

DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY BULLETIN

MUNRO DAY NUMBER

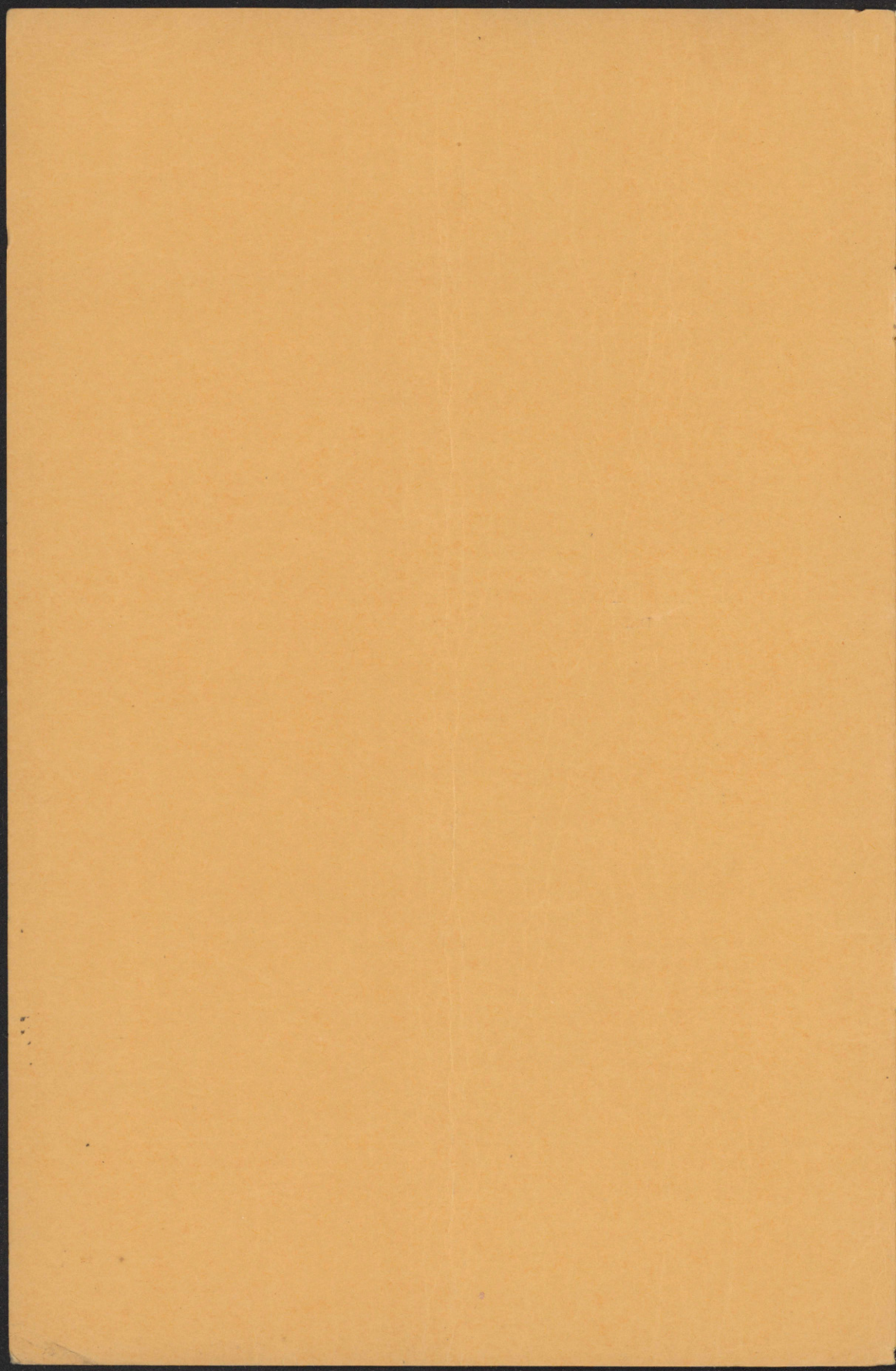


Why do we for?

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HALIFAX, N. S.

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Munro Day—March 9th, 1928

BY

BY A. STANLEY MACKENZIE,

President of the University.



It is fitting that a university like Dalhousie, receiving no state aid, and therefore not supported by all the people, but depending as it does on private beneficence, should at regular intervals recall and pay due honour to those who have made possible her progress—indeed, at times, her very existence. In this respect Dalhousie has been rather remiss. It is my part tonight to present a brief historical statement with respect to our Benefactors and Munro Day.

In a sense our chief benefactor is our Founder, Lord Dalhousie, who gave us our charter of Toleration, from which so many blessings have flowed to the people of this country, and who imbued us with ideals which we still cherish today. On this occasion we call him to remembrance with pride and veneration.

When re-organized in 1863, Dalhousie started out on her new career with bright promises and high hopes. One of those hopes was that with her broad charter and wide appeal she might be the means of federating all the provincial colleges. In this, as in many subsequent similar efforts, she has unhappily so far failed. The first benefactor was the Church of Scotland, whose people, led by George M. Grant and Allan Pollok, collected a fund of about \$30,000, wherewith they endowed the Chair of Mathematics. That was a goodly sum in those days, and we can never forget what we owe to those old Scottish Presbyterians. I have said that Dalhousie started out with high hopes, but before a dozen years had passed these hopes had withered, and the little college was beset with financial difficulties. In the 70's, friends of the pining college came to her aid. These were benefactors indeed, for without their aid Dalhousie might a second time have closed her doors,

as had happened in 1843. Their names should be kept in remembrance:

Dr. J. F. Avery.	John S. MacLean.
Hon. Robert Boak.	Alex. McLeod.
Hon. Stayley Brown.	Medical Faculty.
Adam Burns.	Robert Morrow.
B. H. Collins.	John P. Mott.
Prof. DeMille.	Hon. J. Northup.
J. Donaldson.	Thomas A. Ritchie.
John Doull.	Principal Ross.
Sandford Fleming.	R. H. Skimmings.
John Gibson.	E. Smith.
Rev. G. M. Grant.	J. Stairs.
Peter Jack.	Wm. J. Stairs.
Prof. Johnson.	James Thomson.
Prof. Lawson.	Sir Charles Tupper.
Prof. Liechti.	William P. West.
A. K. Mackinlay.	Sir William Young.

It is true that the largest gift in 1870 was only \$200; but one must not despise the day of small things. We must recall that Dalhousie was a very small thing in those days fifty years ago. I doubt if the annual budget was much more than \$10,000. In 1879, in answer to a plea from the college for an endowment fund, there were eight subscriptions of \$1,000 each; the attitude toward the college was expanding, and the unit of gift was increasing. I might add here that by 1892 the unit had mounted to \$2,500, and in 1902 to \$5,000.

In 1879 the Great Deliverer appeared. George Munro, a native of Pictou County, who had taught school in Halifax, and who afterwards became a successful publisher in New York, endowed the Chair of Physics, and within the next five years the Chairs of History, English, Law and Philosophy. He also for eight years supported Tutorships, or, as we should now call them, Instructorships, in Mathematics and in Classics. Nor did his bounty stop there. He also during ten years supplied the sum of \$87,000 for scholarships, of \$150 to \$200 per annum each, a relatively princely sum in those days, when a student could go through college on \$200 for the session. Munro's total gifts amounted to the munificent sum of about

\$320,000, which were at that time unparalleled in Canada. I think it is not unfair to say that he set a fashion; for it was shortly after this that Macdonald and Strathcona and others began their series of similar gifts to McGill University. Munro literally saved Dalhousie, and sent her on her future way rejoicing. Thereafter she might have her ups and downs; but her continuance and progress could never be again in doubt. He died in 1896. It was certainly fitting and called-for that the University authorities of those days should set aside a day in honour of Mr. Munro. It first appears in the calendar on January 17th, 1883, as "George Munro Commemoration Day—No Lectures." In 1891, it was shifted to November as "George Munro Day." By 1898 it is shortened to "Munro Day." May I add a personal note of appreciation of the generous gifts of Munro. I am probably unique in that I have sampled all his benefactions—for four years I enjoyed one of his scholarships; I was a Munro Tutor in Mathematics and Physics; and I was for a time Munro Professor of Physics. And I might add that my co-tutor, that in Classics, was one Howard Murray, my old school teacher in New Glasgow, and Dean of the University to-day.

I have said that Mr. Munro set a fashion over Canada. Certainly his example had much to do with the gifts of five other benefactors of Dalhousie who were of his time:

John Macnab, whose will benefited the University to the amount of \$96,000.

Sir William Young (35 years Chairman of the Board of Governors), who gave \$68,000 at various times.

Alexander McLeod, who willed about \$65,000, to endow Chairs of Classics, Chemistry and Modern Languages.

Joseph Matheson, of Lower L'Ardoise, who left by will a bequest of \$15,000.

John P. Mott, of Dartmouth, who bequeathed \$10,000.

After Munro's time we do not find the University asking again for large amounts of money until 1902, when \$60,000 was subscribed for a new project, a School of Mines. This may really be looked upon as the origin of the Nova Scotia

Technical College. The moving spirit in this effort was John F. Stairs, another of our great benefactors, with both his money and his ability. Mr. Stairs was at the time Chairman of the Board of Governors. This period is of great interest as showing how the University is broadening its circle of friends; now we find in addition to the names of old Halifax friends, and of many new Halifax friends, such as Hon. D. MacKeen, Thomas Ritchie, G. S. Campbell, etc., the names of Graham, Cantley, McKay, Carmichael, MacGregor, Dand, Patterson, of New Glasgow, and of those of other towns in the province. At the same time there was a drive among the Alumni for \$25,000 for a Library Building in honour of Professor Charles Macdonald, who had left the University in his will the sum of \$2,000 as an endowment for the purchase of books. And here it might be added that his great friend and colleague, Professor John Johnson, left \$1,000 for the same purpose.

There is another lull in the Dalhousie financial affairs for another ten years. In 1911 "Studley" was acquired, and a campaign for money for new buildings and endowment brought in subscriptions amounting to \$420,000. This is the beginning of the era of that great benefactor, the late George S. Campbell, who gave not only liberally of his means, but unstintedly of his time and his great talents. To him this University should erect a fitting memorial. Where so many gave in proportion to their means, and were in every sense as great benefactors as those who could give large sums, it is unfair perhaps to speak of individuals. But on the principle that these large sums meant much to the University's being able to accomplish its desires, one must mention the subscriptions of Andrew Carnegie, \$40,000; James H. Dunn, \$25,000; W. H. Chase, \$20,000; Lord Strathcona, \$15,000; Mr. and Mrs. G. S. Campbell, \$12,500; F. B. McCurdy, \$12,500; J. W. Carmichael Company, \$8,000; J. Walter Allison, C. H. Cahan, John Macnab and Hon. W. B. Ross, \$7,500 each; the firm of J. D. and P. A. MacGregor, \$6,000; Hon. N. Curry, C. M. Macdonald, G. F. Mackay and Hon. D. MacKeen, \$5,000 each; C. H. Mitchell, \$4,000; Charles Archibald and J. C. Mackintosh, \$3,750 each; and Mr. and Mrs. H. McInnes, \$3,500. Again the unit has increased, and the circle widened to England and the United States.

Another lull, covering the war years, brings us to the Centennial Campaign of 1920. But this intervening period is marked by four notable benefactions, on account of their arresting and pathetic circumstances. Dr. D. A. and Mrs. Campbell provided a fund of about \$60,000 for a Chair of Anatomy, as a memorial to their only son, George, who died suddenly at the beginning of a promising brilliant medical career. George W. Stairs ('09), before going to the war, makes his will with a bequest of \$5,000 to his Alma Mater. He remains forever in France. To me this is one of the most touching gifts that have been made to this University. George H. Campbell, only son of Mr. and Mrs. George S. Campbell, also gave his life to his country, and is commemorated by his parents by an endowment of \$25,000 for scholarships. A third victim of that tragic war was Eric Dennis, whose parents, the late Senator Dennis, and Mrs. Dennis, who is happily on the platform with us to-night, made provision for the founding as a memorial to him of a Chair in Government and Political Science with an endowment of \$100,000. What honour can we pay that will be worthy of such boys, lost in the welter of human folly?

The Centennial Campaign in 1920 is too fresh in our minds to call for much detail. The total subscriptions were \$2,250,000. The outstanding gifts were a half million each, from the Carnegie Corporation and the Rockefeller Foundation for the Medical School (their gifts to date total about \$1,400,000), \$300,000 from the late Mrs. E. B. Eddy for the erection of Shirreff Hall, \$250,000 from the British Empire Steel Corporation for the development of science for industry, and \$60,000 from the Hon. W. A. Black to found the Chair of Commerce. Other notable subscriptions were those of S. M. Brookfield, Mr. and Mrs. G. S. Campbell, and Messrs. Cavicchi and Pagano, of \$25,000 each; of W. H. Chase, the Bank of Montreal, the Bank of Nova Scotia and the Royal Bank of Canada, of \$20,000 each; of \$12,500 from C. H. Mitchell and \$10,000 from F. B. McCurdy.

I must comment further on the gifts of the late Mrs. Eddy. She is the largest single benefactor to date of this University, and her name will ever be held in grateful remembrance, as will also her charming personal character. By the

provisions of her will, the University will in time benefit to the extent of about \$700,000. Finally, her brother, the late J. T. Shirreff, has left to the University the reversion of \$250,000 on the death of his widow. Directly or indirectly, our special guest* of tonight is responsible for these gifts, as well as the many generous gifts he has personally made, including the residence for the President of the University, costing \$20,000; and, if for no other of our many reasons, we should on this account tender him a tribute of honour tonight.

Gifts large and small are coming to the University every month, and are noted in my annual Reports, the latest, that of Mr. James D. McKenna, of Saint John, arriving but yesterday. That of Colonel Leonard, of St. Catharines, Ontario, of \$35,000 of a few months ago for the science libraries, appeals strongly in that it came unsolicited and unexpected.

To all these named and unnamed Benefactors we here tonight tender our appreciation; to those living our heartfelt thanks, and to those who have passed on our tribute to their memory and good deeds.

*The Hon. R. B Bennett.

