

Floreat Plutoria: Satirical Fiction About McGill

by Robert H. Michel

McGill has appeared in many kinds of fiction but nowhere more strikingly than in satirical writing. Stephen Leacock, Régis Messac, William Weintraub, Mordecai Richler, Eileen Fitzgerald, Dany Laferrière, Brian Moore and others mixed reality and imagination to focus on McGill from unusual angles, in detail or just in passing. Drawing on personal blends of humour, affection, fantasy and criticism, each writer created a unique vision or glimpse of McGill and its students, staff and community. The results are as diverse as the attitudes and dreams which McGill evokes.

L'Université McGill a servi de cadre à de nombreux romans, mais c'est surtout dans les romans satiriques que son évocation est la plus frappante. Stephen Leacock, Régis Messac, William Weintraub, Mordecai Richler, Eileen Fitzgerald, Dany Laferrière, Brian Moore et d'autres, mêlant la réalité à la fiction, se sont intéressés à McGill selon des perspectives inusitées, tantôt détaillées, tantôt superficielles. Associant humour, affection, rêve et critique, chaque auteur a donné de McGill, de ses étudiants, de son personnel et de sa communauté une image ou un aperçu unique en son genre. Les résultats sont aussi divers que les attitudes et les rêves suscités par McGill.

In McGill University's case, the sincerest form of flattery has sometimes been satire—satire that usually is fairly gentle. "Who could live in the City a month without observing the imposing buildings of Plutoria University, as fine as any department store in town?" Stephen Leacock's bumptious, imaginary university, modeled on McGill in 1914 is one of his lasting take-offs. Cynics would say it accurately predicts McGill's future as an academic, architectural, under-funded smorgasbord. The college novel is a well-known genre, especially the Oxford novel which had reached cult status with Max Beerbohm's fanciful satire *Zuleika Dobson* (1911). McGill appears in many novels—romances, coming-of-age stories, thrillers and mysteries. Leaving most of these aside for the present, the following is a selection of satires which includes some of the best writing about McGill. Frequent quotations will let the writings speak for themselves, with apologies to authors whose plots have been stretched out of shape by this lopsided focus on McGill.

McGill satires prove that McGill is less flamboyant, less loved or hated than Oxford (or Cambridge or Harvard), more matter of fact and realistic, as befits a Scots, Canadian, scientific, practical sort of place. As McGill celebrates its 175 years, it may be of interest to see how it has provoked novelists, including its own Professors Leacock and Régis Messac, who made McGill the centre-piece or

back drop for satires against McGill and society. Satirical fiction about McGill complements the factual histories of McGill by Stanley Frost, Margaret Gillett and others, by offering sidelights on how people have imagined, criticized and remembered McGill. (Page references to the novels are given between parentheses). [Real McGill equivalents to invented people or buildings are suggested between brackets].

PLUTORIA UNIVERSITY

In *Arcadian Adventures among the Idle Rich* (1914), Leacock spoofed the economic, social and intellectual aspirations of Plutoria University, ostensibly American (perhaps to attract more readers) but unmistakably McGill.¹ He burlesqued Montreal's business plutocrats: rich manufacturers plot in the Mausoleum Club; Anglican clergy run hymn-book and pipe-organ corporations. Trained under Thorstein Veblen at Chicago, Leacock gently distrusted the leisure class and conspicuous consumption but allowed that the rich could make themselves useful. Leacock's main aim was to mock the pursuit of wealth by people and institutions; much of his plot centres around the University's ceaseless quest for money. The chapters on Plutoria and its President, Dr. Boomer, who hoped to pension off staff, replace old buildings with higher ones, and multiply vacuous or mechanical courses satirized the desperation of the cash-strapped, market-driven University; echoes may be caught in today's

McGill. Dr. Boomer, an archaeologist-classicist and champion fund-raiser (these qualities may have been lifted from McGill Principal Peterson) would invade the offices of capitalists and give them copies of his famous pamphlet on the "Use of the Greek Pluperfect," or appeal to their vanity by assuming they understood his Latin tags. You may choose what to fund, Boomer would say: "dormitories, apparatus, campuses, buildings, endowment..." but choose they must (p.50). A likely donor was Mr. Tomlinson, an uncomplicated, decent sort who becomes a "Wizard of Finance" after a Plutoria geologist discovered gold on his farm (in a Devonian strata where it should not be—he hoped he would get a learned paper out of it). Dr. Boomer toured the campus with Tomlinson, telling him he needed funds to dismiss old professors, pointing out what is wrong with several that they meet. He hoped his guest would give enough money to pension them off so he could hire new cheaper ones. Boomer also needed money for new buildings (pp.17, 55-57).

Leacock, who taught in the yet to be restored Arts Building, loved to make fun of McGill's obsession with expansion. When he created Plutoria University, McGill had just ended a great period of construction, funded by businessmen: Lord Strathcona's Medical Building and Royal Victoria College and Sir William Macdonald's Physics, Chemistry, and Engineering Buildings. As Boomer led Tomlinson around campus, he pointed out the pride of Plutoria: Chicago-style skyscrapers fronting the Campus on Plutoria Avenue [Sherbrooke Street].

These buildings are exceptionally fine, standing fifteen stories high and comparing favourably with the best departmental stores or factories in the City. Indeed, after nightfall, when they are all lighted up for the evening technical classes and when their testing machinery is in full swing and there are students going in and out in overall suits, people have often mistaken the university, or this newer part of it, for a factory (p.54).

From the skyscrapers, Boomer took his guest to the old part of the campus, the Arts Building, Redpath Library, and Redpath Museum, built before 1890; the real McGill that Leacock loved:

But the older part of the university stands so quietly and modestly at the top end of the elm avenue, so hidden by the leaves of it, that no one

could mistake it for a factory. This indeed was once the whole university.... It had been filled with generations of presidents and professors of the older type with long white beards and rusty black clothes and salaries of fifteen hundred dollars (pp.54-55).

The ancestor of Plutoria University, before its expansion, had been Concordia College. "'This, I am ashamed to say,' said Dr. Boomer, as they passed the imitation Greek portico of the old Concordia College Building [the Arts Building], 'is our original home, the *fons et origo* of our studies, our faculty of arts'" (p.57). Boomer wanted to knock the venerable building down "and to build on its site a real *facultas* ten stories high, with elevators in it" (p.58). Said Boomer: "if I had the money I'd have that whole building down and dismantled in a fortnight" (p.59). In fact, ten years later the Arts Building would be renovated with posh marble interiors and Moyses auditorium added. "Tomlinson looked about him humbly as he stood in the main hall. The atmosphere of the place awed him. There were bulletins and time-tables and notices stuck on the walls that gave evidence of the activity of the place" (p.58). The notices mainly announced that professors will not meet their classes due to illness, etc. "You could judge of the grinding routine of the work from the nature of these notices" (p.58). In Leacock's version of the Arts Building, the hall contained the bronze busts of benefactors, such as Mr. Hogworth, "a man of singularly large heart," who had paid for the wind-measure on the roof (pp. 58-59).

They pass to Plutoria's museum [Redpath Museum], where Tomlinson was shown a skeleton of a *Diplodocus Maximus* not to be confused with the *Dinosaurius Perfectus*; perhaps some generous benefactor might purchase and donate the bones of the latter. "Better still, it appeared the whole museum, which was hopelessly antiquated, being twenty-five years old, could be entirely knocked down if a sufficient fund was forthcoming; and its curator, who was as ancient as the *Dinosaurius* itself, could be dismissed on half-pay...." (p.59). Next, they visit the library [Redpath Hall], with its portraits of founders and benefactors. Once again, if someone were to give the money, the library, which "was twenty years old and out of date, might be blown up with dynamite and carted away" (p.60).

From these three real buildings: the Arts Building, Redpath Museum and Redpath Library, Leacock now sends them to his invented buildings on the unused front of the campus: "the tall buildings that housed the faculty of industrial and mechanical science" (p.60). Even here the need of funding is striking: the physical science department has masses of apparatus and no space while chemistry has lots of space but cannot afford equipment.

Exaggerating McGill's expansion under Principal Peterson (1895-1919), Leacock pointed out the changes wrought by Dr. Boomer; more buildings meant more subjects can be taught, whatever their value: "He had changed it from an old-fashioned college of the by-gone type to a university in the true modern sense." Most striking of all, women had long since invaded the classrooms and laboratories: "and there were now beautiful creatures with Cléo de Mérode hair studying astronomy at oaken desks and looking up at the teacher with eyes like comets" (Fig. 1, see p. 81)

Half proudly, half disgustedly, Leacock observed that Plutoria taught everything. In the old days for example, it had taught no religion except for lectures on the Bible. "Now they had lectures also on Confucianism, Mohammedanism, Buddhism, with an optional course on atheism for students in the final year" (p.55). Had Leacock received a revelation that McGill's Divinity School would some day blossom into the pantheistic garden of the Faculty of Religious Studies? Variety did not stop with religion. With the contempt of the humanist for the plumbers of science, Leacock lampooned Plutoria/McGill's expanded curricula and activities:

It had whirling machines on the top of it that measured the speed of the wind, and deep in its basements it measured earthquakes with a seismograph; it held classes on forestry and dentistry and palmistry; it sent life classes into the slums, and death classes to the city morgue. It offered such a vast variety of themes, topics, and subjects to the students, that there was nothing that a student was compelled to learn, while from its own presses in its own press-building it sent out a shower of bulletins and monographs like driven snow from a rotary plough (p.55).

Boomer's campus tour was for nought. Tomlinson lost his fortune (and was happier for it). The gold samples in the Devonian strata had been "seeded" by speculators. The geology professor would never announce his great discovery and revolutionize his profession as he had hoped.

Much satire of McGill, especially Leacock's, has an architectural angle. This is natural considering that universities and other institutions gauge their progress and stake their immortality on the buildings they manage to put up. The McGill campus nevertheless has always been the architectural icon of Canadian higher learning. H.W. Trott, a McGill medical student who survived a paralyzing disease at McGill in 1919 and wrote about his experiences in *Campus Shadows* (1946) recalled the "old and stately buildings, personification of stability and solidity. For years they have symbolized all that is learned and upright in Canada."² (Fig. 2, see p. 82) But Plutoria (and McGill) aimed at physical expansion as the means to add more courses and departments and to become more important to society. McGill's buildings sprang up haphazardly, in different styles, here and there, as benefactors donated the funds to construct them. Beyond the use of local grey stone (and later concrete) there was no unified plan such as the University of Virginia's, designed by Jefferson, or now prevalent at modern universities—the construction of all buildings with one sweep of a government's budget. As early as the 1880s, McGill administrators may have hoped to destroy the Arts Building (built 1840s) and extend a huge complex in the style of Redpath Museum (built 1882) from the west side of the campus to the east side.³ While a few like Leacock enjoyed architectural oddities and anachronisms, one suspects Plutoria and McGill kept their old buildings mainly because they lacked the money to demolish and replace them. Like *Old Montreal*, McGill's older buildings probably were saved by poverty at the right time. (Fig. 3, see p. 83)

A few years before Leacock invented Plutoria University, McGill's campus had been threatened by the plans of a syndicate to build the multi-storied Ritz Hotel at its southwest corner. More to save the students from the temptations of its bar than for architectural reasons, Sir William Macdonald bought the site and gave it to McGill. The only other threat to the campus's aesthetic serenity came from the eleven story Maxwellton

apartment building, designed by Edward Maxwell and built in 1914. Standing across the street from McGill's main entrance, its hoardings probably went up at the very time Leacock was finishing his spoof. The unbuilt Ritz and the towering Maxwellton may have partly inspired Plutonia's skyscrapers. However, Leacock harped so much on the theme of the University's drive for physical expansion that one suspects Plutonia's skyscrapers may have been more than Leacock's reaction to encroaching apartment buildings; it may have been a send-up of the architectural master plans for the McGill campus that occupied his colleague, Professor of Architecture, later of Design, Percy Nobbs. Leacock and Nobbs would have known each other as founding members of the University Club. In 1911, three years before Leacock published *Arcadian Adventures*, a great opportunity for campus expansion presented itself. Sir William Macdonald (even more generous than Boomer's plutocrats) nearly doubled the size of the campus by giving the land to the northeast of McGill (Macdonald Park) to the university for sports and other activities. Nobbs had already designed Macdonald's Student Union and Engineering Buildings. Indeed, as early as 1904 he had suggested a long range architectural development plan for McGill, including a block plan for buildings on the Sherbrooke frontage and grand symmetry throughout. By June 1913 he had submitted detailed plans for Macdonald Park, including a gymnasium, stadium, and Oxbridge/Princeton style residence quads. (Fig. 4, see pp. 84-85) Nobbs's schemes were well known but none were built as originally planned. Bit by bit, from the 1920s to the 1990s, somewhat scaled-down residences and sports facilities would be built, some designed by Nobbs. Unlike Dr. Boomer, Nobbs respected the Arts and other existing buildings; however by 1920 he had elaborated a massive symmetrical plan for new buildings on Sherbrooke Street (where Plutonia had its high-rises) with a Convocation Hall and other buildings closing the campus off from the rest of the city.⁴ (Fig. 5, see p. 86) As with Macdonald Park, half a century later, McGill finally would build on part of the Sherbrooke frontage, not in Nobbs's stone and bricks but in Brutalist style using serviceable concrete: the McLennan Library and the Otto Maass Chemistry Building and high rise Burnside Hall Buildings, leaving the U-shaped campus still open to Sherbrooke St. In effect, Leacock's Plutonia and Nobbs's plans foreshadowed what McGill would become. Leacock would have smiled at McGill's

mood of expansion, Nobbs's plans of 1904 and 1911, and the search for funds. There can be little doubt that Plutonia University's architectural obsessions were partly seeded by the optimistic, utopian proposals of Nobbs.⁵

Leacock was not the only one to exploit McGill's architecture for laughs. In 1927, Frank Scott, published a parody in the *McGill Fortnightly*; "Gertrude Stein Has Tea at the Union." In her unique style, she is talking about the new Roddick Gates at the campus entrance:

I am becoming very interested in my interest in my interest in your University in its relation to beauty. If you do not mind I will tell you how it all happens. You see I am a follower of beauty follower of beauty and because I follow beauty is just in front of me. That makes it very beautiful, being so close. Being nearness is contemporary with the quite. Now it seems to me that you have beautiful gates just in front of the college [the recently built Roddick Gates] with the college behind and the gates in front. The college is not far behind the gates. So it seems to me that your college is following beauty and that is the most beautiful thing a college can follow, Nothing can be more than the most.⁶

SMITH CONUNDRUM UNIVERSITY

Perhaps influenced by Leacock's Plutonia, Régis Messac, a native of France who taught at McGill from 1924 to 1929, wrote the only novel wholly focused on McGill life. Returning to France, he wrote *Smith Conundrum* [McGill's pseudonym] in 1930-1931 but only published it in 1942. The occupying Nazis destroyed most copies after arresting Messac for his involvement with the Resistance. In 1975 McGill Professor Marc Angenot brought the novel to light and re-introduced Messac to his old University.⁷ Messac studied utopias and the detective story and wrote science fiction—the strange customs of McGill provided him with irresistible inspiration.

Set in the 1920s, *Smith Conundrum* extends Leacock's Plutonia themes: business wealth, vapidity, naivety and their effect on higher learning but more biting, mocking the anti-intellectual, middle-class,

wealthy milieu that McGill seemed to serve. Like Leacock, Messac used short, funny scenes rather than character development and relocated McGill to the crasser, more recognizable setting of the United States. Yet Messac built his surreal university out of recognizable McGill pieces. His autobiographical protagonist, Professor of French A.J. Pluche, was refused a raise at the same time that the University received \$50,000 to build new gates [the Roddick Gates]. The remains of the University's founder (Smith), rested in an urn in front of the Faculty of Arts [recalling James McGill's tomb]. Messac showed how satirists work by adapting to his own purpose the real-life case in 1921-1922 in which German Professor Hermann Walter accused French Professor J.L. Morin of poisoning his well. Walter and Morin probably hated each other because of their national origins, heated up by World War I; but in his novel Messac has "Professor Werther"'s well poisoned by a neighbouring clergyman angered that Werther is an atheist. Once set free of the original facts, Messac amused himself further by blaming the wronged party. Werther failed to win his court case due to the logic of Anglo-Saxon justice—the guilty party must be already suffering pangs of conscience and should not have to carry the additional burden of punishment (pp.148-149).⁸

We follow Pluche into the church-like vestibule of the refurbished marmoreal Arts Building, to teach a class of fifty males and females drawn, Pluche notes, from America's many races. He is particularly offended by the nasal American voice of a co-ed pronouncing the beauties of *Phèdre*. While Pluche talks, they listen politely without understanding. A football player, Harry Swellhead sits next to Anita Loveduck, daughter of a prominent rich clergyman [the cleric's wealth has a ring of Leacock to it]. When she starts doing her lipstick, Pluche knows his hour is up. Walking outside, Pluche is nearly run over by Swellhead and Loveduck at the wheel of a huge car and he imagines his death written up in the *Daily* (chap.1).

Pluche goes to the Library, walking quickly so he will look efficient and American. He reviles its stained glass [Redpath Hall] as worse than Lourdes or the Woolworth Building, and sees students comatose after drinking whisky all night. In a jab at the incipient American addiction to quantification, he runs into his

colleague Professor Talkinghorse who is measuring the lengths of articles in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* in order to define levels of knowledge and genius. Galileo scores impressively. Pluche confuses the issue by telling his colleague that he must take language into consideration: English and Italian encyclopedias differ as to the lengths they give Nelson and Dante (p.22).

Messac taught courses on Balzac, 19th-century French theatre, 17th- and 18th-century literature, and general courses in French language and Literature. His alter ego, Pluche, finds the students even dimmer than the professors. While engaging a female student in conversation, he notices that muskrats have been sacrificed to clothe and hat her—she is as pretty and banal as a cigarette ad. She is interested in both Mallarmé and Freud, and proposes to do, as her master's thesis, a Freudian interpretation of Mallarmé. Original, gasps Pluche (pp.31-32).

What is probably the most amusing chapter, "Honoris Causa" (pp.79-90), describes Convocation and the awarding of honorary degrees. It was translated by Gladys Quirk for the *McGill Reporter* in April 1975. Messac ridicules the Convocation; first, its honorary degree system: "Honoris causa! Long live America! No more exams—get your doctorate in a day. Talk about rationalization." He also mocks the pomposity of the convocation, led by the University's President, General Rumblebass Balderdash [Principal Arthur Currie], held in Conundrum Hall [probably Moyse Hall]:

The General, deans and university dignitaries together with the graduating class settled themselves on the large platform. As the Very Reverend Joshua Helluva, Dean of the College of Theology, invoked the Lord of the Armies from behind a small lectern, the professors standing at the foot of the stage feigned solemnity. Pluche couldn't resist raising his head from time to time to sneak a quick glance at the crowd.... In the foreground, in sharp relief, stood the magnificent figure of Dr. James J. Bunk, Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies. His ochre face, and heavy jowl were furrowed all over with angles jutting in and out like a Cubist painting, topped off by a shock of shiny grey locks. An imposing sight, he was for all that completely senile.

...Brandishing a small tin tube, the General began his speech in a foreign language. Pluche knew about the tube—it contained the honorary degrees. But the language was a real mystery.... could it be that the General knew Algonquin?

Pluche asks his neighbour, "What's he speaking?" He is told that it is customary to give the speech from the throne in Latin. The words do not sound intelligible to Pluche, who murmurs, "That's funny. I learned Latin..."⁹ No one else had and no one understands a word.

Other characters in the novel are based on real people, for example Major Stuart Forbes and probably René du Roure among other members of the French Department. How many characters had real models is unclear. For all its amusing episodes, the novel conveys a junior professor's disappointment in his students and frustrations with his superiors in a hierarchical McGill far less free than it is today. Pluche compares the chief of the French Department [presumably the dashing René du Roure] to the elegant actor Adolph Menjou. (Fig. 6) Du Roure was probably Leacock's closest McGill friend. He spoke French to du Roure over their lunches and drinks at the University Club; Du Roure died in 1940, of heartbreak, it was said, over the fall of France.¹⁰ Du Roure figures in some of Leacock's satirical skits, in one case dampening Leacock's claim to have shot a hole in one.¹¹ One wonders whether Du Roure ever brought his friend and his junior professor together.

Smith Conundrum is to some extent a satire of Arthur Currie as well as of McGill. Perhaps this was inevitable, since Currie personified McGill when Messac taught there. Contrary to Leacock who liked both McGill and Currie, Messac was unhappy and perhaps chose Currie as the symbol of the stifling University establishment. With the rest of the professors and students, Messac would have followed the libel trial in 1928, when Currie successfully defended himself against a journalist's charges that he had wasted lives. An anti-militarist, Messac mocked and embellished Currie-Balderdash's military career in a chapter on "La bataille de Tipperary" (pp. 140-160), inflating the charge of eleventh hour heroics. (Fig. 7) He also covered the libel trial and the McGill reaction. Along the way he noted that America rewarded its generals for

their slaughters by making them university presidents, since unlike France they have no Academy in which to induct them. Unlike Messac, most McGill staff appear to have admired Currie, Leacock most of all. Currie provoked satire and admiration simultaneously. In *Memoirs of Montparnasse*, said to contain a dose of fiction, poet and erotic writer John Glassco offers a satirical yet admiring glimpse of his old Principal. He is looking for his friend Graeme who is to go to Paris with him:

Soon I saw him trudging down the campus, and in front, almost hiding him, the immense figure of Sir Arthur Currie, principal of the university, holder of a dozen honorary degrees and ex-warlord of the Canadian Expeditionary Force. What a poor figure Graeme in his long green frieze overcoat and black hat cut behind this white-spatted symbol of the army, attired like the editor of *Vanity Fair*!¹²

After five years Pluche, and one gathers, Messac, had enough. Resigning from McGill, Messac returned to France, taught, worked for the Resistance, and died somewhere in Germany in 1945.

UNIVERSITÉ DUPLESSIS

In 1979 the Montreal writer William Weintraub brought out *The Underdogs*, a satire set in the future, twenty years after Quebec has become independent after a referendum [perhaps ca. 2000 AD]. To mark the twentieth anniversary, a "temple de la Langue Française" has been built on the former McGill campus with a huge amphitheatre where poets and others will gather to extol "the glory and the grandeur of the French language" (p. 9). Yet not all is well. Quebec now depends on loans from its wealthy francophone ally Senegal. The rest of Canada has joined the United States and linguistic purity laws have provoked resistance by an Anglo Liberation Army resembling the FLQ cells of 1970. English speakers who fail their language purity tests dream of escape to Vermont, are condemned to live in Point St. Charles, and do the menial jobs. A Padlock Law has closed English libraries (p. 116) and the Bureau pour la rectification des monuments historiques cuts off the head on the statue of Anglo Robert Burns and welds on a new



Figure 6. *Old McGill*, v. 39, 1936, p. 160.

bronze head—that of Octave Boileau, Patriot of the 1837 Rebellion (p. 89). The Sun Life Assurance Building, once the British Empire's highest building and symbol of English wealth, has been transformed into an indoor farm, loam on its marble floors (p.11). McGill, an even more dangerous symbol of Anglo oppression, has been converted to the cultural ends of the young state. One of the characters, Anglo "freedom fighter" Mona, wants to be a student—but rejects her boss's offer of a linguistic purity certificate if she will spend the weekend with him. She works as a seamstress in McGill's former McIntyre Medical Building. Much of the action takes place here where costumes are made for the Quebec state film industry as well as for a pageant celebrating René Levesque, Camille Laurin and other Founding Fathers (pp. 80-84).

The satire is aimed not at McGill but against the new state. The medical research centre had been one of the first of McGill's buildings to undergo a metamorphosis after Separation. And, a few years later, McGill itself had ceased to exist. Since 1821 it had been a bastion of the Anglo elite, but now its leafy campus and its historic buildings had become the Université Maurice Duplessis, named after the great advocate of Quebec autonomy:

It had been hoped that Montreal's Maurice Duplessis University would rival Moscow's Patrice Lumumba University in attracting students from the Third World, particularly from the French-speaking African countries. But few of these students ever showed up, for now that Quebec had entered the Post-Industrial Age many Africans considered Quebec itself to be part of the Third World, having pulled itself *down* by its own bootstraps rather than up. So French-speaking students from Mali and Togo and Upper Volta who wanted to learn engineering went to the University of Dakar, in Senegal.... Other French-speaking students, from Benin, Gabon, and Chad, went to Universities in Boston or Sheffield or Toronto where they could learn English (p. 77).

The book reminds one of the often-expressed idea that Quebec rejected Catholicism only to embrace the religions of social science and statism:

But if the Université Maurice Duplessis failed to

find an international role it soon found a national one. It became a centre not only for the theatrical arts but also for the social sciences. Each year it supplied Quebec with thousands of newly-graduated sociologists, all of them eager to join in the task of measuring and calibrating every aspect of human activity in the young republic" (p. 78).

In a pastiche of the 1970 October crisis, Mona and her Anglo terrorists kidnap the Foreign Minister of Senegal during the twentieth anniversary celebrations near the former McGill on Durocher Street. They force the broadcast and publication of their demands, and escape abroad. There would be years of struggle ahead... A play version of this book has caused controversy since 1989 when, the author alleges, fear of offending francophones caused a Montreal theatre to back out of renting its premises for the play's performance; it is being performed this year in Ontario.¹³

STUDENTS

Not surprisingly, McGill students figure prominently in satirical writing about McGill. In almost all fiction and memoirs about McGill, the Arts Building and its steps are the places most often cited. Graduate and former Chancellor Conrad F. Harrington recalled, "While it has been said that marriages are made in heaven, I think a lot were also made on the steps of the Arts Building, which were a meeting place and date bureau *par excellence* for the R.V.C. girls and others, and the male students."¹⁴ Leacock set his "Opening Day at College" from *Funny Pieces* (1936) in the hall of the Arts Building:

"What the hell are you taking Divinity for?" asked a bright-eyed co-ed of her companion in the jostling crowd that filled the hall of the Liberal Arts Building on the opening day at College.

"Oh, Gee! it's a cinch," answered the other girl, "only two hours a week instead of three and the old bird has never ploughed anyone in thirty years."

"Any prerequisite for it, before you can get in?"

"No, only good moral standing."

"Count me out," said the co-ed.

[Someone wonders where the Professor of French is].

"He won't be back for a fortnight, they say. He's over in Paris learning French."

"What's he need that for?"

"Search me" (pp. 33-34).

The dignified Dean arrives in the hall but it is the janitor Bill Jingleman whom everyone cheers—a reference to McGill's Bill Gentleman, great friend to the students, caretaker of the Arts Building and poet.¹⁵

Perhaps the most provocative, lively glimpses of McGill students appear in the writings of Mordecai Richler. Although he did not attend McGill, he evokes the McGill of the 1940s and 1950s convincingly, although one wonders if Jews and Gentiles were as socially divided as his characters indicate: his deftly rendered Gentile students tend to be rich, athletic, lazy, and snobbish while his Jewish students come across as insecure, ambitious, and grade-grinding. McGill itself appears as a playground for the rich and a proving ground for the strivers but seldom a moral or intellectual force. In *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz* (1959), Duddy has a studious, less rebellious, older brother—Lennie, who is a McGill medical student and falls prey to the temptations and potential treachery of life in the fast lane at McGill. Lennie gets into McGill in spite of the anti-Semitism of the 1940s, joins Hillel but picks up airs, becomes an "assimilationist", and starts going to Gentile fraternity parties (pp. 191-193). Duddy talks to Bernie, a friend of Lennie, who says:

Well, you know he dropped out of sight for a while. Then the next thing I'd heard he'd picked up with the Joe College bunch. The football crowd. Well, you know, drink chug-a-lug and all that. Listen, everyone's entitled to enjoy themselves the way they want. It's not for me, that's all. They're mostly rich kids. . . They run sports cars and get the prettiest. Well, you know,

the campus beauty queens. I don't know how Lennie ever got mixed up with them (p. 195).

Bernie has seen Lennie with one of his new friends, Sandra Calder; Duddy suggests they might have eloped. Bernie whistled. "If they eloped you can stop worrying. Old Man Calder is a millionaire. He's on the Board of Governors at McGill" (p.196). Lennie liked the new crowd, happy, outgoing, "not always plugging away"; he had good times with them at the Maritime Bar at the Ritz (p. 214). But it turns out that Lennie has started an abortion for Sandra. He is not the father but has done it as a favour for Sandra and her boyfriend. In fact this is why these new friends courted Lennie in the first place. When Duddy upbraids Lennie for his foolhardy act, Lennie retorts that he was protecting his friends and that Duddy has no code of honour. "You're a sucker not a gentleman," says Duddy (pp. 214-215). Lennie will survive and become a doctor but not before learning that if a Jewish medical student is invited to join the wealthy Gentile crowd, he may be asked to do extra work—in this case an illegal abortion.

Most of the characters in *Joshua Then and Now* (1980) attended McGill in the 1940s. Most were either nappy, superficial, upper bourgeoisie, or disaffected intellectuals or strivers—bookworms who spend Friday nights in the Library rather than at fraternity parties. The glimpses of student days are retrospective; characters now middle-aged look back to golden—or unhappy—times at McGill. Protagonist Joshua trying to get a job on the Paris *Herald-Tribune*, claims he majored in Spanish history at McGill (p. 102). He never did, although he once infiltrated a McGill hockey practice and shocked the other players with his street-style, ungentlemanly play (pp. 99-100). Richler's vignettes are biting and hilarious. At a reunion of high school friends in Ottawa, one character (the ineffable Seymour) says of Izzy Singer, a hustler who got started by following ice trucks and selling refrigerators to their clients on insialment:

You'll never believe this, but when he was at McGill, that *grauber*, he actually took a couple of courses in architecture, not that he ever wanted to be one, that *paskudnyak*, but so that he'd know enough that they couldn't cheat him when he became a developer. Anyway, so help me God,

he wrote a paper on the construction of Notre Dame, estimating from sources available the cost of the cathedral per cubic foot, and its present value as a Paris tourist attraction, arguing that it had, on balance, been a sound investment (p.141).

Joshua's wife contrasts her McGill set of easy going, indolent WASPs with

fierce driving Jews, who didn't play by their rules, each one hollering 'me, me, me.' They interrupted you in mid-sentence. They grabbed seats in the front row in lecture rooms. They wore diamond socks....They had already taken over the *McGill Daily*, raging at each other in the columns....they say our fraternities were restricted. It was the only place we felt unthreatened" (pp.177-178).

For Joshua's brother-in-law Kevin Hornby, McGill was his golden age, where he was worshipped for his athletic and social prowess. But after being caught cheating at McGill, his life goes downhill. He lives off women on his cruise boat in Bermuda. He makes a brief comeback running a mutual fund he does not understand and ends up losing the money of his McGill friends who invested with him: "The McTeers, Abbott, the Friars, the Harpers, everyone we were at McGill with. The entire country club" (p. 315).

Once grown up, the McGill WASPs tend to drink too much and are cuckolded by their decaying but elegant wives. A masterful portrayal is that of the social climber, Jack Trimble, who pretends to be British but was born in the poor Montreal district of Point St. Charles. He confesses his climb up the ladder to Joshua; it has been the driving force of his life to join the elite of McGill graduates who live in Westmount, summer in the Eastern Townships, and send the wine back at the Ritz. While his contemporaries played at McGill in the 1940s,

I got a job as a curb-service waiter at Miss Montreal. Remember it? The first drive-in on the strip. The Jewish kids used to drive out there in Daddy's black-market Buick. Outremont punks. Big tippers, though. Then the real McGill crowd. The quality. McTeer. Tim Hickey. Dickie Abbott

and Wendy. The beautiful Pauline Hornby. Kevin in that MG. The outrageous Jane Mitchell. Yeah, that's right. I knew them back then. Not to speak to, mind you, but to serve. Two Michigan Red Hots and fries? Yes, sir... (p.366).

In *Solomon Gursky Was Here* (1989), the protagonist's father L.B. Berger [reminiscent of poet A.M. Klein] goes to literary evenings with McGill professors who write poetry and claim to be socialists—clever catty people with private incomes (p.20). The protagonist Moses Berger wins a scholarship to McGill but here McGill is a mere detail among the novel's lively conceits—such as Jewish Eskimos.

In 1969 Eileen Fitzgerald, a student in Arts at McGill from 1965 to 1968, published *Expo Summer* about a woman student at McGill in 1967.¹⁶ (Fig. 8) The protagonist is named Eileen so the novel may be at least partly autobiographical. The book has some significance as a chronicle of student summer jobs at Montreal's Expo '67 World's Fair and for its half-humorous, half-critical portrayal of the restricted lives of women students at McGill's Royal Victoria College. It was just before the rules all ended in the face of the sexual revolution and women students' demands to live as freely as male students. Expo fever causes McGill to finish exams two weeks early in April 1967. From her perch in R.V.C., Eileen watches Mayor Drapeau's workers wash Sherbrooke Street to impress the tourists. With two girlfriends, she moves out of R.V.C. to an apartment on Mackay Street. Eileen and one of her friends have jobs at Expo, where they have to wear cute clothes and sell junk souvenirs to the visitors. Eileen describes the R.V.C. residence she is leaving with no regrets:

We slept that night for the last time in a building in Montreal on the corner of Sherbrooke and University Streets which is five stories high and has a larger-than-life statue of Queen Victoria planted firmly and symbolically in the centre of the wide granite staircase leading to the front door. It is an impressively heavy stone building, a grey and immutable architectural monster. I once met a man who had lived in Montreal all of his life and always believed it was a museum. Actually it is called Royal Victoria College and it is the home, of sorts, of all first- and second-year



Figure 7. Sir Arthur Currie on a booklet by the Publicity Committee of the McGill Centennial Endowment Campaign, 1920.



Figure 8. McGill University as a background in some works of fiction.

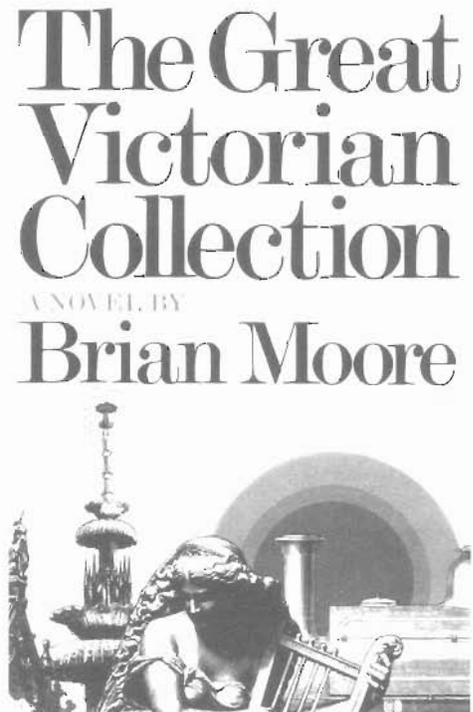


Figure 9.

women students at McGill University who do not live with their parents or certified close relatives. I lived there for two years. I signed in and out on my leave card after 9 P.M., couldn't receive visitors after 11 P.M., suffered the phone being shut off at 10:30 P.M. (p.17)

McGill's most famous student musical play, *My Fur Lady* (1957) satirized (among other things) student life at McGill and the restrictions of R.V.C., headed by Muriel Roscoe, a distinguished scientist: "No one could be keener on Victorian demeanour than the girls in Dr. Roscoe's care..."¹⁷ Fitzgerald's Eileen declares that she cannot think of a better way to describe why she and her friends moved out of R.V.C. than to describe its dinner ceremony. She does so in Dickensian detail; it will be recognized by anyone who has been at a private boarding school or a university residence or jail before the late 1960s.

[Dinner was at 6:15]. Of course we had to wear skirts to dinner. (It wasn't until our second year that R.V.C. girls were permitted to wear slacks outside the closed corridors of the living area without special permission of an Assistant Warden.) So at 6:14 we would scramble out of our jeans or whatever and throw on any skirtlike thing within reaching distance and head for the staircase. We ran down the stairs, around the corner, and into the main hallway where we were confronted with a solid mass of hungry females all jockeying for position near the dining room doors. At exactly 6:15 a bell located directly overhead began to gong madly. It kept on gonging for about a full minute. Then the crowd on the left side of the doors separated down the middle and the girls pushed themselves up against the walls of the corridor to make way for the royal procession wending its way toward the dining room from the lounge a suitable distance away. This was the R.V.C. hierarchy decked out in full dinner regalia, the Warden in a scintillating forest green velvet with a delightful 1943 sort of cut; the Assistant Wardens, in order of age and prestige, trying to make up with their smiles for the stony mien of the Warden; and carrying up the rear the several resident assistants, young women who were still in school and found themselves awkwardly suspended between

administration and students because they were allowed free room and board while serving as counsellors on the resident floors (p.19).

Like Leacock, Fitzgerald homes in on the architecture that somehow forms the culture it houses: "The pervading life-style of R.V.C. is reflected in the architectural mood. Its main dining room is a high-ceilinged, cavernous hall, with mahogany trim all along the walls, and mahogany tables and chairs, and a head table for members of the procession" (p.19). She describes waitresses serving the tables with serving dishes which were then spooned out family style; meals took at least an hour because the serving method was so slow. Inevitably, pea fights broke out (p.20). Once free of R.V.C., she pursues a romance over the course of Montreal's most famous summer.

Continuing the romance theme, an irreverent view of McGill education is found in *Going Down Slow*, set in about 1972 by John Metcalf. The protagonist David, a high school teacher, lies in bed with his beautiful grade 11 student Susan, while in the next room his flatmate Jim, another teacher, writes a thesis for the McGill Faculty of Education:

He was compiling the marks scored by each student during each of the four years of high school in each subject and correlating the arithmetic mean with the score attained on the provincial matriculation exam. He suspected a positive correlation (p.32).

David has his student's welfare at heart: stopping at the Roddick Gates, he encourages her to go to McGill—she will need the piece of paper to get a good job. She retorts that she doesn't want a career that will change her: "Look I was born on Droict in the east end, right? And I'm not going to let anyone turn me into a nice middle-class McGill girl!" (p.77).

Haitian-born Dany Laferrière's *How To Make Love To a Negro*, first published in French in 1985 and made into a film, draws McGill into his satire on racial and sexual stereotypes. The black protagonist draws on a harem of McGill women students. He has nicknames for the women he meets: the chief McGill woman is "Miz Literature." She is the opposite of Eileen Fitzgerald's quietly romantic, quietly rebellious,

discreet RVC student of twenty years earlier. He met her "at McGill, at a typically McGill literary soirée". He observes, "Most McGill girls smell like Johnson's Baby Powder" (pp. 22-23). Miz Literature comes to his apartment with cheese and wine; she pours him wine: "I close my eyes. To be waited on by an English girl (Allah is great). Fulfillment is mine" (p.26). He complains Miz Literature is naive and believes everything she is told and also is amazed that she puts up with him; it must be his reward for being black.

Miz Literature comes from a good family, she has a bright future, upright values, a solid education... she belongs to a feminist literary club at McGill—the McGill Witches—whose mission is to restore the reputation of unjustly neglected poetesses.... So what's going on here? You could hold a gun to her head and she wouldn't do the tenth of what she does here for a white guy. Miz Literature is writing her PhD thesis on Christine de Pisan (p.34).

When she cleans up his place, he observes: "McGill people are taught to decorate their environment" (p.34). Why does she keep coming back? Perhaps she sees him as exotic and dangerous, he thinks:

By day a WASP princess, by night slave to a Negro.... Suspense guaranteed because with Negroes you never know. Let's just eat her up right now, yum-yum, with a little salt and pepper. I can see the headlines in *La Presse*... 'TWO BLACKS ATE A MCGILL CO-ED'.... Miz Literature climbs into my bed.... Europe has paid her debt to Africa" (p.35)

This is certainly the McGill-related novel with the most erotic episodes. He meets another beautiful McGill student, Valery; another, "Miz Snob"; and for variety "Sophisticated Lady" from Sir George Williams (Concordia University). The stereotypes (tongue in cheek) pour from every page; the protagonist declares that McGill girls lack tact and logic:

And when you consider that these girls were sent to a serious institution like McGill to learn clarity of thought, analytical capacity and scientific doubt! But they're so full of Judeo-Christian

propaganda that when they get around a Negro, they immediately start thinking like primitives (p.83).

FANTASIES OF A MCGILL HISTORY PROFESSOR

Brian Moore's wonderful concoction, *The Great Victorian Collection* (1975) rebounds off McGill. (Fig. 9) As a journalist in Montreal in the 1950s, Brian Moore would have been aware of the McGill of Principal Cyril James, in the days when McGill's Principal was still the uncrowned Pope of English Montreal.¹⁸ While the satire says little that is peculiar to McGill, the fact remains that Moore chose to use the McGill provenance and academic back-biting in one of his most original works. The protagonist is an Assistant McGill History professor, aged twenty-nine, whose wife has just left him. Anthony Maloney visits Carmel, California (incidentally, where McGill graduate and inventor of transactional psychology Eric Berne lived). Maloney goes to sleep in a motel and wakes up in a huge open air market of Victorian antiques, toys, furniture, paintings and sculpture (the latter ranging from Arabian horses to an enticing statue of Andromeda exposed to sea monsters) of which he is in charge. Some of the works are the actual ones we know from museums, others are long lost "ghosts" or inventions. The book is a collector's fantasy. Many of the objects in the collection, such as the paintings, prove the Victorian talent for masquerading the erotic as historical scenes or metaphors of innocence; for example, there is a circular painting of sisters by Charles Baxter with their "pubescent, soft, garments spilling about snowy shoulders, liquid eyes wide in what waves of childish innocence, or wise in what hidden schoolroom depravities" (pp.121-122). Wifeless, on the loose from McGill, Maloney soon acquires a pretty girl friend who offers real-life supplements to the fantasies fired by the paintings of douce servant girls and sculptures of writhing heroines.

McGill is the reality point in what the protagonist himself agrees must be an illusion; he slowly realizes he has created the entire collection of furniture, paintings and other objects by the strength of his imagination. He also fears that like Never-Never Land, all will disappear once he stops believing the collection is real. The public visit, journalists descend; the

collection commands grips the public imagination. The fantasy art objects and fresh love affair contrast with his obligations at McGill. Finally, though, he calls home to McGill to explain his absence from department duties. McGill is not amused by this unacademic notoriety; indeed, his department head has "hit the roof" after reading in the *Montreal Gazette* about the sudden embodiment of the Victorian collection. Maloney learns that the History Department is planning to get rid of him if he does not return soon (pp.46-47, 53-54, 74). He is in a quandary. His McGill job is unexciting but real; meanwhile journalists and experts are starting to claim his collection consists of fakes and the pressures on him build. On the telephone, his mother warns him that the McGill Board of Governors can fire him if he does not return to his classes (p.81) and that perhaps his uncle, a lawyer, could help. McGill and its job symbolize reality while the miraculous collection represents an escape and possible fortune if sold or displayed with admission fees. A doctor's report on Maloney observes he fears losing his McGill job and also fears his academic enemies have exaggerated the crotic content of the collection (pp.96-97). When the still absent Maloney is fired, a History Department friend tells him over the phone that his firing has caused a campus protest. The students hold that his act of the imagination was more creative than any scholarship:

What more creative scholarship can anyone imagine than to re-create the artifacts of a period simply through an act of the imagination? Any university but dear old McGill, My God, they'd be so proud of what you've done. But we Canadians, we never recognize originality, because we have no real use for it. We fire the man who thinks up something new... This is the academic scandal of the century (p.119).

Likewise, his friend declares that Canada must not lose Maloney to the United States. Maloney now visualizes himself as a hero at McGill:

From now on he, Anthony Maloney, would be a campus hero, controversial, whispered about in the faculty club.... All he had to do was go home.... Excitement, as if he had just drawn an outstanding hand at cards, filled him as he replaced the receiver. A full house of people

assembled back there in Montreal, a flush of students, faces blooming upward. A hero who gave up fame in the States for the cause of academic justice. I am a historian who was witness to that first moment in history when a man's dream literally came true. I could work up a course, say, on the Victorian era as a factor in modern man's historical consciousness, an extension of my Ph.D. Thesis. I'd be an outstanding lecturer, unique in my field (p.120).

He dreams of giving a course on the Victorian era's place in our historical consciousness, then goes to brush his teeth and has a porcelain vision of McGill:

Brushing vigorously, bending toward the white concavity of the washbasin, he saw, in the porcelain, white snows, snows which covered the lawns at McGill, saw the path, brushed clear, leading up to the library, saw himself walking up the path. Students paused to stare and whisper, breath pluming from their mouths in the cold morning air, as he moved on, an academic hero, the man who had dreamed up the world-famous Great Victorian Collection in faraway Carmel (pp.120-121).

Sadly enough, as reality increasingly invades his life, the pieces in the collection begin to look slightly shabby and worn. Then, worse still, they start to fade. The beautiful artifacts seem to plead with him not to leave. He stays but can do nothing to stop them from slowly fading away like ghosts at sunrise. Readers are left with both a sense of loss for this fantastic array of beautiful old objects and the conviction that the tedium of everyday reality and jobs kills the imagination and its works.

REAL-LIFE STAFF

Real staff members, writers themselves, have appeared in satirical novels. An elegantly written book by Richard Pennington had a touch of McGill-related satire. *Peterley Harvest* (1960) begins:

Among the Peterley family papers now in the McGill University Library is the Journal of David Peterley that covers the years of his life in

Australia, in England, and in Prague, the years from 1926 to 1939. The full journal is more an archival collection than a diary, since almost nothing was excluded from its pages, and the description of an evening with a poet or a mistress may be followed by a tradesman's bill (unreceipted), or the plan of a yacht he built for the Bulli sands, or a newspaper cutting of a suicide. So that by 1939, when the journal ends, it had grown to the six bound volumes, the seventeen folders, and the bundle of Czech documents which fill the red box now in the manuscript collection at McGill" (Foreword).

The book was supposedly edited by Peterley's cousin Richard Pennington, McGill University Librarian at the time. It revels in delightful literary devices and observations while following the adventures of a young Englishman with real and imaginary figures of the 1930s. Researchers soon realized the Peterley Papers did not exist, at least not in McGill's Library. The author and protagonist appear to have been Pennington himself; if so the book offers insights into one of McGill's legendary characters. Peter McNally concludes that "It is clear that Richard Pennington has written his autobiography disguised as biography all the while employing the techniques of the novelist."¹⁹

A character in *Going Down Slow* (1972) by John Metcalf, who has taught at McGill, describes Hugh MacLennan as McGill's version of Mr. Chips:

Garry had told him that MacLennan lived in Montreal and taught at McGill and he had formed a picture of him as an old man, lonely, walking on the McGill lawns under old trees feeding the pigeons and squirrels with breadcrumbs from a paper bag. He didn't know exactly why he imagined MacLennan in this way. But the picture was quite clear. He filled the paper-bag every night ready for the morning. He always wore an old mac. He often stood watching the football practice, a figure apart from the shouting groups of students (pp.126-127)

In 1979 Jacques Ferron, author of *Le ciel de Québec*, satirized father and son characters modeled on McGill law professor and poet F.R. Scott ("Frank-Anacharsis Scot") and his father Canon F.G. Scott

("Bishop Dugald Scot"). Well-intentioned Frank symbolizes the English Canadian who is puzzled by French-Canadians but wants to be a real Quebecker—not badly enough perhaps. Even though Frank changes his name to François, it is predicted he will probably revert to Anglophone allegiances:

he'll go teach the Sociology of Residual Fauna at McGill University and later still, of course, after he's assimilated his subject completely, he'll keep the faith and a clear conscience by writing a little novel on the doppelgänger, the late François-Anacharsis Scot (p.285).

The writers examined here show us McGill in a variety of guises and angles; indeed they show how writers can use the university milieu as the focus or backdrop of their fiction. The brief episodic method seems most effective for such a task; Leacock's and Messac's little stories and Richler's vignettes were perhaps the ideal method to lampoon the McGill reality. While today's general readers probably will prefer Moore or Richler, who tell stories which happen to draw on McGill, McGill people will find themselves drawn in incestuously by the allusions and details in Leacock and Messac (who deserves republication).

Novelists, biographers, journalists, literary critics and film makers deal in fact and fiction, reality and imagination, memory and invention. Increasingly there is the danger that they will mix up these elements up as well as capriciously or naively blend the techniques of truth-telling and invention. Thus we have "non-fiction novels" and docudramas. The results range from insights to lies. But unlike those whose duty it is to tell the literal truth, the novelist, especially the satirist, can stir up reality and imagination at will. McGill is a likely inspiration for novelists whether they are satirical, romantic, historical or realist. What could be made of the life of Principal Dawson setting up his fortress of Protestant rationalism? or Cyril James's journey from middle-class London to North American eminence? or Rutherford in the lab Macdonald built him, untangling the invisible?

The satirists do not see McGill as a trainer of the mind, a guardian of intellectual heritage, but at best a

supermarket of ideas, an expanding physical plant, a place to have fun, get ahead, catch husbands and wives. It serves as a vacation or proving ground between childhood and adulthood. Missing from these satires are the ignition sparks given to students by the likes of Osler, Rutherford, MacLennan, and Robert Vogel. Perhaps this is inevitable due to the destructive nature of satire. In contrast, other novels, not covered here, by authors ranging from Constance Beresford-Howe and Hugh MacLennan to thriller writer Robert Ludlum have characters who find intellectual stimulation and grow at McGill.

We cannot know if Plutonia University has weathered as well as McGill. Its inspiration, McGill, still faces economic and political uncertainties that American Plutonia may have side-stepped with huge private endowments. McGill still lives with the burdens and preoccupations it had when Leacock and Messac wrote their parodies; it still worries about funding, establishes new disciplines and even builds new laboratories. As McGill woos government and donors, as it strives and twists to survive to its 200th year in 2021, it will surely inspire more satire.

Acknowledgements

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Notes

1. Many of Leacock's other satires are set squarely on McGill's reality; in *The Iron Man*, he makes fun of the parliamentary-ruled debates, complete with dog Latin, of Arts Faculty meetings, while *College Days* contains more academic skits, and a long poem on the foibles of all the arts professors (Part V).
2. H.W. Trott, *Campus Shadows*, Crosset and Williams, Hemlock, New York, 1946, p. 39.
3. John Bland, "In Advance of all the Others", *McGill News*, Summer 1962, p. 9.
4. McGill University Archives, RG 2, C16, file 20, "L-O, 1904-1907", memorandum, P. Nobbs to Principal William Peterson, ca. Nov. 1904; Percy E. Nobbs, "The sites of the University Buildings", *The McGill News*, June, 1920, pp. 2-5; *The McGill News*, Sept. 1920, pp. 30-31 (Nobbs's sketch of the entire developed campus). See Susan Wagg, *Percy Erskine Nobbs*, McGill-Queen's, Montreal, 1982, chapter 5. The 1904 block plan and a sketch of the 1913 gymnasium and residence scheme are reproduced on p. 59.
5. I am grateful to Susan Wagg and John Bland for information and suggestions; they are not responsible for any inaccuracies in this speculation.
6. F.R. Scott, "Gertrude Stein Has Tea at the Union", *McGill Fortnightly Review*, 25 May 1927, p. 62, quoted by Brian P. Trahearn, "Aestheticism and the Canadian Modernists: Aspects of a Poetic Influence", Ph.D thesis, McGill University, 1986, p.448.
7. *McGill Reporter*, 23 April 1975, pp. 4-5 contains a note by Angenot on Messac and the book and an extract translated by Gladys Quirk.
8. The Walter-Morin dispute is discussed briefly by Robert Michel, "Poison in the Well", *McGill Reporter*, 18 Sept. 1974.
9. Gladys Quirk, "Honoris Causa", *McGill Reporter*, 23 April 1975, pp. 4-5.
10. See Ralph L. Curry, *Stephen Leacock*, Doubleday, Garden City, New York, 1959, pp. 231, 275, 292.
11. Leacock, *The Iron Man and the Tin Woman*, Dodd, Mead and Company, New York, 1929, (pp. 204-206).
12. John Glassco, *Memoirs of Montparnasse*, Oxford University Press, Toronto, [1970], 1973, p.7.
13. See Pat Donnelly's theatre column, *Montreal Gazette*, 6 April 1996, E2; letter from W. Weintraub, *Montreal Gazette*, 13 April 1996, E2. The play was scheduled to open in April 1996 in Cobourg, Ontario.
14. E.A. Collard, ed., *The McGill You Knew*, Longman Canada, Don Mills, Ontario, 1975, p. 35.
15. Collard, ed., *The McGill You Knew*, pp. 216-222.
16. She is listed in the published McGill *Directory of Students* for sessions 1965-1966, 1966-1967, and 1967-1968.
17. Collard, ed., *The McGill You Knew*, p. 124. Private papers and McGill records documenting *My Fur Lady* are held by the McGill University Archives.
18. As a colleague in the McGill Archives once put it.
19. Peter McNally, "Identical Cousins. Richard Pennington and David Peterley: The Story of *Peterley Harvest*", *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of Canada*, 1987, 66-87, p. 79. The only McGill connection in the book is the alleged home of his papers.

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