

1926-1931

MCGILL

So? I do not believe that the question of an alternative - or a sequel - to R.M.C. had ever occurred to me, or the matter of a career. But nor do I remember consciously thinking about being an architect until the Summer after the R.M.C. debacle. But one day it suddenly seemed obvious that architecture was for me. So I sat down and sketched out plans and elevations of a sort of Westmount Tudor house (I had occasionally toyed with house plans and road layouts) and I sent it off to McGill with an application for the School of Architecture. And I was accepted (and so probably were all others who applied - at any rate we started as a class of eight or nine, which had shrunk to six by graduation).

The course in Architecture was fun, and, as far as we knew then, pretty good training. In 1926, 20th Century architecture had not hit Canada - certainly not Montreal or McGill. To us, contemporary architecture consisted of the skyscrapers going up in the U.S.A., whether neo-classical or neo-gothic. We were taken to see such Montreal wonders as the Royal Bank building on St. James Street, where I saw that the keystones of an arch were put in place first, supported on steel, and followed by the rest of the voussoirs similarly held up - the exact reverse of rational arch construction; and the Bell Telephone building, where I, as a dare, walked 20 feet along an outside wall beam, column to column, some sixteen floors above the sidewalk below.

* Memory must exaggerate - probably there was an offset floor below?

* The architects whose names we knew were chiefly the big American firms doing pseudo classic and gothic, or the "benighted" English ones: not any of the Dutch, French, German or Swedish people then leading the way. There were of course the few Montreal offices, our source of mandatory summer jobs.

* (Sir Edwin Lutyens, Sir Robert Lorimer, Sir Herbert Baker, Sir Aston Webb, etc.etc.)

We were taught the rudiments of our trade as it was then seen: Draughting and free hand drawing; how to cast shadows graphically; how to plot geometrically. The entasis on classical columns and the volutes of an Ionic capital; how to "stretch" a double-elephant sheet of Whatman's smooth-press paper on which to make presentation drawings rendered in monochrome wash of accurate details of all the classic orders. We were taught some structural engineering, about construction methods and materials and specification writing, and something of ancillary subjects such as plumbing and sanitation; but precious little if anything about heating or electrical services, and of course such sciences as air-conditioning and acoustics were virtually unknown to us.

We followed the history of Architecture all the way from the Egyptians through Greek, Roman, Romanesque, Mediaeval and Gothic to Renaissance. But we heard nothing of the modern movement then already well under way in Europe: that we discovered for ourselves mostly after we had finished college. But we did have a good course in the principles of design, taught by Percy Nobbs who was himself a very good practising architect and the best teacher on the staff. (He alone could keep the class awake and alert when the hot spring afternoon sun flooded our lecture room.) in the Macdonald Engineering Building. S.W. Corner

Ramsay Traquair was Macdonald Professor of Architecture and Director of the School. He was a small funny faced Scotsman from Edinburgh, with a walrus mustache, and he was inclined to splutter.¹ "Traquair" was probably less interested in running the school and in teaching history than in his per project.

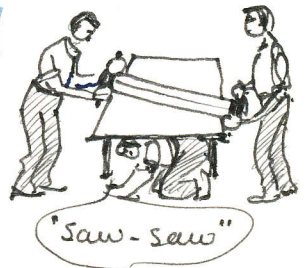
¹ Bob Montgomery and I later christened our Singer car in England "Traquair", because it spluttered like him.

of recording the native architecture of Quebec, on which he did a very thorough and excellent job: his publications were profusely illustrated with his own photos and measured drawings of churches and houses, most of them measured and drawn by his students on excursions for the purpose to Quebec City, l'Isle d'Orléans, Old Montreal and elsewhere. As a sideline, he taught the McGill C.O.T.C. bayonet fighting!



Prof. Traquair, McGill Campus.
(wartime bayonet instructor!)

Another faculty member was an Englishman named Carless, 2.I.C. to Traq, whom we teased unkindly by such inane tricks as piling up two or three samples of structural steel sections, precariously balanced on the edge of a draughting table so that, when Carless was nearby but with his back turned, a gentle nudge of the table would cause them quite decidedly to crash thunderously to the floor. And then there was my parlour trick of wood "sawing", set up with two fellows holding two long T-squares back to back and apparently gang-sawing a table in half, with me under it providing the sound effects. We worked so hard, including occasional traditional all-night sessions before a design went in, that we needed these little respites.



Our little School, totalling never more than 30 or 40 students in those days, was closely self-contained in the south-west corner of the Macdonald Engineering Building. It consisted of one large draughting room, a 15 seat lecture room and a small library between them; a workshop storeroom, two offices, and downstairs a "museum" full of casts of architectural

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E. Andrew Collard in The
Montreal Gazette, Sat. Nov. 14th 1987

In time some of the older professors, after their training, became useful in training young recruits in the COTC. Notable among them was Dr. A.S. Eve, who succeeded Ernest Rutherford as professor of physics.

Dr. Eve made an admirable second-in-command of the COTC. The young men in training used to speak of him as "Daddy Eve." He thought highly of his military role, but at times he appeared as "the absent-minded professor."

It happened when he set out from his home for a COTC drill on the campus. He felt proud of his full military uniform, Sam Browne belt and all. Fortunately, his wife caught a glimpse of him through a window. She was just in time, to call him back. As he left, he had picked up his old felt hat from the hall peg, instead of his military cap.

Another McGill professor who served as instructor was Prof. Ramsay Traquair, of the department of architecture. He was a Scot with a singularly unmilitary figure — small, with an immense head, and little legs. His appearance was not improved when he appeared on the campus in his kilt.

Prof. Traquair gave instruction in bayonet combat. In his instruction he would leap into the air, clutching his bayonet-tipped rifle, his kilt flapping about his scrawny little legs. "What you require," he would shout to the recruits, "is more fer-ocity!"

• Prof. A.S. Eve was father of my friend & classmate Dick Eve (father of Liz etc.)

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Principal Lewis Williams Douglas (1938-39) contemplated phasing out architectural education at McGill.

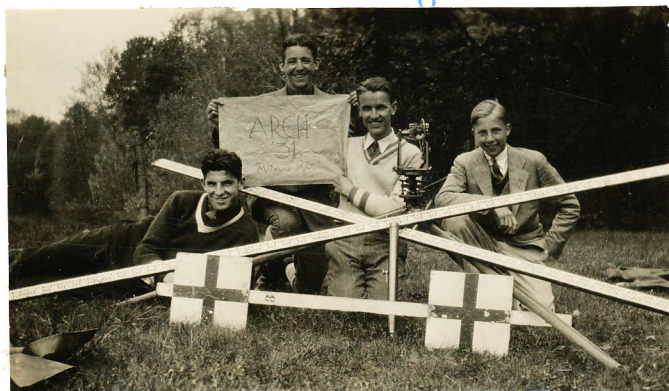
A number of young architects, George E. Auld (B.Arch.'33); Richard E. Bolton (MIT'29); E. Roscoe Chaffey (U. of Manitoba'24); Richard Eve (B.Arch.'31); Harry Mayerovitch (B.Arch.'33); J. Campbell Merrett (B.Arch.'31); and Robert Montgomery (B.Arch.'31); sent a memorandum on January 10, 1938 to Principal Douglas of the University and Dean Ernest Brown of the Faculty of Applied Science. After expressing their alarm about the rumour which suggested that "owing to the low revenue from fees as against the relatively high expenditure on salaries, the necessity of closing the School entirely may have to be considered." Several suggestions for the improvement of architectural education at McGill, were submitted in this document. Among the criticisms were listed the "out-of-dateness" of some courses, the "doubtful value" of the School's museum filled with antiques instead of the display of contemporary materials and building methods, the absence of courses in "Regional Planning," "Town Planning," and "Housing," as well as the lack of encouragement in "self-expression and original thought." This document also contained two suggestions, namely, the establishment of an "Advisory Committee of leading architects and designers," and the admission of women to the School both of which were implemented shortly thereafter.† * 1987

from: MCGILL'S SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE
A RETROSPECTION

by Norbert Schoenauer, published by McGill 1987.

elements and classical sculptures used for free-hand drawing, and one or two ancient building models. For five years we did 90% of our practical and theoretical work in that one locale, leaving it only in the earlier years for certain lectures with the engineers, or in the Physics Building, or for life drawing class in the Art Gallery with a wonderful little Frenchman named Dyonnet, a Montreal painter; or for occasional field trips. Rarely, if we remembered about it or had time, we might visit the stacks of the Blackader Library of Architecture in the McEneaney. The course schedule of lectures and draughting meant a 9 to 5 day, plus frequent evenings, at home if not actually in the School. This rather tight and isolated program meant that we had less exposure to campus activities than, say, the Arts or Commerce boys or even the engineers. My only major extra-curricular activity was to design and produce the scenery for the McGill Red and White Review (1929 I think) a job always given an architect.

At the end of our second (?) year we spent two weeks camping on mattresses on the balcony of the Macdonald College gymnasium in Ste. Anne de Bellevue, while we learned the art of surveying (which I doubt we ever used professionally).



Hal Doran, Bob Montgomery, Val Bouchard, me.

We chained, levelled and angled a large section of the fields I now like to ski over. Our class of Arch '31 did this in company with the much larger class of Sc. '30 (this showing our superior intelligence over the engineers).

It was a tradition for these survey schools to record their presence for posterity by plastering their logo in paint over

various parts of Ste. Anne de Bellevue, where some are still to be seen today as on the highway bridge. In our year the more hoodlum element of the engineering class thought it clever to vary the prank by painting their mark in huge whitewash letters across the central lawn of Macdonald. This vandalism which embarrassed and angered us environment conscious architects who took no part in it, finally faded back into green grass about 5 years later (having cost us all our caution money)



The ill-mannered class of Sc. '30 immortalized, finally faded back into green grass about 5 years later (having cost us all our caution money)

Another year, after term, Traquair took two classes off for two weeks sketching school based in Quebec. This was a good thing and we got to know the city, & its surroundings, including the Ile d'Orléans, and under Traq's guidance I for one became very fond of the old houses, manors, churches and other heritage of old Quebec. Besides measuring up some of these charming buildings we also tried our hand at water-colour sketching. But no one thought to teach or encourage us in the art of photography.

One Christmas holiday Percy Nobbs commissioned Bob Montgomery and me to measure up the old church at Château Richer, some 20 miles below Quebec on the north shore. We spent the best part of two weeks (interrupted by a trip home for a few days over Christmas) in a farmer's little old house in the village. We had --



Château Richer, bas St. Laurent

a ground floor bedroom behind the family parlour. We ate mostly thawed pork from the household's winter store. In the mornings it was so cold that not only was there an inch of ice on top of the water jug we washed with, but our pillows were frozen stiff to about 8 inches from our noses. But it was great fun, and we allowed ourselves a few breaks to ski over the surrounding countryside. I think Percy paid us \$100 each plus transportation and lodging.

To get a degree it was necessary to chalk up a certain period of "apprenticeship" in an architect's office. Brother Stuart introduced me to Ernest Barott who at the time was enjoying one of the more successful practices in Canada. I worked in his office for 2 or 3 months each of the 4 summers while at McGill, receiving emoluments ranging from nil the first summer, through \$8 a week the second, to a high of \$25 a week. During that time Barott, with no partners, had on his boards, one after the other, the \$6 million Hudson Bay store in Winnipeg, the Bell Telephone Head Office in Montreal (some \$3 million) and The Aldred Building (about \$2 million); I got a very rosy impression of architectural practice. When I went to see E.I.B. just after graduating he greeted me with "Sorry, no job this year" - the Great Depression had begun, and fortunately for me I was able to tell him that I was off to Europe.



Staff ↑ of Barott & Blackader '29
Bob Montgomery - J.C.M. up a tree.

In my second year I joined a fraternity - ~~Ψ~~ - it was the "in" (Psi-U) thing in those days. My classmate Bob Montgomery, who was fast becoming my best friend, belonged to it and he and I became respectively the President and Vice-president...

Dor's Raphael in white clothes - hat
Bob

(or whatever were the greek terms for those offices.)

Because my exams were over earlier than some others' I was lucky to be appointed a delegate for the chapter to the "National" Convention in Chicago: an enjoyable trip. Another summer after my stint in the office I took



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my first trip to New York, stayed at the N.Y. chapter house of the fraternity, free, for two weeks and explored the city and its buildings all on my own.

E.Φ. Chapter of ΨΥ - Peel St. top J.C.M.↑ and R.A.↑ Montgomery



New York City with its neo-classic or neo-gothic skyscrapers, churches, colleges, etc., was an exciting place to explore in 1930.

Of the six in our class who graduated together in 1931, five practised the profession as principals. Only Dick Eve (father of Elizabeth) did not: he ended a chequered career teaching at the Architectural Ass'n in London where he died about 1972. Boucharad had a successful partnership in Bermuda; Dorau had a small office in Montreal - they are both dead. Kalman made an early killing in speculative developments in Montreal and long ago retired to Ottawa. Bob Montgomery, the best of us, joined E.I. Barott's firm after the war in 1945, but after a long bout of cancer he died in 1956. I joined that firm in January 1946.

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tential winners of the Canadian Championship this year.

We are fortunate to have back with us Brother Jim Sihler who has our every good wish for another successful season with the University Golf Team, which he so ably captained last Fall. Brother Sihler's many activities were recognized when he was elected President of the Nu Chapter for the coming term. Brother Shortly is our sole representative on the tennis court. We hope he may have even more success than last year when he made an excellent showing.

Perhaps it would not be amiss to mention at this point the academic standing of certain of our brothers in the examinations last May. Brother Beall for the third suc-

cessive time led his year in forestry; Brother Ryerson, who is now spending a year of study at the Sorbonne, France, again led the Modern Language course; and Brother Skilling, who before entering the University, had won innumerable scholarships, continued his enviable record and emerged at the head of the Political Science class.

In closing we wish to extend our best wishes to our three graduates, brothers Popplewell, Gibson, and Johnston, that they may continue to enjoy the same popularity and esteem in which they were held both at the University and amongst us here at the Chapter House.

RODERICK G. PHELAN,
Associate Editor

EPSILON PHI—*McGill University*

WITH the opening of a new college year at McGill the Epsilon Phi Chapter emerges from its long "hibernation" of summer inactivity. The members of the Chapter have gathered together again for new and better things and everyone seems set for a big year. Many of the brothers—in particular Grayson-Bell—returned with splendid coats of tan, mute evidence of the effects of basking overlong in the caressing rays of our hot summer sun. And speaking of coats, although just now one must do so in whispers, the house this year boasts a brand new coat of paint throughout, to say nothing of great improvements on the exterior, all of which is the product of "Brother" Ahnert's labours. Yes, the same Ahnert who has blossomed fourth this year in his new rôle of steward and purveyor to six fraternity houses—and the field house.

At this time, of course, we are very busy looking over prospective Psi U's. The house is pulling together well and we expect to report a fine list of pledges. Arthur Minnion has been tireless in this regard.

The Active Chapter wishes to thank those alumni who are turning out to give us a hand with the rushing and we wish all alumni to know that we greatly appreciate their help and consider their presence at the Chapter House during this time to be of great assistance.

Student activities have hardly begun, so not much can be said about the brothers' doings on the campus. We do know, however, that Brothers Halpenny, Hammond and Smyth are playing senior football, while Brother Munro Bourne is helping to uphold the well-known honour of Old McGill on the track. Brother Anglin was recently elected Secretary of Arts '33 and Brothers Sellar and Cornell are mapping out programmes for the Arts Undergraduate Society. "Moose" Montgomery is still chasing the elusive sheepskin (more elusive than the mountain-goats of his beloved Rockies) but we are pleased to announce that R. B. Call has finally "become a B. Comm."

Scholastically the Chapter can look anyone in the eye. It is being whispered about

that the Davis Cup for scholarship among McGill fraternities has again been won by Psi U. But we are especially proud of the scholarships won by Brothers Montgomery, Merrett and Minnion.

The first social function of the Chapter will be the rushing banquet on Thanksgiving Day. Meanwhile certain brothers are nobly holding up our end in the social field—notably Brother Hammond, if one should ask the freshmen who answer the telephone!

The Chapter was recently visited by Brother Edward L. Stevens, Chi '99, President of the Executive Council of Psi Upsilon, who spoke at one of our luncheons. Brother Stevens has given the Chapter many occasions to be grateful to him in the past and we certainly appreciate his visits.

Alumni Notes


Brothers Robert Montgomery '31 and Campbell Merrett '31 spent the summer on a motor tour of England and Scotland, in the course of which, judging by reports, they seem to have visited most of the cathedrals—and more of the taverns—in the old land.

Montgomery was the winner of the McLennan Travelling Scholarship in Architecture as well as the Lieutenant-Governor's Silver Medal for Professional Practice. Merrett won a Provincial Government Scholarship for European Study and the Lieutenant-Governor's Bronze Medal, while he split the Robertson Design Prize with Brother Val Bouchard, our third graduating Architect, who has been all summer working in Bermuda and is now suffering from some sort of a Bermudan fever.

Brother Russell Call, after a hectic "Grand Tour" to Budapest and other European centers, is with the Canadian Pacific head office. Brother Jack Taylor, having taken a two months' post-graduate course as room clerk of The Berkeley, works for the Bell Telephone in the daytime and plays football for Westwards in the evening. Brother Palmer Savage, who made his transatlantic expedition in company with Brothers Howard Nichols, Epsilon Phi '12, and Allan Hickey, has returned to his old love, Dominion Bridge. Brother Claude Morrison flies with the R. C. A. F. at Camp Borden.

H. MCK. FOWLER,
Associate Editor

* I have not the slightest idea who this sender might have been (sent to me in London, ± Xmas '31) — or do?, maybe?

Jobs of the fraternity:
Merry Xmas - etc
from another artist *

Yes, with bobbed hair (?)
Now —

ARCHITECTURE

BOUCHARD, VALMER DUDLEY

Born Dec. 26th, 1905, at Sherbrooke, Que. Education pursued at Sherbrooke High School and University of Bishop's College, Lennoxville, Que., '26. Sought further punishment at McGill. Activities: Fencing Club ('28, '29), class hockey ('27, '28, '29) and scenery painting. Hobby: Trying to burn the candle at both ends. Slogan: "Never be too critical."

• Dec'd. ± 1975, Bermuda

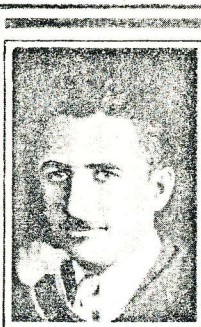
DORAN, HAROLD (HAL) JAMES

Born Oct. 27th, 1907, at Montreal, Que. Thence, St. Patrick's School and Mount St. Louis. Hence to McGill in 1926. College boxing champion, 160 pounds, '27-'28. Architectural representative Sc. '30, '26-'27. Secretary Architectural Society '27-'28-'29. President, '30-'31. P. J. Turner Building Construction Prize '27-'28. Junior Prom decorating '29-'30. Art Editor, McGill Annual '29, '30. • Dec'd ± 1977.

EVE, RICHARD STEWART

Born Dec. 14th, 1908, at Montreal. Educated at the Oxford Preparatory School, England, and at Lower Canada College. Entered Architecture with class of '30. Spent year 1927-28 in England, then joined the class of '31. Member of the Players' Club, Fencing Club, class hockey, English rugby. Hobby: Tea at 4.30. Favorite expression: "How about a cigarette, Bob?"

Dec'd. ± 1970, London
Father of Liz Lounder,
and of John, my grandson.



KALMAN, MAX MYRON

Born May 31st, 1906, at Montreal. Early life shrouded in mystery. Awarded Anglin-Norcross prize for Architectural drawing in 1927. Chairman Maccabean dance committee, 1929 and 1930. Junior Prom Committee, 1929. Secretary, Architectural Society 1929-30. Could have made Senior football team in 1923 but did not want athletic career cut short by four-year rule. Hobby: Telling "the best one of the year."

MERRETT, JOHN CAMPBELL

Started making noises in Montreal on August 26th, 1909. Was somewhat quelled at Selwyn House School, Montreal, and Ashbury College, Ottawa, but renewed the racket at McGill in 1926. Bit for the scenery painting job of the Red and White Revue of 1929, otherwise strictly confined to the aesthetic.

MONTGOMERY, ROBERT ALEXANDER

Born at Beebe, Que., in December, 1907. Educated at Bishop's College School, Lennoxville, and came to McGill with a Greenshield's Scholarship in the fall of 1926. "Daily" reporter 1926-27-28, associate editor, 1928-1929. Treasurer, Architectural Society 1928-'29, Vice-president 1929-30, Librarian 1930-31. Class hockey 1927-28-29-30.

Dec'd 1957, Montreal
My partner & best friend.
(I was his best man).

School of Architecture

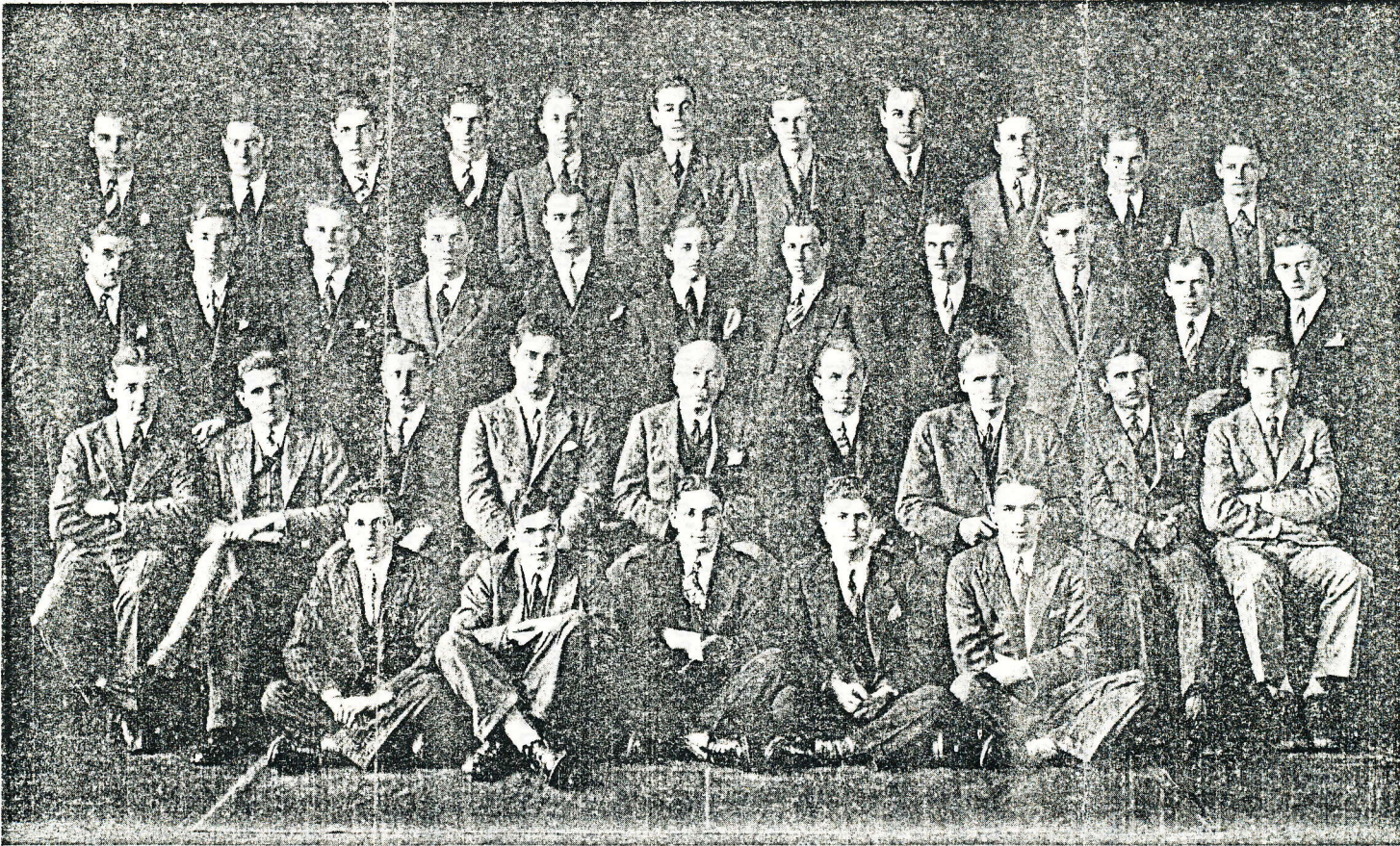


↑ "Faculty"

Front: Nielson Roy Wilson Percy Nobbs Ramsay Traquair Philip Turner Leslie Thompson R. John Pratt Prack Doran

2nd Row → Giffman Davis Blair Bunting Meyerovitch Wilson J.C.M. Kalsman
 Back row → Gardner McCreary Wadren Bland Davitt Green (Chemistry Bldg. Steps)

Architectural Society



Back Row:— M. ELIASOPH, H. E. DEVITT, H. F. MACGREGOR, H. J. DORAN, J. C. MERRETT, R. J. PRATT, R. S. EVE, I. J. BERGER, F. E. DAVIS, J. H. REMMER, J. A. WOOLYER
 Middle, Standing:— W. H. PORTER, H. E. GREENSPOON, C. M. TAYLOR, J. K. WOOLEVER, F. B. TAYLOR, C. W. ABBOTT, L. N. BOOTH, V. D. BOUCHARD, G. E. AULD, G. M. FISK
 J. THIBODEAU
 Middle, Sitting:— R. A. MONTGOMERY, Vice-Pres.; C. H. COPEMAN, Pres.; MR. NEILSON, MR. F. P. CHAMBERS, M.A., PROF. R. TRAQUIR, F.R.I.B.A., MR. P. J. TURNER
 F.R.I.B.A., PROF. L. R. THOMSON, M.E.I.C., M. M. KALMAN, Secy.; J. BLAND
 Front Row:— H. MAYEROVITCH, M. A. LOUIS, A. L. BERENSTEIN, M. J. MENDELSON, G. E. WILSON
 In Absentia:— PROF. P. E. NOBBS, F.R.I.B.A., MR. E. DVONNET, R.C.A., H. S. ROSS, D. L. BLAIR (Treas.), T. SHIMOKURA, E. L. BURGESS, E. SPRINKLE

Years: 1930, 1931, 1932, 1933, ?

* Pratt "The Navy Show" G. Patenaude Underlined care my class | Date of 1930!