

McGILL UNIVERSITY

MONTREAL

FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

28 November, 1931.

Dr. W.H. Hatcher,
Biological Building.

Dear Dr.Hatcher,

I have received the draft of the Time-table for the First Year. It is there suggested that the time of Course 1 in History should be changed from 11 a.m. on Tuesday etc. to 11 a.m. or noon on Monday etc.

The course, as you know, is conducted by Professor T.W.L. MacDermot and myself. We are both sympathetically aware of the difficulties which face your Committee, and we should like to be accommodating. But it is essential that the class should meet on Saturday mornings and consequently, I suppose, on Tuesdays and Thursdays also. For our tutorial work with the class, to which we attach particular importance, we require the co-operation of two or three part-time Assistants, and most of the persons suited to the work can come to McGill only on Saturdays. If your proposal took effect, I should be obliged to dismiss the two very efficient men who at present help us with the work of History 1, and if I could replace them at all it would be by people of inferior qualifications. For this reason alone we are compelled to oppose the suggested change.

Some other considerations, less decisive, but still not without weight, may be mentioned. History 1 is a big class, containing at present over 170 students. For at least ten years it has been held at the hour now allotted to it. That hour has proved perfectly convenient to the hundreds of students who have taken the course since I came to McGill. Almost all of them have also taken English 2, and the juxtaposition of the two courses has been of great advantage to them. And I cannot remember more than half-a-dozen students who have been prevented from taking History 1 because of the time at which it was held.

There is also the question of accommodation. For the proper conduct of the course we must have the use of the Moyses Hall. Under present arrangements the Hall is occupied at 11 on Monday etc. by Economics 2, a big 2nd.Year course, and at noon on the same days by an English class. Perhaps, however, the Committee has already considered this difficulty.

Apart from the points raised above, the suggested change would in various ways be inconvenient to the History staff. I do not wish to make much of this aspect of the matter; but it is a fact that many of the Department's activities, intramural and extramural, have been conditioned by the fact that the biggest History class met at 11 on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. The change would be disturbing and on the whole detrimental to the Department's efficiency even if the question of the part-time assistants did not arise. That, however, is the vital factor in the situation. It compels us to treat as