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LAW SUPPLEMENT

75 YEARS OF PROGRESS

By EDWARD J. FLINN

On October 30th, 1833, in the chamber of the Legislative Assembly, Dean Richard C. Weldon delivered an Inaugural Address which officially brought into being the Law School of Dalhousie University. With 500 volumes accumulated for a library, one full-time professor, Dean Weldon, and five voluntary lecturers, the first classes of the law school were begun on October 31st, 1833, with 52 students in attendance.

Little did these people then realize that this law school was to become known as a training school for great men, and an unequalled leader in teaching the common law in Canada.

The first quarters of our law school were situated in the then new High School at the corner of Brunswick and Sackville streets. The fee was \$150 a year for board, tuition and books. The High School quarters were soon found to be too small and wholly inadequate. Consequently, the law school, after untiring efforts on the part of many, entered its second home, the Halliburton house on Morris Street.

Two years later in 1837, a new building having been constructed and space being specifically provided for legal education, the law school acquired a home where it was to stay for more than 60 years. This, of course, was the Forrest Building.

Richard C. Weldon, often referred to as the Father of Dal Law School, had in his mind many other things than simply an education in law. In his Inaugural Address, he addressed the assembled students:

"In drawing up our curriculum we have not forgotten the duty which every university owes to the State, the duty which Aristotle saw and emphasized so long ago, of teaching the young man the science of government . . ."

"We may fairly hope that some of our students will in their riper years, be called upon to discharge public duties."

This idea of public duty was fundamental with Weldon, who himself was a member of parliament while Dean of the law school. The idea was of such great importance that the semester in the law school was changed to run from the first week in September to the middle of February so that Weldon could attend his sessions of parliament. The school year previously ran from the end of October to the beginning of April.

As will be seen below, Weldon's ideas and hopes were certainly to bear fruit. His ideas are still a fundamental part of our law school and his hopes have been realized a hundredfold.

DEAN McRAE

In 1914, after Dean Weldon's many years of endless and unselfish service to the law school, Don-

ald A. McRae was appointed to fill the vacancy as dean. It was Dean McRae who sent Sidney E. Smith, (now the Secretary of State for External Affairs in the Dominion Cabinet), upon graduation, to Harvard University for the purpose of studying what is called the "case method" of teaching law. The following year, 1921, this method was introduced at Dalhousie and to legal education in Canada. Other Canadian law schools followed Dalhousie's precedent, and today the "case method" of teaching is used throughout the common law schools in Canada. During Dean McRae's period as administrative head and lecturer, the courses were strengthened and entrance standards were raised.

DEAN JOHN READ

From 1924-29 John E. Read served as the third dean of the Law School. He introduced a series of annual lectures on various legal subjects by visiting lecturers. Later, Dean John Read was to become an undisputed leader in the field of International Law and to become a member of the International Court of Justice at The Hague, the first Canadian to serve in such a capacity.

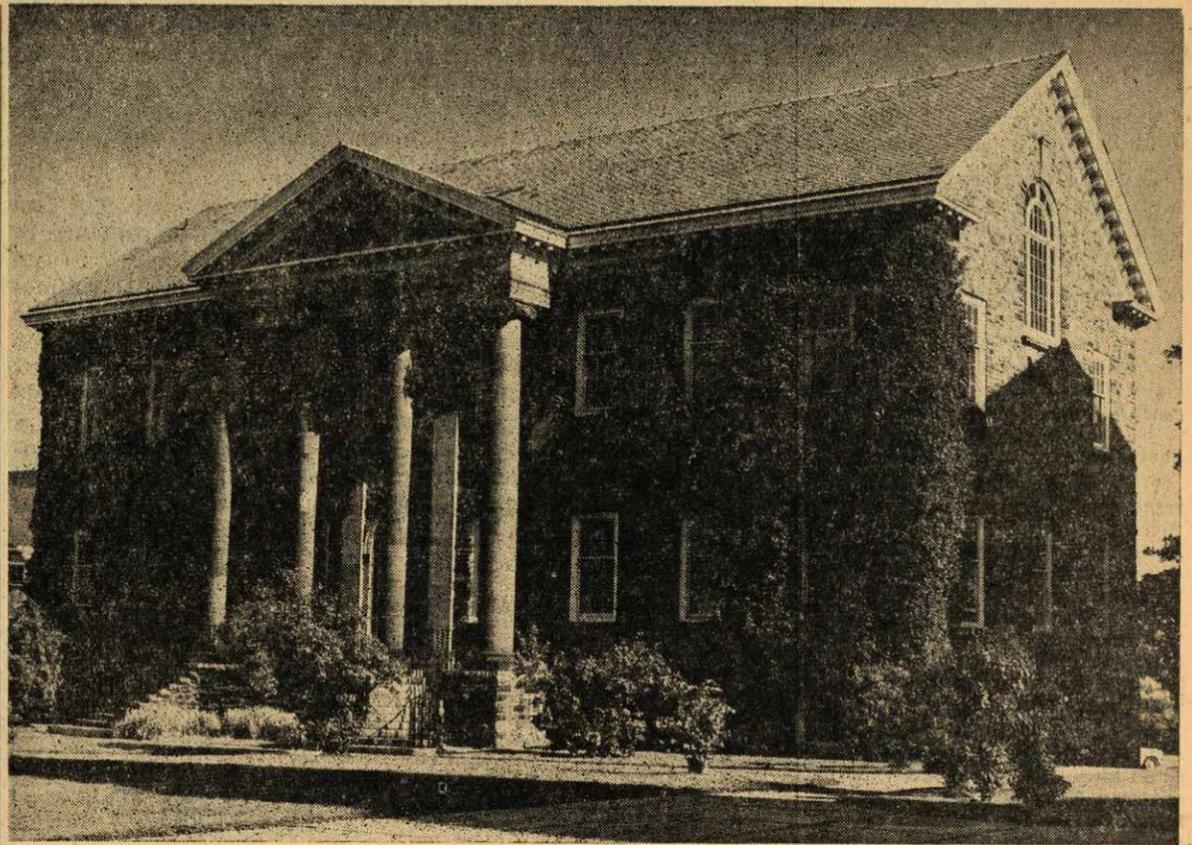
During the twenties, the law school was to lose some of its professors who left Dalhousie to take positions lecturing in other North American law schools. Three of these gentlemen were to return and become future deans. They were: Dean Sidney E. Smith, 1929-34; Dean V.C. MacDonald, 1934-50 (now a Judge of the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia) and our present Dean H. E. Read.

The law school's history from the thirties to the present day has been marked with nothing but success. Enrollment has grown, the faculty enlarged. Graduates are now spread across the country, and the name of Dalhousie Law School has created an overwhelming influence in legal circles throughout the country.

LAW SCHOOL TODAY

The fourth and present home of the law school was occupied in 1952, 30 years later. It had been occupied, since its building, by the Arts faculty, "temporarily." The teaching staff has now reached eight full time professors and the Library now number more than 30,000 volumes. Already, plans for expansion are in the making.

What is the present position of this law school which struggled for



THE LAW SCHOOL TODAY

its existence in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries?

In 1952, at the opening of the University of British Columbia's new Law School, Right Honorable Louis St. Laurent, himself a lawyer, said:

"Dean George Curtis came to Vancouver from Dalhousie Law School, which we in Laval are inclined to regard as our only possible peer among law schools in Canada."

A distinguished Chief Justice of Canada, Sir Lyman Duff, said of our law school:

"Of this I am sure the contribution of the Law School of Dalhousie to the education of lawyers in Canada, to the elevation and maintenance of professional standards in point of mastery of legal principle, and otherwise, cannot be over emphasized or exaggerated . . . There is hardly a province in Canada in which graduates of Dalhousie Law School are not to be found among the Bench or among the leaders of the Bar."

"Graduates of this school have won renown in public and professional life and have exercised high influence upon the course of public affairs in critical periods."

Dalhousie Law School has given Canada more prime ministers, provincial premiers, cabinet ministers, supreme court judges, university presidents and civic leaders than any other school in the country.

Dalhousians have sat on every provincial supreme court in the country, The Supreme Court of Canada, the Exchequer Court, the International Court of Justice, and a host of lesser benches.

A former President of the Bar Society of Saskatchewan, E. M. Hall, Q.C., said:

"The Bar of this province has been enriched by many leaders who received their education at Dalhousie. Our debt to your Law School for these and other contributions is gratefully acknowledged."

This year, Dalhousie Law School celebrates its 75th anniversary.

Three-quarters of a century of great tradition has been made, and we, the present students, are fortunate and, indeed, proud to have such a tradition behind us. It is, of course, our job, and the job of those who are to follow us, to do our utmost to assist in the preservation of this tradition, with the hope of continuing an endless chain of success and prosperity for an institution which is truly serving its purpose.

Welcome to the Alumni

The Law Students' Society is happy to take this opportunity to welcome you to the ceremonies commemorating the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Dalhousie Law School.

We hope that this will be an opportunity for you to renew old acquaintances, make new friends and witness the progress being made by your alma mater.

We, the current students of the Law School, recognize your accomplishments and realize the high standards you have set for us. It is our hope that we can meet these standards, for it would be difficult to surpass them.

Again, may we welcome you and say "Will ye nae come back again?"