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TMM





1937

MARRIAGE

Just as when I arrived home from Europe I had found that my once beloved Metis no longer had much appeal, so I found some of my earlier friends - particularly the girls - no longer terribly interesting, and for a couple of years I floated about uninvolved. I joined the Hillside Tennis Club and there made a new set of friends. Among them was one Hazel Howard who, in the summer of 1936, turned out to be particularly congenial. By the end of the tennis season that year, having walked her home to Grosvenor Avenue over Westmount mountain on a good many occasions, I got up the courage to suggest we get married. Even though I was "between jobs" and presumably had no right to make such a proposal, Hazel thought it quite a good idea, and in fact when, shortly after, I landed the C.N.R. job she decided that long engagements were stupid. 1

So on April 26<sup>th</sup> 1937 in the chapel of St. Andrew's and St. Paul's Church, before a small gathering of our families, Dr. James Donald married us (in the Church of Scotland manner - but not long after Hazel got herself confirmed into the Anglican persuasion). This ceremony was followed by a cocktail party<sup>1</sup>, literally, given for us by the Philip Fishers in their very upper Westmount house, at which a few additional friends were present, and at which Hazel's cousin Wilbert Howard broke a prior understanding by making a speech, to which, unaccustomed as I was and totally unprepared, I was obliged to stammer a feeble reply. After that we escaped and dined, alone, at the Mount Royal Club, courtesy of Father, and then caught the night train to New York for a week's honeymoon. (Brother Stuart acted as my best man, in lieu of Bob Montgomery who could not leave his construction job at Arvida. Hazel's maid of honour was Alma.)

1. Hazel has never been keen on cocktail parties since.
2. Philip was president of Southam Publishing Co., & Hazel was his secretary.



The Sent Room introduced us to the then top-favorite team of Charlie McCarthy & Edger Bergen.

The trip to New York was partly by courtesy of the C.N.R., and to justify the free rail fares as well as the unscheduled time off, it was thought a good idea for me to see some examples of up to the minute interior design, to assist in my work doing interiors for the Vancouver Hotel. So the honeymoon was a romp consisting largely of a theatre every night, followed by dancing at the Rainbow Room atop Rockefeller Centre or the Waldorf-Astoria's Sent Room; and by day going over both the "Normandie" and the "Queen Elizabeth" - both brand new and in port - as well as seeing a few museums & galleries and the sights of New York in general.

1

We came home to our tiny flat over a garage at the top of Stanley Street, to find the furniture which I had designed not only completed and delivered, but all installed and everything ready to go thanks to the efforts of Hazel's sister Alina and my brother Stuart. It was a cute little flat, and it served us well for 5 years, while Hazel worked at McGill and I at the C.N.R. Among my extra curricular interests during that period was the A.R.G. whose activities I have described. The big exhibition was put together in a studio two streets east, and I was able to short cut to and fro for late night sessions by scaling the brick wall at our garage door and thence by laundries to McTavish Street. I was also involved in a minor way with the Montreal Symphony Orchestra\*; I designed a couple of <sup>annual</sup> program covers and for each concert I lettered two poster programs for display in the lobbies of the Ritz Carleton and His Majesty's Theatre, on Guy Street, where the concerts took place. For those services I received two season tickets, so Hazel and I spent many Sunday afternoons at the Symphony.

\* N.B. The M.S.O. was the first such in Montreal: later the French O.S.M. was started, with almost identical musicians, the two gradually fusing into what is now the Concerts Symphoniques, or M.S.O.





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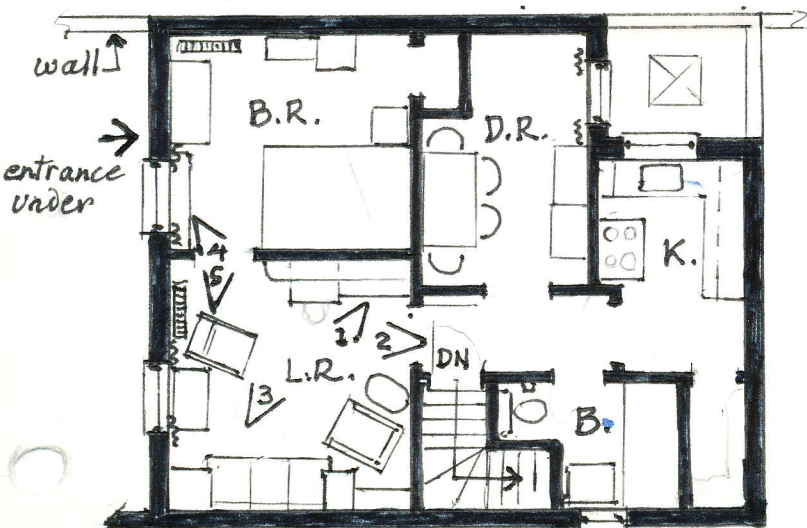
↑ \*

3



4

— Lane —



from Memory  
Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"



5

1937 - 1942  
3491 Stanley Street

\* We were proud of our Aalto chairs, among the first in Canada, bought from Eaton's who had imported a few from Finland, hoping to have them copied by Canadian factories who still had not the plywood moulding technique.





The Lorne Crescent  
Apartment  
1942-1944  
Tim's first home  
and first steps →



Metis revisited 1943  
Merrett stamping -  
ground  
Thomas Edward and  
Timothy Howard (10 months)  
enjoyed  
each other's  
company.





In 1942 when Tim was "up in camp", we moved to an apartment on Lorne Crescent, where we stayed until we went to Saint John in 1944. At one point our landlord tried to grab the very pleasant apartment for himself, but through the Wartime Prices and Trade Board I was able to frustrate him, and when we left even managed to get the lease transferred to Bob Montgomery who by then also needed more space for his firstborn. (When Monty married in 1942 I was his best man; Hazel did not attend that wedding because Tim's arrival was imminent.) During most of our stay on Lorne Crescent I was a weekend-commuter from Ottawa.

In the summer of 1943 I succumbed to the Merrett family weakness, and Tim was taken to Metis - like his father, before he was a year old. We rented (sharing with Mollie and Norris Giblin) a cottage above (and from) the Boule Rock Hotel, and had our meals at the Hillside Inn, next door, where mother and Dad were staying as usual. I think Dad really enjoyed having his first grandson to play with.

Our next move, to Saint John\*, was somewhat traumatic in that housing was at a premium due to wartime influx. After spending some time in the Admiral Beatty Hotel I was only able to find an apartment in the centre of town, and to this Hazel came with Tim, and a nurse named Robbie. Summer in the city would not have been much fun for them had it not been for the car the City provided for me. With it we spent as much time as possible in the very pleasant surrounding country, including along the Kennebecasis, and the Bay of Fundy shores west to Duck Cove and east to Red Head and Mispec, where Tim revelled in the icy Fundy water.

Saint Johners are not noted for instant hospitality

\* May 1944



to outsiders from Upper Canada, and our social life for the first 6 months or so was not very active. Fortunately, however, we knew some people in Rothessay (Montrealers married to Saint Johners or vice-versa), and between them and the efforts made by the Mayor to find us a house out of town, we were able to rent for the winter months a house in East Riverside (part way to Rothessay) which we called the Red House - it was green, but had a red roof. The owners were a pair of spinsters who were not very pleasant landlords: we quarrelled about coal consumption and other things.

Some members of the City Council questioned the propriety of an employee of the City living out of town, and commuting in a City owned car, so it was decided to add Saint John County to the Planning Commission's mandate! (I had already included it in my surveys and planning data.)

Our lease of the Red House was up in the spring and for a few weeks we "shacked up" with an acquaintance, whose wife and kids were away, in a pleasant little house, in Renforth - one step closer to Rothessay - until we managed to get a tiny cottage in Rothessay Park, by the river, rented from an old tyrant named Gilbert, who lived next door with his young wife in a small shack, renting the cottage for the summer months.

This cottage was Brian's first home. We had acquired a somewhat aged nurse, Mrs. Blizzard, to look after Tim in anticipation of his brother's arrival, and to help Hazel who had been having trouble with giant hives, which knocked her out of commission occasionally. The treatment for these was a shot of adrenalin as fast as possible: on one occasion I had to

\* Harley Jolly : his wife - Thelma.





The "Red House", East Riverside, N.B.



The Jolly's house, Renforth N.B.



City of Saint John's Buick...  
..made the countryside attainable



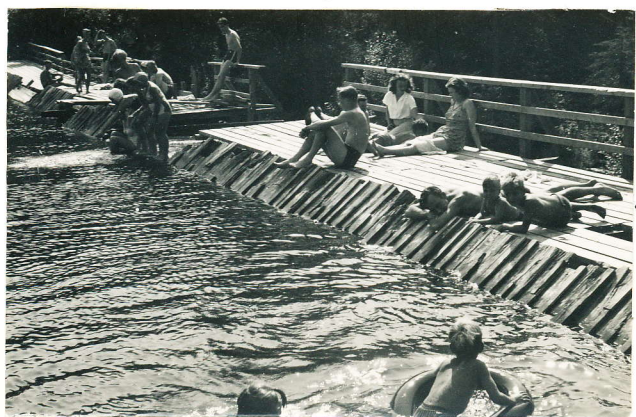
The Gilbert cottage, Rothesay Park --  
(summer '45) was Brian's first "home".



.. the icy cold Bay of Fundy at Mispec



206 Germaine St., Apartment; Summer '44



..or the dam rendez-vous at Rothesay.

JCM ↑ ↑ THM



Audrey MacDermot & Brian... at  
206 Sennerville Road.....







rush Hazel in to the Saint John General Hospital at about 1 a.m. for emergency treatment. The next time I drove her to the Hospital was on account of Brian, and I spent that night on a friend's\* sofa across the railway valley: when the expected phone call came at 7 a.m. I scrambled back across the valley and up the Shelley cliff short cut to the hospital to greet my second son.

Another notable incident that summer, and from that cottage which was situated between the river and the railway main line Saint John - Moncton, was when one day Tim, not yet 3, decided to walk, with his dog friend, along the track to the city where he knew Daddy worked. He was spied from a house some way along the line, and Hazel was warned in time to dash out and recover him before the afternoon train came along.

The restricted quarters of the Gilbert cottage, and the prospect of having to find still another place to live, as well as the limitations on our social life - though we made a number of friends we neither of us had much time for activity in that field - probably had some influence on the decision to return to Montreal and home where our real friends were and where I felt I wanted to work. So in August, 1945, I took a week off and went to Montreal to find a place for us to live there. I went via Metis, where of course Mother and Dad were spending their usual break at the Hillside Inn. At the Club I met Bill Augus (ex-Bosburian) and wife Caro, who told me they had a cottage to rent in Senneville. So in Montreal I borrowed a car and drove out to inspect it. And having been living in the country, we decided to take it, even though it meant a 20 mile-plus commuting to work in town.

\* Gerry and Tiny Teed: he a lawyer & member of The T.P. Commission.



So, in September 1945, I put Hazel, Timothy & Brian on the train to Montreal and our sixth dwelling in 1 1/2 years. Brian, aged 6 or 7 weeks, stayed for a while with <sup>his</sup> Aunt Evelyn Saunders in Montreal West because <sup>his</sup> Aunt Alma, <sup>who</sup> was en route to England, with her two sons Francis & Paddy (after spending the war in New York with husband Patrick Rolleston), and a nurse girl, were already borrowing our Senneville cottage and there was scarcely room even for Hazel and Tim. When Alma & family left, Brian was able to rejoin the fold. I stayed on in Saint John, at the "Beatty" again, finishing up my planning job and handing over the reins to a manager type hired by the Commission to administer the Plan. I finally joined the family in time for Christmas, and started in as a partner at B.M.M. & M. in January 1946.

We stayed at 206 Senneville Road for three years. Hazel managed to find a 15 year old nurse girl to help out with the kids: Jean Wishart, of a local family, was almost a member of ours for a few years, and came with us to Metis in the summer of 1951 when we took Tim & Brian. I commuted to Montreal by Rene Crevier's taxi to Ste. Anne de Belleve and C.P.R. to the city. Then, after a couple of years we bought our first car, a Hillman Minx, and Hazel drove me to and from the station. We suffered a number of disagreements with our somewhat difficult landlord Bill Augus, but our benefits included a vegetable garden (in which among other things we one year grew an overwhelming crop of yellow tomatoes), and a right of way to a bit of wooded lakeshore. For a while we had as close neighbours in another Augus cottage Steven and Pat Stephens (Steve Oppé, another ex-Ashburian). Tim started nursery school from 206, at a school Hazel organised in a basement at Macdonald College.



Those first years in Senneville were generally happy, and good for young Tim and Brian. We made new friends among our landed gentry neighbours like Todds, Abbots, Johnsons & Chevaliers, and with the kids enjoyed the wide open spaces for Summer and winter fun. There were some unhappy times too: poor Brian had two bouts of pneumonia, involving spells in hospital as well as doctor visits, and for a long time the sight of anyone carrying a little black bag, or the prospect of a ride in a car, caused him much anguish. And once he squashed his fingers in the iron gate. Tim was gregarious and liked going places: once when Hazel and I were setting off - probably for a party - he stood at the gate waving tearfully and sobbed "Have fun!".

But when the opportunity came to move to another cottage, with another landlord, we grabbed it. No. 320 Senneville Road belonged to Armand & Marguerite Chevalier, she of the Forget clan that owned most of the north end of "Upper" Senneville - as the Augus families owned the centre, and the Todd-Abbot connection the south section. The Morgan family were relatively new-comers, and had only recently broken out of the stigma of being "in trade" - their trade being the department store, now "The Bay." At 320 we felt much freer, with no landlord looking over our shoulder. There was a fine big vegetable garden and an acre or more of land for our sole enjoyment, plus endless acres of farm fields and open land across the road. But the house had one disadvantage - it was cold, and Hazel complained that only the east wall stopped the west wind, which swept unobstructed across the Lake of Two Mountains from the Ottawa River to our garden. But <sup>we</sup> were very happy in that house and remained there for almost 6 years, September 1948 until July 1954. (The rent was \$50<sup>00</sup> a month!)



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In those years while we were at 320 a lot of things happened. Tim started real school, at Macdonald High, and Brian started nursery school, (and was frustrated by it). Both the boys learned skiing, first in the hillocks right across the road, then on the "Dombax" hill and in the Morgan Arboretum. A major episode in our lives was the gift of a thoroughbred Llewelyn Retriever bitch, (given us by George & Betty Merck - he of the pharmaceutical family, when they returned to the States). We bred Ladybelle to an English retriever belonging to General Panet - it needed two meetings - and she produced 13 pups. She hid them in a semi-underground root cellar near the house, and Brian was the only person small enough to crawl in and bring them out. 11 pups lived, of which we eventually gave away or sold all but one - Sir Kay, who lived with us for 11 years. One runt was kept alive by dropper feeding, Tim and I taking turns getting up every two hours or so one night to feed it, but the next day it succumbed. A sedate funeral was held, Tim and Brian in their so'westers, and the corpse in a newspaper box labeled "Kid Finish", which Tim tearfully pointed out as we paraded in the rain across the road to a small grave in the field.

Many more events and experiences are summarized and illustrated in other pages and photos, and rather than repeat them here, with the risk of confusing dates and even places (which others can recall probably more accurately than I) it seems best to wind down this record now. So let's close it\* with the fact that my improving fortunes in the office made it possible to buy a piece of land, from the W.B. Angus estate (having made the subdivision myself and chosen my piece), and to design our own house - at 232 Semnerille Road - which we moved into in July 1954, just under 30 years ago as, still in it, I write this. 30.03.84.

\* But I did not! - there is more .....