

Conseil des universités, *Cinquième rapport annuel 1973/74*. Québec: L'Éditeur officiel du Québec, 1974. pp. 230.

Ces deux rapports annuels permettent de prendre connaissance des activités des deux organismes. Au cours de l'année, on peut signaler les progrès des services communs de bibliothèques à la Conférence des recteurs, ainsi que l'étude de l'éducation permanente au Conseil des universités. Dans plusieurs domaines, la Conférence et le Conseil travaillent en collaboration continue.

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*Four Principals of McGill: A Memoir 1929-1963*, by Dorothy McMurray. Published by the Graduates' Society of McGill University, Montreal, 1974. 73 pp. \$10.00. A limited edition of 500 copies, proceeds to go to the McGill Development Fund.

With refreshing candour Dorothy McMurray, in this slender volume, provides a unique glimpse of over three decades in the life of McGill, drawing remarkably vivid portraits of the four principals whom she served as secretary — Sir Arthur Currie, the only native Canadian; Arthur E. Morgan, “a rather English Englishman;” Lewis W. Douglas, a charismatic American; and F. Cyril James, a transplant from Britain to the United States and thence to Canada, and, in the author's view, “the architect of modern McGill.”

Aside from Chapter One which graphically portrays the horrors of the 1917 Halifax explosion and which, despite attempts to rationalize its inclusion, remains a curious non-sequitur, the majority of the text, quite properly, is devoted to Currie and James. The former held office for 13 years, and the latter for 22, whilst both Morgan and Douglas lasted barely two.

Currie, a former army general and a non-academic, emerges as a big man in every sense — tall, dignified, courteous, kindly, possessed of a keen intellect and immense tact. Using his administrative skill and experience gained as a leader of Canada's armed forces, he steered McGill through the difficult post-war period followed by the Depression years when “there was just no money and no way of getting any. . . .” Financial crises notwithstanding, McGill thrived under Currie's command — student enrolment and faculty doubled; admission standards rose; assets increased by one-third; new plant was built and old buildings were remodelled. Above all, the university maintained its integrity as a teaching institution. “Integrity and truth were in the very air we breathed.” Currie's greatest contribution to the university was to prepare the way for Dr. Wilder Penfield to come to McGill and for the establishment of the Neurological Institute.

The new incumbent, Arthur E. Morgan, was “a strange mixture of the autocrat and socialist,” and he was singularly lacking in tact. The university was in deep financial trouble when he arrived, and the members of the Board of Governors had paid, over a period of four years, out of their own pockets, over \$420,000 to bridge mounting deficits. Hence, Morgan, who in his former post had been “absolute master,” now had to bow to the age-old injunction that he who pays is the real master. Finding himself with very little power, he was continually at odds with the Board, and particularly the chairman

of the finance committee. Failing in his attempts to win support even from the students whom, upon his inauguration, he had vowed to serve and befriend, he finally admitted defeat and returned to England, leaving one legacy – McGill's first student residence, ironically named not after himself but after the grandfather of his successor, Lewis Douglas.

Douglas, "an astute and able administrator" with "tremendous personal charm," decided in 1939, upon his own initiative, that he should not remain at the helm of one of Canada's leading universities at a time when the nation was at war, but he did not leave until a new principal was found. His chief contribution during his short tenure was to so tighten the administrative reins and to adopt such stringent economies that he brought university expenditures in line with income.

James, a young academic and a well-respected economist, was not a Canadian but he worked indefatigably both in the interests of McGill and of the nation, chairing the Federal Government Advisory Committee on Post-War Reconstruction and the Finance Committee of the National Conference of Canadian Universities. He led the successful NCCU campaign for federal money, without which the immense expansion in higher education which took place throughout Canada in the 1960's would never have occurred. Possessed of a giant intellect, iron will, infinite patience, and almost unlimited energy, "he drove his team, but he never forgot that it was a team, as equally he never forgot that he was the driver and that he wanted it to go his way." Retiring in 1962, just when the waves of student radicalism reached the shores of Canadian campuses, James was among the last of the executive heads able to freely use his position coupled with his intellect and administrative expertise to the fullest advantage. It is interesting to speculate that if James had chosen to write his memoirs of McGill how very different they would have been from the recently published account by Claude Bissell of his presidency at Toronto.

There is room for more candid views of Canadian universities like Dorothy McMurray's because they can provide a perspective somewhat different from that afforded by ex-presidents-turned-historians, or by the professional historian writing on the basis of painstaking research rather than from personal experience. The main value of this book, however, is that in a very special way it preserves the record of a bygone era when the universities, although ever hovering on the verge of insolvency, did command unblemished respect and prestige and no one seriously questioned their right to survival.

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Abram G. Konrad, ed., *Clientele and Community: The Student in the Canadian Community College*. A Yearbook of the Association of Canadian Community Colleges. Willowdale, Ontario: The Association, 1974. pp. 158.

Abram G. Konard, rédacteur en chef., *La Clientèle du Collège Communautaire: L'étudiant du collège communautaire canadien*. Un recueil d'études de l'Association des collèges communautaires du Canada. Willowdale, Ontario: L'Association, 1974. pp. 183.

"Community Colleges," *CAUT/ACPU Bulletin*, XXIII, 3 (December 1974), 8-25, 28.