

# OF U OF A

turned him down for political reasons." While Aberhart took the snub with dignity, it prompted Kerr to resign.

## Editorial

An editorial in the Edmonton Bulletin slammed the university for "one of the most despicable tricks, one of the most tasteless fiascos...ever to occur in the Dominion of Canada."

It went on to state that "this is the miserable trick that humiliates and degrades and makes ashamed every educated man and woman in the province. The public demands a full explanation from the majority of the Senate responsible for it."

At first, Aberhart didn't accept the resignation, but Kerr wouldn't reconsider.

Kerr died a few years later.

"I knew him well and felt that it was a blow which I'm sure affected his physical health," says Dr. Johns.

Out of the conflict a committee was appointed to study the university, on the

suggestion of George McNally, deputy minister of education.

The committee established the General Faculties Council as the chief academic body on campus and reduced the power of the Senate. "So in 1942, the Senate became a public relations body, different from any other Senate in Canada."

Kerr's replacement, Dr. Robert Newton, had gone to the national research council in Ottawa after being a prof at the U of A in the 1920's. He returned in 1940 to become the dean of agriculture.

## Lack of buildings

Faced with cramped facilities and a doubled enrollment, Newton embarked on an extensive building program.

"Some of the facilities were pitiful. The library consisted of a small room in the Arts building. We couldn't circulate books; we had to pack them into boxes."

Rutherford library was one of several buildings planned during the war.

Huts had to be built near the present Cameron library and Chemistry building to accommodate students returning from the war.

Other portable buildings used for classrooms were inadequate. They leaked and the acoustics were so bad that in one-half of the room you couldn't hear lectures.

"Accommodations for veterans was a helluva problem," recalls Johns. "We brought in huts from Dawson Creek which were used during the war to build the Alaska highway."

Even the ice arena was used for the housing of students. "We held classes until 9 and 10 every night. And there wasn't any place to study."

"I taught for 15-18 hours a week. We worked to death, but all loved it. It was satisfying because these students wanted so much to learn."

In the late 1940's enrollment records were established in several faculties, including geology and engineering.

When Dr. Andrew Stewart took over in 1951, the urgent need for buildings had declined.

"I was the dean of arts and science when Dr. Stewart asked me to be the vice-president. I didn't want to get into it. But somebody had to do it so I took over as acting president. I continued 'acting' for 10½ years."

During his term, enrollment jumped from 6,000 to 18,000 and building boomed.

Asked about the most significant developments during his presidency, Johns replied, "The thing that struck me the most was the increase in administrative staff. This was pretty essential. But the thing that I see as the most important was the development of junior colleges in Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, and Red Deer and the University in Calgary.

"This spread higher education widely across the province. I worked very hard for this."



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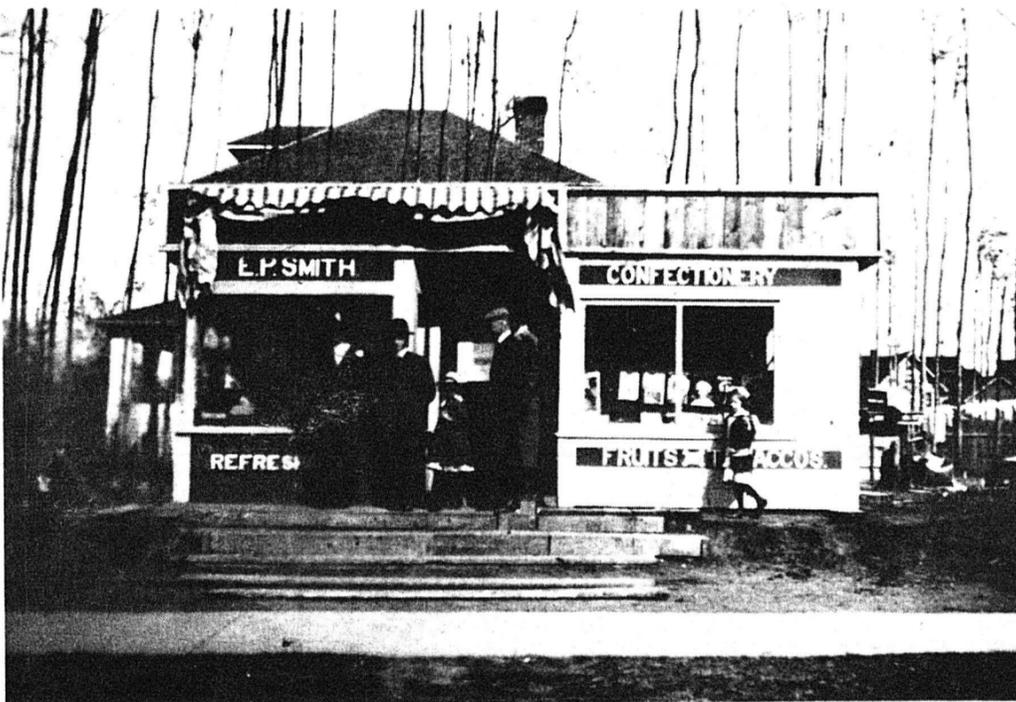
## REMEMBER??

1939...

Gateway celebrates thirtieth birthday—considered one of Canada's leading college newspapers...Two-pant men's suits sell for \$25.00...Parade officials provide green and gold bunting for autos in football parade...Sadie Hawkins' day introduced to campus against official opposition...Students' Council urges Roosevelt to mediate in Russo-Finnish war...Canadian Student Assembly in Montreal splits on conscription issue...Philharmonic presents Iolanthe...Golden Bears win Halpenny trophy...Mortar boards worn at Convocation for first time...

1941...

Dr. Newton is Acting President...Registration is down 150 from last year...R.C.A.F. has possession of residences...CKUA power is increased...Wauneita is first formal to be held overtown...Waw-Waw weekend hits campus...Women take military training...Nine dollars per week presented to war veterans returning to studies...Meds-Engineers stage mile-of-pennies duel...Engineers publish own edition of Gateway...Ten year \$1,000,000 building plan suggested for University...College of Education plans accelerated course...



Old Tuck Shop, a traditional student hang-out—1919

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