lights, and the dining room was panelled in oak linen-fold! It was a large house and quite luxurious in keeping with most of its neighbours, though out-shone by some (in particular those belonging to a Molson, a McLennan, a French senator and at the top of the street a Forget). To run it, Mother maintained a staff consisting of a cook, two maids (Scottish girls named Margaret and Daisy) and, for a little while, a nanny for me; and there was also an itinerant furnace-man-cum-gardener (though there was no garden other than a few tulips, only grass to cut).

where
was call
M-Greg
St.

see All

I occupied a large bed-playroom, fitted with built-in drawers for my clothes and a vast toy cupboard. Off this room was a verandah. The door to it had brass weatherstrip which in certain winds would howl like a banshee, often in the middle of the night, evoking echoing howls of terror from me. When not being taken for "walks" in my carriage or sleigh I was aired on this verandah. I well remember the white bunny fur coat and hat and its hanging to dry out on the radiator close to my bed. During the first few years I spent most of my time, in that household of grown-ups, in the company and care of Dorothy my nurse whom I liked, and then I became one of the gang of kids living on our street, or nearby.



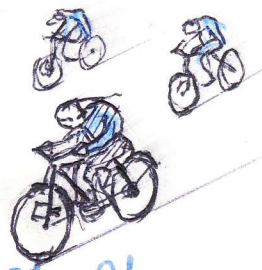
The verandah & howling door.
(& Teddy.)

Being a cul-de-sac (were we "dead-end kids"?) there was not much traffic on Ontario Avenue and we played more or less unrestricted up and in and out of our neighbours' and backyards (few of us had gardens as such). In winter we kids would swish all the way down to Sherbrooke Street on our sleighs and wait for a horse-drawn delivery cart from Dionne's the grocer, or Morgan's or Goodwin's, to hitch onto ^{down it and} ^{houses} for a ride up again. We dug houses and tunnels in the huge snowbanks between the ploughed road & sidewalks. We helped spring along by cutting channels in the street ice to guide the water run-off and then dammed them up again. All these activities caused our mothers worry that we would be smothered by cave-ins or squashed under the wheels or runners of what little traffic there was.



"Red River Suits"

One of the few restrictions imposed on me, and only me, was never to ride my bicycle lower down the hill than our own house and I have a vivid memory of ignoring it - to my grief. We all had "tickers" on our bicycles - cards clipped to the front wheel fork with clothes-pegs, which we could flick on with a toe to engage the card in the spokes and make a fine clatter. A bunch of us started down the hill and I, intent on switching on my "cut-out" at a given signal, swept past the imposed limit, flicked the clothes-peg engaging my ticker and also my toe in the spokes. I went over the handle bars at high speed to be picked up all bloody and helped limping home to a very upset mother. I think my injuries were considered sufficient punishment, and it was a lesson remembered.





"Photo by Notman"

Growing up at 62 Ontario Ave. ←



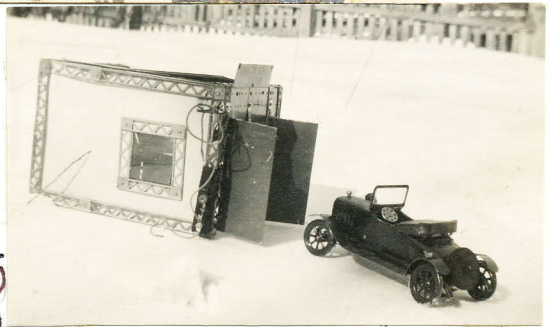
(Shirres House) - eliminated by McGregor St now Blvd. Dr. Penfield.)

"...a few tulips"

cm



Play Mates (Yulles & me)



Play things "Structo" - 2 fwd speeds + reverse (Erector Garage)

cm



Father's friend "Carrie"



see Plan P. 18a.

cm

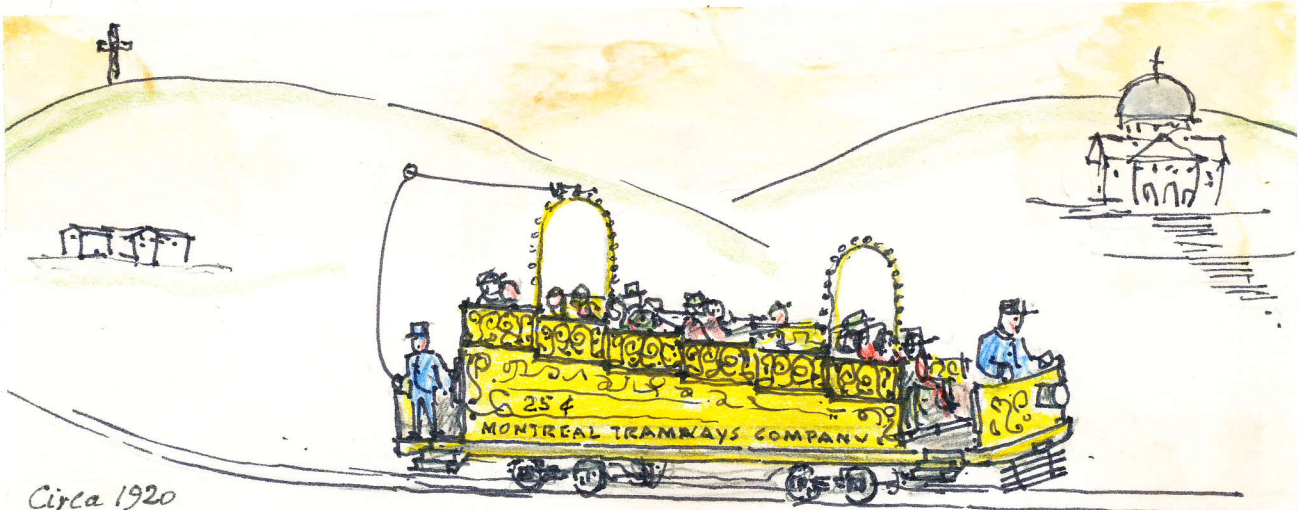
We moved to Crescent St. ... and then to Westmount Boulevard for 35 years (for KSA #90 later #3200) ... East side, a few doors below Sherbrooke.

At one stage of my upbringing while on Ontario Avenue, doubtless pre- or early school, I was subjected to a governess — as far as I know the only one of my pals thus afflicted, and I suppose it was, again, because my family was relatively so much older. In memory, Miss Fairbanks was a bit of an ogre: she had a visible mustache and beard, and I visualize her now as resembling The Ugly Duchess. She was very churchy and got on well with Mother whom she must have matched in age. When I was later confirmed at Ashbury she gave me a prayer book, and all in all she was probably very good to me, and just possibly for me. She would arrive after lunch and take me in charge until supper time. When weather permitted — that is, no actual cloudburst or blizzard — we would walk, and those long walks served me well in later years.* A favourite route was up the steps to Pine, west via Cedar (and the No. 25 Fire Station with its white horses and brass pole to slide down) Côte des Neiges, The Boulevard, Mount Pleasant & Wood Ave., Sherbrooke and home, having watched tiny men finishing the dome of The Mother House at Atwater. Sherbrooke Street had wooden board walks with several steps at each of the street intersections, particularly Drummond where we stopped to watch The Ritz Carleton being built, on an alternate walk eastward to McGill.

Other Ontario Avenue memories include water shut-offs heralded by a man ringing a handbell, and once involving buying new ashcans to be filled from a water cart. And once a gas leak caused all the manhole lids to blow off, in sheets of green flame, all up and down the street.

* See App. 1 re. P. 1.2 In 1922 the Bank merger* caused a drop in Dad's income and he had to sell the house. I recall being very upset and suddenly very aware of what a lovely house it was. It was the year I was sent to boarding school: I left from that house and returned at Thanksgiving to a terrace house on Crescent St. which Dad rented for a year before buying another on Westmount Boulevard, where ~~the~~ Mother and Dad ~~family~~ lived until Father died in 1958.

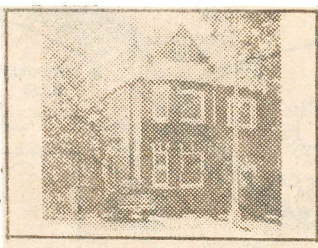
* See Page 48 et. seq. — walking around European cities.



Circa 1920

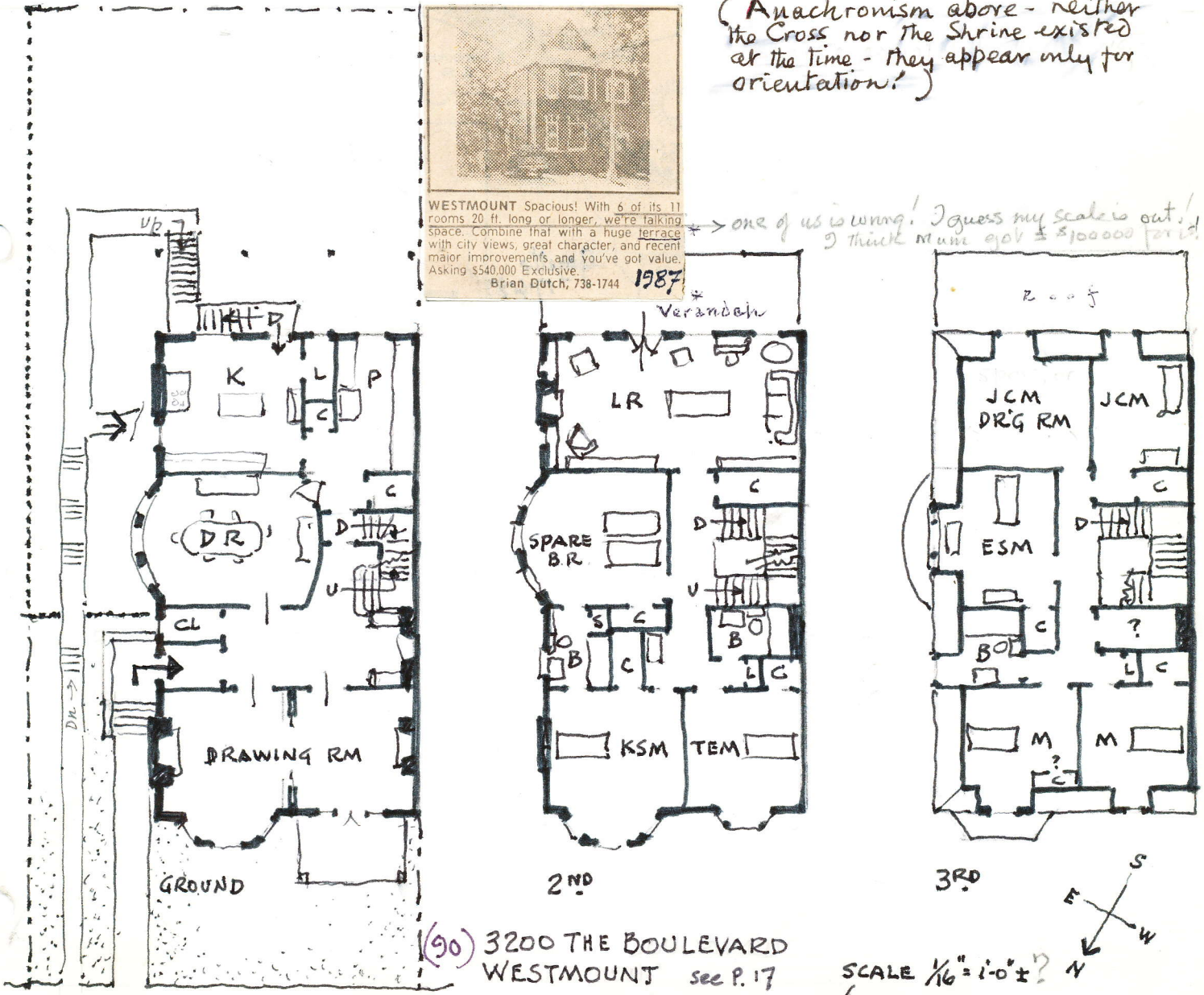
Come summer we would have our ride on the "Round the Mountain Car," also known as the "Flying Bedstead," predecessor of the sightseeing bus. All gilded wrot iron and electric lights, it was a stirring sight.

(Anachronism above - neither the Cross nor the Shrine existed at the time - they appear only for orientation!)



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* -> one of us is wrong! I guess my scale is out! I think main floor is \$100,000 for it!



(90) 3200 THE BOULEVARD WESTMOUNT see P.17

SCALE 1/16" = 1'-0" ± ?
from memory