



NED & KATIE MERRETT at 3200 The Boulevard, Westmount. (at Pat Munro's
Wedding, 05, 06, '53)

PARENTS

THOMAS EDWARD MERRETT and KATHARINE STUART CAMPBELL were married in Kingston, Ontario, on September 9th, 1891. Both came from military families and each was born in officers' quarters in a British Army garrison in the Province of Quebec: "Ned" at Ile aux Noix, in 1866; "Katie" at St. Jean in 1867. Their family backgrounds, along with their siblings, are tabulated in Appendix A VII-1.

TEM
1866-
1958

See "FAMILY"
pp 27, 33

Ned, sometimes nicknamed "Pinkie" in his youth, was the second of three children of Captain Thomas Merrett, Royal Canadian Rifles, formerly of Royal North Gloucester Militia and 3rd East Kent ("The Buffs") Regiment. His elder sister Agnes (Daisy), married to General Benson, and his younger brother Fred, a banker, both pre-deceased him.

Ned began his career in 1880 with the Merchants' Bank of Canada as a junior clerk in Kingston where his father was then stationed. In 1889, as accountant, he was transferred to the Napanee, Ont., branch, where in 1893 he was appointed manager. In Napanee two daughters were born, Helen in 1892, Hilda in 1893, and a son Stuart in 1895. In that year the family was moved to Mitchell, Ont., Father remaining there as manager only about a year until he was again transferred, this time to the Bank's New York office, where he continued as agent until 1906. During that ten year posting the family lived in Garden City, Long Island,¹ Father commuting (even in those days) to the big city.

In 1906, another promotion brought him back to Canada as Chief Inspector and Superintendent of Branches, with headquarters in Montreal. In this post he remained until 1922 when the Merchants' Bank was merged with the Bank of Montreal, when he became manager of the St. Peter & St. James Streets branch (formerly head office of the Molson's Bank - also merged with the larger institution). Father later became manager of the Montreal Branch (Main office) on Place d'Armes, where he remained - his office just off the central rotunda; until his retirement in 1936.

(Note: Red Numerals throughout refer to notes in The Appendix I)

In 1885, aged 19, Father did garrison duty at Fort Henry, in Kingston, during the Riel Rebellion, as lance-corporal with the Prince of Wales Own Rifles. Later during World-War I he joined the Home Guard and trained as a private on Fletcher's Field.

"Ned-the-Father", as his daughter-in-law Hazel irreverently dubbed him, was a highly respected banker. He was also popular as a keen sportsman and loved golf, curling, fishing and sailing. His occupation and his recreations brought him many friends in Montreal Society, almost all of them anglophone in those days of English dominance. He belonged to a number of clubs including the Mount Royal, Forest & Stream, Royal Montreal Curling (he was a president), Royal Montreal Golf, St. Maurice Fish and Game. He was one of a group of cronies known as the "Twelve Apostles" which met once a month at the Mount Royal Club for a hearty dinner, hosted by each of the members in turn, and followed by bridge. Names of the well-known members included: Baillie, Braithwaite, Cairns, Claxton, Findlay, McGill, McMaster, Pitblado, Ross, Williamson

The bank merger in 1922 considerably altered Dad's career. It was the Merchants' Bank general manager who was blamed for its downfall and Dad's reputation suffered not at all. The Banking community held him in high esteem, and The Bank of Montreal at once situated him in the important posts he held until his super-annuation. These however did not earn him the same salary as his former job, and he had to sell the fine home he had built in the centre of Montreal's "Golden Square Mile". However, he was able to buy and maintain a smaller semi-detached house and ménage (with two instead of three servants) in Westmount, as well as the family summers in Metis, and right through his retirement he kept on some of his club memberships - the fees probably covered by the Bank on top of a very good pension, a generous percentage of which Mother enjoyed after his death.

THOMAS EDWARD MERRETT,

Supt. of Branches and Chief Inspector, Merchants Bank of Canada, Montreal.

Born: Isle au Noix, P.Q., Barracks of R.C. Rifles, Feb. 2, 1866, son of Capt. Thomas Merrett, formerly of 3rd East Kent or Buffs Regt., Berkeley, Gloucester, England, and Annie Eliza (Ward) Merrett, of Preston, Lancs., England.

Educated: Private Schools, Kingston, Ont.

Started as Junior Clerk, Merchants Bank, Kingston, Dec., 1880; Accountant, Napanee, 1889; Manager same branch, 1893; Manager Mitchell, 1895; Agent, New York, 1896; Superintendent of Branches and Chief Inspector at Head Office, Montreal, 1906.

Served with 3rd Co., 14th Princess of Wales Own Rifles as Private and Lance-Sergeant, 1882-5; did Garrison duty at Fort Henry, Kingston, during Riel Rebellion, 1885.

Married Katharine Stuart Campbell, daughter of the late Lieut.-Col. J. T. Campbell, R.C. Rifles, and late of Royal Scots Fusiliers; has two sons and two daughters.

Clubs: Mount Royal; Forest and Stream; Montreal; Montreal Curling; Royal Montreal Golf; St. Maurice Fish and Game; Arts; Winter Club.

Recreations: Golf (formerly cricket, hockey, yachting, etc.).

Residence: 62 Ontario Ave., Montreal.

from "Who's Who in Canada" ?

opposite →

Re: The Merchants Bank of Canada merger with (or "absorption by") the Bank of Montreal, for further information see Merrill Denison's history of the B. of M. "Canada's First Bank" Volume 2, pages 345-346.

All the names mentioned in that record, particularly that of D.C. Macarow, the Merchants' General Manager, were heard often in our house during the days when Dad frequently spoke of his worries and of his warnings to top management which were obviously ignored. It was H.B. MacKenzie who supported Dad through the trouble, of which I, aged 12, understood little.

* These books & other less important records of the B. of M. were turned over to either the Bank, the McCord Museum, or perhaps to the McGill "Book Sale", when Hazel & I left our Senneville house in November 1991.

16.01.92.

Jim

CIRCULAR No. 3710.

The Merchants Bank of Canada

TO THE MANAGER,

MONTREAL, December 22nd, 1921

SIR,

Staff:

The staff of the Bank will not unnaturally be glad of a reassuring word at this juncture and it is a pleasure to be authorized to send out a message of encouragement.

The absorption of the old M. B. of C. is an epoch-making event which the staff generally, particularly the old tried and loyal members, will hardly view without some measure of regret. We may, however, feel assured that considerate treatment will be extended and we may say that Sir Frederick Williams-Taylor, General Manager of the Bank of Montreal, has so expressed himself.

The aim of everyone, it goes without saying, should and we are confident will be to hand over to the Bank of Montreal all desirable business intact at the conclusion of the arrangement, carrying on meanwhile with the minimum of disturbance.

With all Seasonal good wishes,

I am,

Yours faithfully,

T. E. MERRETT

Superintendent of Branches.

I-174

Bank of Montreal,
ST. PETER & ST. JAMES STREETS BRANCH
288 ST. JAMES STREET

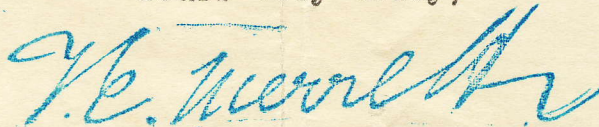
CABLE ADDRESS "IROQUO, MONTREAL"

*Montreal, Que.**Febr 1931*PLEASE ADDRESS YOUR REPLY TO
"THE MANAGER" AND QUOTE INITIALS.

Having been appointed to the management of the Montreal Office, I shall, with a full measure of regret, be severing my connection with this Branch of the Bank, but as will be announced within a few days, I am glad to inform you that Mr. W.H. Nesbitt, who has been Assistant Manager for the past two years, has been appointed to take charge here.

In expressing my grateful appreciation of the cordial relationship that has obtained for many years between the Bank's good clientele and the management, may I bespeak for my successor the same degree of friendly cooperation as you have invariably extended to,

Yours very truly,



Manager.



Father enjoyed a drink - always in moderation. He would occasionally produce a martini cocktail so icy cold and so overdosed with vermouth and lemon peel that Mother would not touch it, much to his disgust. Wine, as I recall (other than sherry), appeared only for Christmas dinner. Dad often had a whisky with his dinner but never considered his children old enough to partake, me in particular, until the night I dined with Mother and Dad the day his first grandson, Timothy, was born. On that occasion he offered me a beer: I declined, adding that I would like a whisky. He was quite taken aback and for a moment uncertain how to react; then conceded that I had "become a man" and so entitled to my first drink (at home).

Dad was superannuated by the Bank at age 70, and retired in customary good health. He briefly undertook one or two voluntary jobs, such as Treasurer of Federated * Charities. He spent much of his time churning out rather overworked fuzzy watercolours which gradually covered the walls of his bedroom. (The Bank used an earlier one for an annual calendar). His father was also an amateur watercolourist; a few small samples survive from his military travels. I have three larger paintings signed "TM", attributed to him, of a calibre which, if in fact he did them, would put him in a talent category far beyond those of his son or grandson! Dad indulged himself from time to time by buying paintings, chiefly of the English watercolour school, and once, to Mother's horror, bought a white Carrara marble statue, 1/3 size, of a semi-nude water nymph, which lived in the drawing room.

When Dad was about 80 he was very perturbed and apprehensive because the doctor hospitalized him, for the first (probable) time in his life, for a general check-up. He survived that, to him, traumatic experience and continued in good health until he went to hospital for the second time, in May 1958, and a few days later died, of being 92 years old.

* ("Red Feather"; "Centraide")

K.S.M.

1867-1969

Mother was the fourth daughter of Lt. Col. J.T. Campbell, originally of the Royal Scots Fusiliers. Her mother, a Kinnear from Halifax and Ottawa, died when Katie was four, and shortly thereafter her father took the four girls to live for some years in County Galway, Ireland, during which time he married a second wife and fathered their stepsister Violet. When they returned to Canada Col. Campbell joined the Royal Canadian Rifles and was stationed in Kingston where they lived in a large house on the shore of Lake Ontario.

See "FAMILY" p. 35

When Mother married Ned Merrett, then a bank clerk, she was breaking the pattern set by her three older sisters all of whom married soldiers: Alice married Ned Taylor who became a colonel and Commandant of the Royal Military College; Marion married Alain de Lotbinière of the Platon, Quebec, seigneurial family, who became a general with the Royal Engineers in India; Maud married Archie Macdonell, of Glengarry, Ont., who started out with the Royal Northwest Mounted Police, and became ~~Major~~ ^{Lieut-} general commanding the 1st Canadian Division in World War I, was knighted* and ended his career also as Commandant of R.M.C. (See A VII 2: "Relations")

See "FAMILY" p. 34

Mother was a deeply religious person, a quality inherited rather more by her daughters than by her sons. She was a keenly active member of several church-related organisations and, until old age prevented, a faithful attendant at church. In this context she found her closest friends. Apart from her family, her chief occupation was knitting* and sewing for charitable causes, her favourite being the "In His Name" society. She and daughter Helen were early members of the ladies' Morning Musical Club*, but beyond that Mother went in for very few of the social activities of

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*. Thus, according to the cable he sent his wife on the occasion, succeeding at last "in making a Lady out of a Campbell."



Over:-
Christ Church Cathedral, Montreal. (Over)



K-S-M. 95 YRS; 1962.

Senneville, QUE.

the day. For instance, I never knew her to indulge in any of the games her husband and children played - golf or tennis, or Bridge (but she was a "Patience" addict, and would sit for hours by herself at a card table playing "Canfield" or "13 down"). She entertained sparingly, and usually only close friends or relatives. She was a hardworking house-keeper: until well into her seventies she would do her shopping in person, including a trip once a week to the market - first Bonsecours, later atwater, to choose the family's provisions. No doubt her Scottish ancestry made her careful of money, and it would never have occurred to her to take a taxi, for instance (Dad never owned a car), so wherever she could not walk she went by streetcar.

Mother enjoyed life, and her religiousness in no way interfered with her keen and frequently "naughty" sense of humour, a family trait shared by her sisters. Maud suffered from a speech impediment which made her sibilant humour all the more amusing, which she well knew; Marion sparkled too, but Alice was more proper and could disapprove with a resounding "sniff"; whereas Violet was lots of fun but often bawdy. These Campbell qualities have spilled down to various off-spring.

When Father died Mother was 91, and we moved her from Westmount Boulevard to an apartment in the Tour de Mont Royal, where she was looked after by a succession of house-keeper-attendants. On her 100th birthday in 1967 she received the conventional congratulatory messages from the Queen, the P.M., and the Mayors; and the President of the Bank presented her (the oldest pensioner) with a cheque for her favourite charity: she received him with great charm and dignity. She retained all her faculties and was reading and knitting (though on my weekly visits it was always the same book, and ^{*knitted*} scarf grown a few rows longer), and joking, until a very few months before her death in 1969, of being 102 years old.