JOURNAL

ROYAL ARCHITECTURAL INSTITUTE OF CANADA

Serial No. 302 TORONTO, OCTOBER, 1950 Vol. 27, No. 10

PRESIDENT - - - - - J. ROXBURGH SMITH (F)

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Editorial and Advertising Offices - - - - - - 57 Queen Street West, Toronto 1

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Canada — Three Dollars per year. Great Britain, British Possessions, United States and Mexico — Five Dollars per year. All Other Countries — Six Dollars per year. Single Copies — Canada, 50 Cents; Other Countries, 75 Cents.

JOURNAL
R. A. I. C.
OCTOBER 1950

A FEW years ago we published the inaugural address of the Chancellor of the University of Toronto, the Right Honourable Vincent Massey. In that address he stressed the importance of leisure in undergraduate life. It was a subject on which we, in the School of Architecture, had already given thought, but had taken few steps to put into practice. We have since made Saturdays free, and by introducing fewer problems in the academic term, we have reduced greatly the periods of panic where reading and discussion gave way to a slogging match to finish drawings. The need for leisure is not confined to undergraduate life, but the seeds may be sown in youth that will some day lead to a richer and fuller life.

IT is always a matter of amazement to us that Mr. Winston Churchill can find time for writing and the vast reading that goes with it, and for painting. We think, too, of the late Field Marshal, Lord Wavell as poet and writer of short stories; and of Earl Grey, the Foreign Secretary, as the author of a famous book on fly fishing. Only this week, we read "Ill met by Moonlight" — in which two English officers kidnap the general commanding the German forces in Crete. Part of their equipment, as essential as food and tommy guns, was a load of books. In dripping caves, or by a fire on a mountain side, their reading and their talk was of Plato's Republic, the Greek Tragedies or the poetry of François Villon. Interests of that kind are rarely acquired after undergraduate days. In Canada, and among architects, Mr. Percy Nobbs is probably outstanding in the variety of his interests. He has books to his credit on salmon fishing, fly fishing and design, and he is an authority in Canada on heraldry. So far as we know, he did not write a manual on the most effective way to bayonet a German, but on that subject, too, he was once an expert instructor. Such a manual would have been useful to the kidnappers of the general in the weeks they spent in Crete.

EQUALLY important in the enjoyment of leisure is the ability to so organize one's life that leisure is made available for doing those nice things that come one's way in professional life. In that respect, we have an uneasy conscience. Hardly a month or a week goes by when a fellow architect from Canada, or the United States or overseas, makes a friendly visit. He may be interested in a school of architecture, in public schools, hospitals, town planning, or merely the city in which one lives. Our own record in such cases is far from perfect, and falls away below the standards of architects in Great Britain, Western Europe or the United States. We recall with amazement the hospitality of Dr. Harmon in Texas who gave a committee of three architects four days of his time in an investigation of schools covering hundreds of miles; and of Mr. Perkins, of Chicago, whose attitude on a comparable mission seemed to be that his time was entirely at our disposal. Many architects have received similar evidence of a hospitality that could never be returned from Dr. Gropius in Boston to Mr. Kump in San Francisco, and, while enjoying their hospitality, we have frequently contrasted our own busy little day with the magnitude of theirs.

THIS matter has been brought home forcibly to us by the return, over the last few years, of students who have been abroad. With the possible exceptions of the universities, the view would be commonly held in Canada that the time given a visiting, strange student would be substantially less than that given a visiting eminent practitioner from another country. It is apparently not so in Europe. The tale is told, over and over again, of a hospitality and an interest rare in Canada — of architects taking the day off to show a boy of twenty everything of interest in a city — of lunch and dinner in his home — of letters of introduction to architects elsewhere, and a repetition of tours and discussion when the letter was presented. We know of one Canadian student in Scandinavia, whose years and modest professional standing were known in advance, being met at the station by the architect and the director of a famous art gallery in which he was interested. Loot, in the form of photographs, autographed books and plans are limited only by the student's ability to carry them. We recall with pleasure an event in our own youth when we had the temerity to ask the Marquess of Linlithgow for permission to measure Hopetoun, his house near Queensferry. He replied that we could, and that it might be more convenient for us to live at the house while we were doing it. Ladders, and help from gardeners, would be ours for the asking. Those experiences will never be forgotten by those who have enjoyed them, and must leave an impression of a civilization of which they were previously unaware.

IT is high time that the record of the Royal Institute of British Architects in respect to hospitality to Canadian students was made known to Canadian architects. The possibility of travel following the war, and the Pilkington Glass and other Scholarships, have meant that scores of students have converged on London in a tour of the British Isles and Europe. Rather light heartedly, we have told all who come to us for addresses to go to the R.I.B.A.; and for the Pilkington Scholarships, the R.I.B.A. has generously assumed the responsibility for approval of a student's study. But far more than that, the R.I.B.A. has made suggestions and revisions of a student's programme, and made easy the entrance to architects' offices and to buildings not only in Great Britain but abroad. Until we have a headquarters for the R.A.I.C. in Ottawa, there is little we can do officially for the now frequent visits of English students to Canada. May we suggest that, individually, we may do much to make their stay pleasant and profitable? The number who are here, or who will come from time to time, will be small in contrast to the steady stream that, every spring, makes Portland Place its headquarters. Our debt to the R.I.B.A. will not easily be repaid. On the other hand, it will not easily be forgotten.

Editor

INTRODUCTION

THIS issue of the *Journal* on the subject, "Branch Banks", provides an indication of the direction in which the architecture of this type of building is headed. Within the span of a few pages, there is evidence here of an evolution in bank design which is probably unequalled in Canadian history — an evolution which is but five years old.

During the depression of the thirties, bankers — like everyone else — confined their expenditures on premises to the barest needs of maintenance. Then came the War, when building — though badly needed — was restricted. Thus, as we look back over the years to the boom days of the late twenties, we see a long, dull period of almost complete immobility. Not until 1946 is there any sign of life in the building of banks.

But when life returned in the post-war period, it was, in the main, a new vibrant thing — a movement in design born of fresh thinking, enriched, it almost seemed, by a maturing process at work through all those barren years before.

The present programme of replacing old buildings, and of constructing new ones to keep pace with the rapid development of the country, not only reflects the growth of the banks, but expresses defiance of the old traditional line of thinking. This programme — this evolution — has just begun. There is a tremendous back-log of bank building, which provides exciting opportunity for architects in all parts of the country.

My experience over the past five years proves that the banks, spurred by a fresh outlook on life, are distinctly receptive to new ideas. Perhaps it is a reaction to their much publicized conservatism that they seem more inclined than the average business man to explore fresh fields. More conscious of their old shackles, they shake them off the harder.

In revolt against the old formulas of twenty years ago, we see a continuing search to make a bank a more pleasant, inviting place for customers, and to improve working conditions for the staff.

No longer do we build forbidding structures patterned on temples of old, designed to impress upon the beholder financial strength and the security of a prison. But neither do we accept the grocery or corner drug store as a model for a bank.

Banks today — more than at any time in their history — are part of the stream of life in Main Street . . . by contrast with their *carriage-trade* clientele of two or three decades back, they serve literally every Tom, Dick and Harry in the community.

Yet, by their very nature, as service institutions, dealing in intangibles of confidential counsel and financial assistance in a dozen forms, they differ from commercial enterprises — a fact which, in the final analysis, grows from the dictates of the public. Thus, as all good architecture reflects the use for which a building is constructed, banks differ distinctly from commercial buildings generally.

For this reason, while customs change and banks are changing with them, our buildings must retain a feeling of security, combined with dignity and good taste. To discard such essential aspects, merely for the sake of novelty, would be to disregard the inherent nature of a bank, and the public conception of its role in the community.

The customer has a great influence on bank design. In his bank he has a somewhat filial interest as well as confidence; for his bank he has a certain respect, not duplicated in his attitude toward the rest of Main Street. If his bank did not provide a building of substance to which he could point with pride, he would feel his banker was letting him and his community down together.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank the contributors to this issue. From all parts of the country they have sent me their writings, their pictures. They have contributed, at no small cost in time and trouble; they were painstaking and prompt, even during the summer-holiday season. I hope their efforts are appreciated. To the editor, I offer thanks for inviting me to *captain the issue.*

Bruce H. Wright

THE WHY AND WHEREFORE OF MODERN BANK DESIGN

By L. W. TOWNSEND

Assistant General Manager, Bank of Montreal

BANK architecture has changed immensely during recent years, especially since the war. And the first reason for this is that bank thinking has changed. For the office in which a bank does business is a quick and precise mirror of its attitude towards the public. Or, rather, a new or remodelled office; the others stand as monuments to different phases of the bank's history and to the architectural tastes of earlier generations.

The bank's thinking, of course, is, itself, only part of the general thinking of the period, conditioned by the political and economic atmosphere. Like any organization which intends to remain alive and healthy, a bank must continually adapt itself to changing circumstances. Earlier generations of bankers, to judge from their buildings, may have thought that circumstances would never change, but that was itself part of the attitude of their times.

The first impression presented by a comparison of a modern branch bank with one built fifty or even twenty-five years ago is the great gain in simplicity. Apart from the general trend of architecture in this direction, the chief cause of the change is that banks today stress service to their customers, in the pleasantest and most efficient way possible, instead of endeavouring to impress people with their stability or strength; among the Canadian chartered banks, such characteristics may be taken for granted. They are concerned above all with being an attractive, welcoming place to do business.

There are very many ways in which this policy manifests itself, and the exterior of the modern branch is perhaps the most striking. Its characteristics are the extensive use of glass and the absence of unnecessary ornament. The passer-by looks into the bank through wide, high windows. There is nothing pompous or forbidding about the place. Men and women of all ages and occupations can be watched depositing their savings, transacting their business inside. The bank is part of the busy shopping district in which it is usually situated, not a withdrawn citadel of power, reminiscent of the Middle Ages. The door is no longer a massive piece of wood, which, however handsome in itself, looked better shut than open, but is of glass, forming an integral part of the whole welcoming facade.

The same aims govern the internal planning of a new branch. The prerequisite is that it should be light and airy, an office pleasant both to visit and to work in. It's the kind of place where the counter is not an impassable barrier, but a convenience for staff and customers, and where the manager is not an unseen being set apart in a closed office, but someone who is readily accessible to his customers and friends. Thus it is as natural for him to come and go among his own staff, as it is for his customers to drop into his office. Certainly, this ease of access to the chief is a continuing tendency of North American business, but in the banks it has received considerable encouragement in modern branch design. At the same time, there is sufficient privacy for the manager's visitors to be able to talk in confidence.

The features of the new branch derive from these general principles. The woodwork is now usually light in colour, the counter line is low, and the tellers' cages, though they keep their name, have lost their claustrophobic qualities. The tops went a long time ago, and in some cases the backs also have been given up. Which does not mean that the banks are any less careful about the safety of their cash; only, that they have found better methods of protecting it. At the Bank of Montreal, we are now using sloping glass screens for the counter, which greatly help its appearance.

The vault remains an architect's problem. Safety precautions and regulations fix its bulk and allow little variation in design. Our general principle today is to make the most of the vault; show it to the public, and let it be part of the general design of the branch. In fact, just as in former days the branch itself was used to display the solidity of the bank, so today the vault is kept before the public's eye as a symbol of soundness.

The introduction of fluorescent lighting was a marked blessing for our architects, who have been most conscious, too, of the need to cut down noise. Modern machinery has many advantages in a bank, but it does increase the noise level. Thus, although stone floors can be very impressive, today we prefer rubber tiling, and ceilings are automatically soundproofed. The comfort and convenience of the customer are served in other details. The stone or polished wood bench of our older

branches has been replaced by chairs with soft leather-covered seats. There are plenty of signs to make it easy for customers to pick out the department they need. Pictures are used for the decoration of the branches, which provide pleasing colour contrasts on the walls. Actually, in some of our most modern branches, the large amount of window space makes such decoration unnecessary, but elsewhere we now hang the silk-screen prints issued by the National Gallery of Canada, and they have proved widely acceptable to staff and customers. Improvements, such as better lighting and less noise, which make for greater customer-comfort also help the staff. More specifically, new branches all contain staff rest-rooms, and the larger ones also have lunch rooms.

The increase of women in the service has also had its effect. Their presence may well have influenced the bank's architects to soften the rigors of the functional designs of new bank buildings, and they are responsible for reducing the height of the counters by an inch and a half. It was easier to do that than to provide all women tellers with special platforms.

Canadian bank architecture is, naturally, strongly influenced by what is happening in the United States. This summer, in Vancouver, the Bank of Montreal opened Canada's first drive-in branch, a feature of American banking during recent years. Such a branch is another sign that time-consuming ceremony has gone out of banking and that our aim is to render every transaction as simple as possible for our customers. With this same purpose in mind, we also set aside a section of the floor of our Vancouver drive-in branch — actually situated on the corner of Tenth Avenue and Granville Street — as a baby-carriage park.

More and more, too, the banks are becoming conscious of the advertising possibilities presented by their branches. Both overall design and details of decoration are thought out from an advertising point of view. The bank's name is given prominence so that it will catch the eye of the passer-by. At the Bank of Montreal, we find that bright metal lettering on a polished black facade is most effective for this purpose, the lettering, itself, being simple and modern, in keeping with the architecture. Plastic illuminated signs are also used.

For some years the identifying device of the bank in its advertisements has been an insignia carrying the words: "My Bank" to a Million Canadians. With the aid of transfers, we are now having this fixed to the doors of our branches. Inside the branch, posters and display racks for advertising literature are placed at strategic points. These help to convey that impression of colour, which is so characteristic of the modern branch bank. It's not the subtle variation in shading which the marbles employed in our Head Office banking room provide — that is something unique and not to be duplicated in this generation — but warm, friendly colour, such as green and orange-brown, which is easy to work with. In our new Toronto building there is a happy compromise, we believe, between the traditions of the large bank building and the modern feeling for light and colour. Thus the banking room is flanked by 20 Belgian black marble columns, while its walls are panelled in light oak and the floors are of green terrazzo.

It is only right to mention another consideration influencing bank design today, and that is cost. Merely putting up a building is expensive enough, and the cost of the monumental masonry and ornate work of earlier branches would be prohibitive. Cost has its effect too on the planning of the interiors, for it has become essential to make as economical use of the space available as possible. The increasing employment of machines has helped in this connection, limiting the space needed for bookkeeping and other routine operations, and it has been found possible to reduce the width of the tellers' cages from five to four feet, and even to three feet nine inches in the savings departments. We try not to cramp our customers, and, in general, our new branches permit far more tellers per customer than did the old ones, but the vistas and the entrance halls have disappeared.

There is one further aspect of branch planning to which we pay great attention today, and that is suitability of style. There are some sites where stone is right, and where it is used, but in others it would look badly out of place, and brick is preferred. But we have never at the B. of M. tried to pretend to be something we are not; a bank is obviously a bank. It is advertised as such on the outside, and there is little point in trying to disguise it as a country cottage or ranch house. It has, we feel, a definite character of its own, and a form of architecture especially suitable for bringing it out. Today the essence of that character is friendliness and efficient, straightforward service. The bank must be the kind of place the businessman, the housewife and the high-school boy can all walk into without embarrassment, transact their business with ease, however many or few the dollars they are dealing in, and speak well of to their friends. Just as we aim to make our customer relations reflect this, so we try to design our new branches — and redesign our older branches — to create the same impression.

RECENT TRENDS IN BANK BUILDING

By S. G. DAVENPORT,

Consulting Architect, The Royal Bank of Canada

IN the earlier years of this century, the Branch system of Canadian Banking produced buildings which were generally monumental in character, conservative in appearance and well built. Through their good design, they succeeded in creating the desired impression of representing substantial institutions.

Subsequent changes in the architectural character of bank buildings came about partly on account of the trend towards modern style, but perhaps more through the need of expressing the change in the ideas of traditional banking.

The austere "temple" quality of the bank of the past has all but disappeared and the tendency today among banks in Canada is for their relations with the public to become more and more human in their approach.

This changed part that the banking institutions play in the public life is emphasized in present day bank designing. Nowadays the practice is to build an open and airy banking office, which, from the shining floor to the pastel-toned walls and ceiling, is as smooth and fresh and modern as the latest automobile. Gone are the days of heavy grille-work and massive dark counters in a sombre atmosphere. The accent is on such features as low-line counters and unobtrusive grilles to conform to requirements of modern banking practice, efficient furniture and equipment, effective use of materials and excellent provision of natural and artificial lighting. The fortress like character of banking quarters of bygone days has vanished and although there is less parade of safeguards, these safeguards have been multiplied and perfected in a measure fully in keeping with the progress of the age.

Convenience for the client is the key-note in the designing of modern bank buildings, but together with this attention to the customers there has come a real effort to give the staffs quarters in which they can work with some feeling of pride and comfort. Today, therefore, attention is given toward providing for the staffs, who spend a quarter or more of their lives within the banks, all the comforts, conveniences and amenities that modern science tells us they need. Lunch and rest room accommodation is now a general requirement in the planning of a bank's service spaces.

Bank building, therefore, does not concern solely with the mechanical characteristics of the structure but also with the social significance of its spaces.

Trends in bank building, not always clearly determined in the past, stand out in sharper relief today and have to do, not only with the physical aspects of construction but with what might be called its sociological phases, such as designing into the building every possible aid, whether of beauty, utility or facility to realize the utmost in banking service. More care is therefore being given to the solution of functional problems by a more rational use of forms and materials and by an imaginative blend of colour, line and beauty.

The Bank branch is as much a part of the ordinary town or village it serves as the church, the general store and the post office. It is self-contained and clearly identifiable as an important unit in the local social and business structure and is basically designed to serve both physical and utilitarian purposes.

The character of bank buildings, like their shapes, is therefore a natural development of functional requirements, and it would seem undesirable to build a bank which could not gracefully modify its functions.

While concessions to modernity have been made in recent years, and although freedom and unconventionality are to found in the way some bank buildings are designed today in disregard for the old formalities of proportion and rigid balance, architectural design in bank buildings adheres mainly to classical lines and there is often enough to recall the style tradition established in this field, even although translated into modern idiom. We wisely seek to retain, from the past, much that is worth retaining as we plan for the atomic future. Today we search for a combination of utility and beauty that is not markedly dated. The Bank of Canada Building in Ottawa perfectly exemplifies this attitude.

New Bank Buildings may be better than their predecessors through advanced design and through the accumulation of many small improvements which will make the new structures simple and direct expressions of necessary functions set forth in appropriate and economical materials.

Today one finds more attention being given in bank building to the details of construction and to the selection of materials, success in which is often much harder to come by than good design. Large areas of bank exteriors are now of glass, and light metal, with masonry parts covered with fine stone or marble slabs and new construction is making a fuller and more imaginative use of these materials. It is reasonable to expect that further developments in the plastics, light metals, plywood and similar products and their better availability may further influence bank design and construction methods. However, they will not change the fundamental functions of banking premises.

Today there is a tendency to make the utmost use of window showmanship and recent bank buildings show emphasis on light, air, and similar amenities as factors towards pleasant and efficient business operations. This trend is accentuated by the openness in design and the generally informal treatment. Large windows and simple horizontal lines, both on the exterior and in the interior have resulted generally in pleasant clarity, restful to the eye. The openness and horizontal character of the windows somehow express big areas within.

The clean neatness of detailing in recent bank structures is marked and the effect of simple directness achieved in a number of the newer buildings illustrates the meaning of simplicity. Details are well studied and easily erected.

As a contrast to the contemporary attitude for horizontal lines in one or two storey branch building, it is interesting to note that, in the many storied structures erected during the past twenty-five years to house Head Offices and Main Branches of Canadian Banks, emphasis has been placed quite strongly on vertical lines in their exterior treatment. However, historical precedent has been adhered to in the decorative forms, exterior and interior, and that simple directness, that unconscious feeling for proportion and for placing that characterizes these larger bank buildings are indicative of the good building technology and design followed by Canadian banks. The quiet dignity and seasoned graciousness of these Main Office Bank Buildings will endure long after some of the modern trends of architecture are really old-fashioned.

We should not overlook the many good results obtained within recent years in the modernization of older branch buildings or in the adaptation of premises for banking purposes. In line with the re-study of functional requirements, plans are being modified to get natural easy flow for customers through the bank, and these new expedients for better use of space, closely parallel the need for re-designing exteriors. A well designed bank pays in efficient operation. Banks have, therefore, looked critically within recent years at dingy entrances, drab exteriors and inefficient interiors. The ripping out of off-dated ornamental bric-a-brac and of poor construction and their replacement by more durable and attractive materials with clean lines and fresh smooth planes have been undertaken. The benefits of these modernization and improvement schemes have been marked by the tangible and immediate rewards of customer appreciation.

A recent requirement in branch bank building, the result of our modern way of life, is the provision of adequate parking facilities for clients. These parking lots are tied in with site planning which is being given more careful attention as is landscaping and treatment of fences to emphasize or hide parts of the bank property. Recently one of the banks instituted a practical innovation by designing as a feature in a new branch building, a tellers' enclosure for automobile drive-in service.

Mural painting has been successfully undertaken in a few bank buildings. This is an effective manner in which the austere walls of a banking room may be enriched and enlivened by colour, warmth and beauty.

Good ventilation has become a matter of course in bank buildings and it is conceivable that air-conditioning, while already installed in some branches, will become more frequent in newer banks. Acoustical treatment of interiors is now commonplace.

In the past little thought was given to the illumination of bank exteriors and often, after dark, they were dark spots in the length of any business street. Today bank architecture has a night life, being designed for day and night illumination. Skillfully handled flood lighting is effective not only for visibility but for mood and decoration.

The designing of a branch bank is possibly more affected nowadays by local conditions. This is particularly true in new communities where under recent town and group planning, community or shopping centres usually follow a particular style, construction and character. Obviously the bank building in such a group must, by necessity, be closely related in treatment.

In summation, recent and future trends in Bank Building appear to be to structures, simpler in design, better planned and erected and equipped to scientifically defined standards to serve their special intentions through the help of more modern methods and new materials.

THE BRANCH BANK IN THE MARKET PLACE

By E. R. ARTHUR

ONE of the great services which modern architecture has done for building is that it asks the question "why?" Reports on schools and hospitals have questioned the validity of age old practices and time worn shibboleths. The result has been new and exciting structures that have brought much colour and happiness to occupants, and new appreciation of architecture for citizens at large. By comparison, banks in the main in Canada, seem unaware that an industrial and social revolution is taking place around them. The reason for the conservatism of bankers, and the progressiveness of school and hospital boards and the owners of factories, who, oddly enough, are frequently bankers, are not hard to find. The school board, which too often in a former time, built a school that was a monument to itself or the community, now builds for the maximum comfort and use of pupils and staff. The guiding principle before the architect is the perfect environment for the educational process. The same may be said of hospital boards and the owners of factories. The bank board approach is more complex, and is overlaid with a Victorian fog of standards that have no place in modern architecture. Of these, perhaps, the idea of the "monument" is most persistent. Bound up in the monument is the concept of dignity, which puts the trading in money on a loftier plane than trading in groceries or other commodities. In the past, dignity found easy expression in the ready made carcass of the Greek or Roman Temple. The Greek Temple also provided the illusion of security; but in practice, provided a masonry screen behind which the bandit could work unobserved from the street. On occasion, the substantial temple has provided little security when it has enclosed an unsubstantial financial structure within.

The blatant display of wealth in the monumental banking hall of the head or regional head office finds no echo, fortunately, in the branch bank. It is mentioned here merely as a phenomenon which the architectural historian will find of more than passing interest. In an age when the depositing of money is by the many, in small amounts, rather than by the few in large, it is, surely, with no understanding of elementary psychology that the banking hall is built as a salle des pas perdus; an extravaganza of semi-precious metals and multi-coloured marbles. Here again, custom rather than common sense dictates the form. The grandfather of banking halls in Canada is the hall of the Bank of Montreal in Montreal. If one may, and of course one should not, think of that hall as a piece of architecture divorced from function, it is a noteworthy example. It belongs to a period in taste on this continent (1903, McKim, Mead and White were the architects) that may be called the period of Roman grandeur. If monumentality is to be the theme, no one has since improved on the Bank of Montreal, but equally large halls have been built in which a certain lushness of detail and material are apparent. The movies must take credit for this departure from the McKim prototype. An examination of recent halls would indicate that while the voice is the voice of McKim, the hand is a hand guided by de Mille.

To return to the less rarified air of the branch bank and the comparison with the school or groceteria or any other building type in our democratic society — the question is raised whether any bank has analyzed its needs in terms of its smooth functioning as a business in relation to the comfort and efficiency of staff, the convenience of customers and neighbourliness? In a study made by the writer, which included Canadian banks of different ownerships, design seemed far less important than inherited custom, daylight was neglected and furniture was heavy and unsuitable. Surprisingly, even the technological improvements of our age were ignored. Electric lighting frequently achieved nothing better than 12 foot candles (1 and 7 foot candles were recorded), and the old fashioned electric fan, even if it were of mammoth proportions, proved ineffective against the heat of summer. When air conditioning, with summer cooling, has reached the restaurant and the neighbourhood movie, the bank manager in his shirt sleeves with a convenient coca cola bottle is a curious commentary on our times.

All Canadian banks have to their credit new branches, and this issue of the *Journal* will prove that quite a number are admirably designed. The writer has seen none of the photographs submitted, but would guess that the best are on inside sites bounded by party walls. There, the solution is comparatively simple with an all

glass front, and carefully considered artificial lighting providing about thirty foot candles. That solution differs only in detail from the Imperial Bank on Yonge near Bloor, which was built twenty years ago. The corner site, which is, naturally, the most desirable, presents a much more difficult problem. It is here that the considerable literature, which has been built up on the lighting of schools and other buildings should play an important part in planning. I am told that thirty years ago a bank architect made the statement that, for him, the public space should be on the inside wall – as an invariable rule. This is no longer general practice except, I believe, for two banks in Canada, the Bank of Montreal and the Dominion Bank. In opposition to this system is the placing of the public space on the outside wall. The theory behind such a system is that the pedestrian seeing his neighbours happily depositing their money will be persuaded to do likewise. Such theory is sound enough, but, in practice, the spectator's vision is obstructed by venetian blinds or coloured glass which is more easily seen through from inside than outside. The well lit area against the outside wall is therefore wasted on the customer, and the area not reached by daylight is devoted to the staff. The staff, who are at their jobs all day, are sacrificed for the supposed comfort and advertising value of the customers whose stay in the bank must average ten minutes. Against a return to the old plan, where the staff work against the outside wall, is the argument that their jobs at times are necessarily untidy, and that confidential papers might lie exposed on desks or tables. In the very few modern banks the writer has seen where the old system was adopted, (one in Winnipeg was outstanding) no evidence of untidiness was apparent. In any case the window sill in the office space would be raised to a height that would preclude casual "gaping", and persons who would climb on a sill can be handled by the police or their fellow citizens. The same precautions should be taken for the window in the manager's office, or obscure glass could be used for a foot or more above the sill.

We have for so long built branch banks (and head offices) on the concept of prestige, that we have lost sight of the fact that "good taste" may be synonymous with poverty of imagination. As a result, the majority of banks in our neighbourhood shopping centres stand out in curious contrast to other "stores", where the basis of design is an invitation to the citizen to enter. The banks are in the market place, but not of it. The bank is in business, but it stands out like Gibraltar with masonry walls punctuated with windows. It probably has a sculptural panel of arms, doors of polished metal of great weight and cost – its direct ancestor is the temple. It is as friendly and as inviting as the mint. Every bank in Canada has its stable of such banks, and some are building at the moment of this writing. In what proportion the architect and his employer, the banker, must share the responsibility for branches that are patently anachronisms in our modern society, only those who "do" banks could tell us.

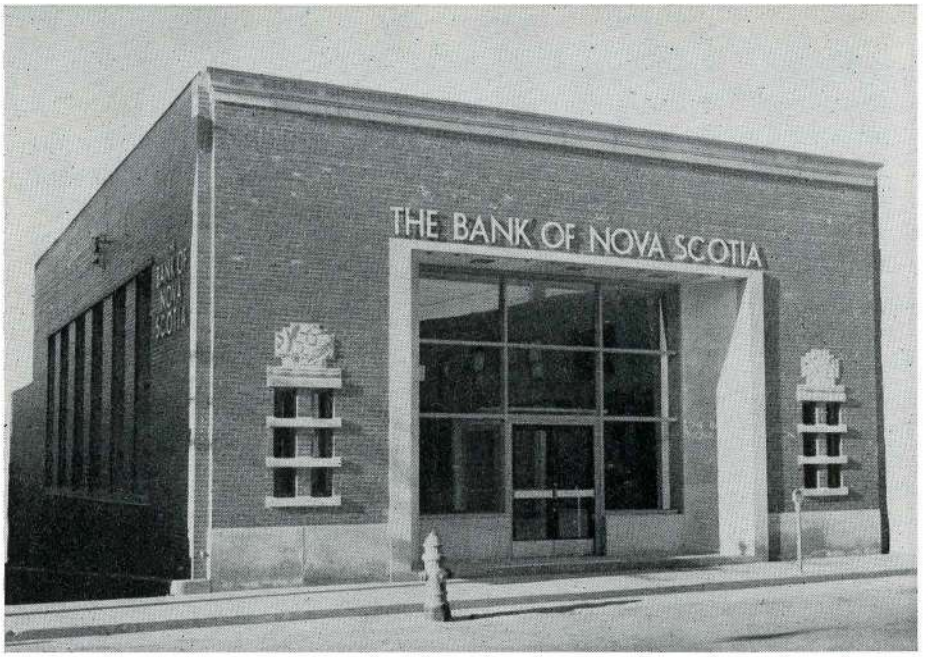
The banks of the Pacific West Coast, particularly of California and Oregon, have most to offer the architect interested in the problem of the small branch bank. Ingenious diffused lighting outside removes that dark spot which shop keepers abhor in a neighbourhood shopping centre. They seem to be frankly in business to attract depositors. Their demeanour is modest, their interiors are as exposed as a chain store grocery. Colour and light enliven their interiors, and planting removes the last vestige of the institutional. In a word, they are places that one enters as naturally as a drug store. It is significant that, in the United States, the existing institutional type of bank, which says "Enter if you must" is frequently being altered to a gay one of glass, which says "Come right in". Burglars are said to prefer the old type, customers, the new. The sixty-four dollar question is the preference of the banker.

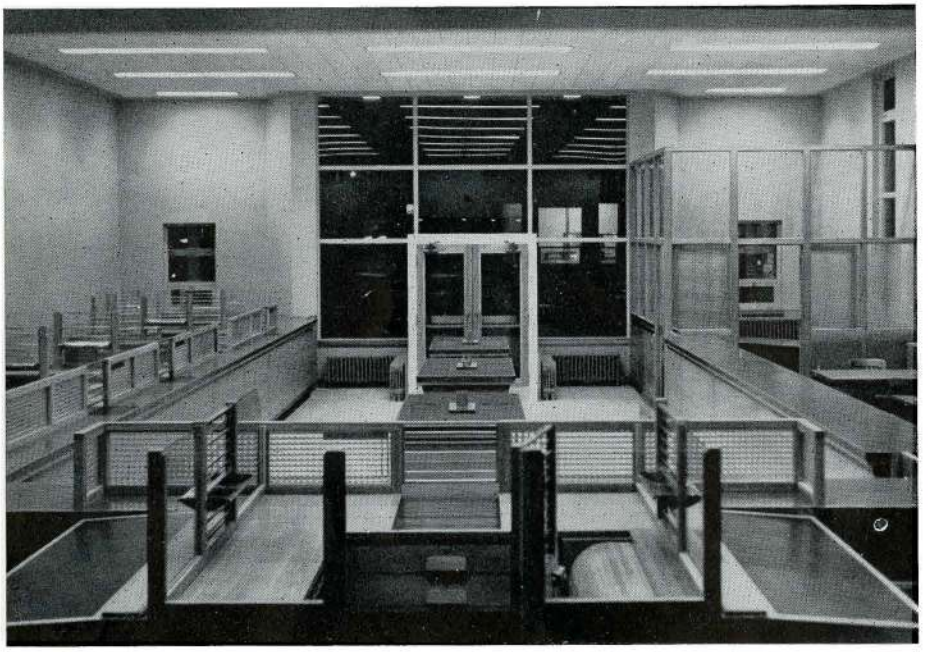
I first became acutely conscious of the Canadian branch bank on a memorable night in 1937. We were working late at the office, and our lights, on a darkened street, attracted some unexpected human moths. One was a flaxen haired woman who, mistaking me for the veterinarian next door, accused me in front of the draftsman of murdering her bitch. Peace had just been restored when a new visitor, a man, asked if I could spare him five minutes. He was the manager of a new and imposing nearby bank, and he had come at 11.30 p.m. to see whether I or the draftsmen would care to open an account with him. With my permission, he spoke to each draftsman in turn and left his card. He was an extremely nice man in an obviously highly competitive business. He was as gregarious as an Elk and his gregariousness was profitable to the bank. I felt then how incongruous was this little man and his habits in the tomb or temple in which he was obliged to function – the incongruity of human simplicity and architectural or financial ostentation. What he needed was a bank that was a well planned store, where he could meet his customers without the embarrassment of so blatant evidence of riches – a place where money was spent on comforts like cooling, lighting and furniture, and a colour scheme that made staff and customers look well and feel well. The pages of this *Journal* may convince me that somewhere this is just what is being done.

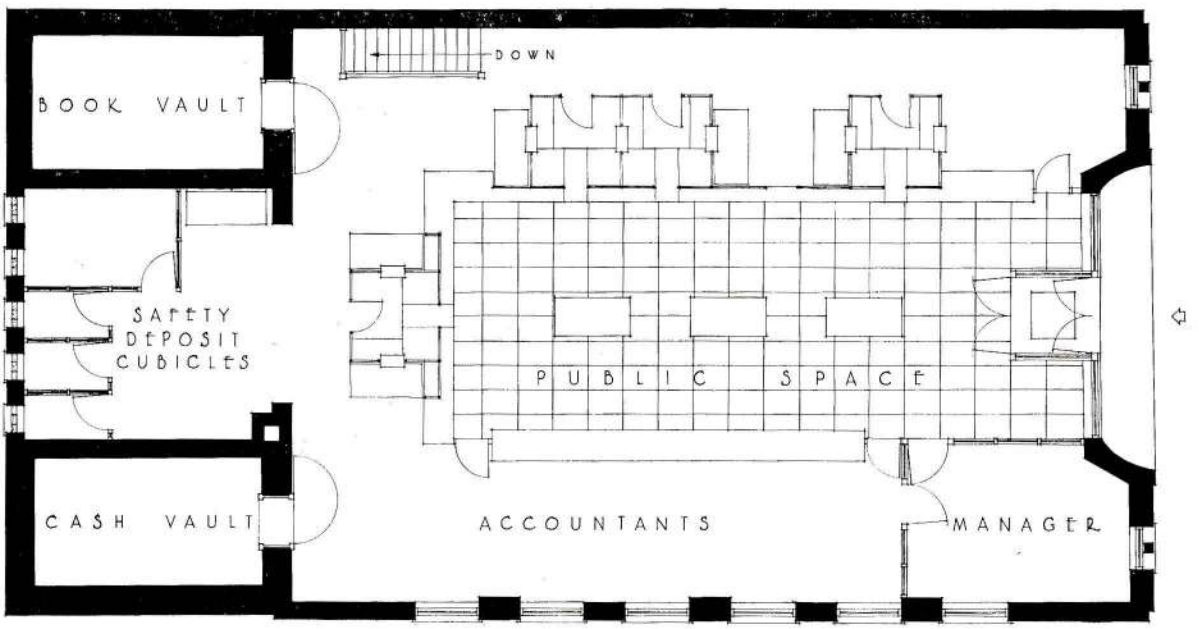
THE BANK OF NOVA SCOTIA,

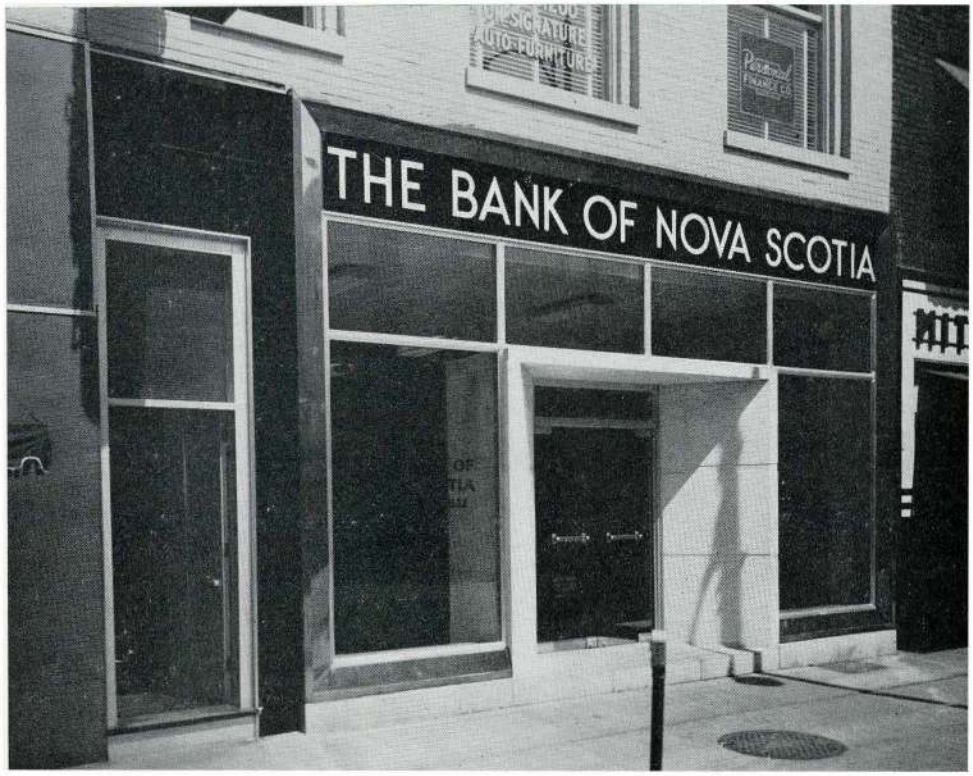
SUMMERSIDE, PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

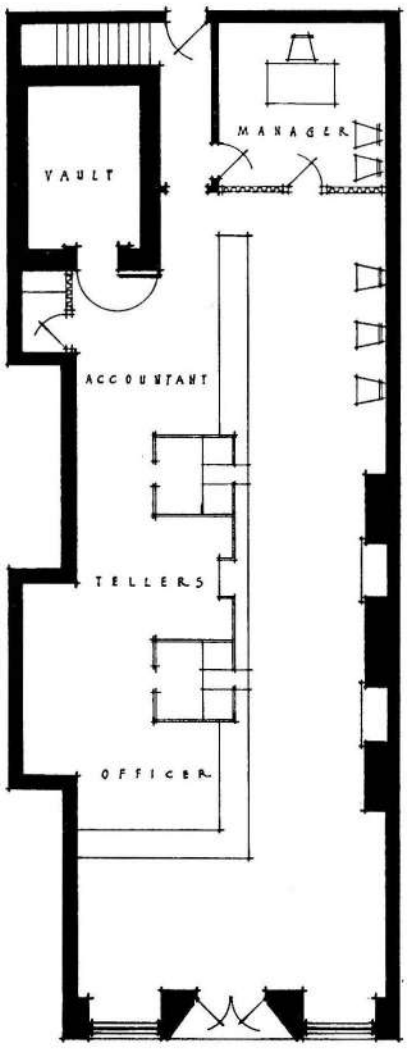
BECK AND EADIE, ARCHITECTS





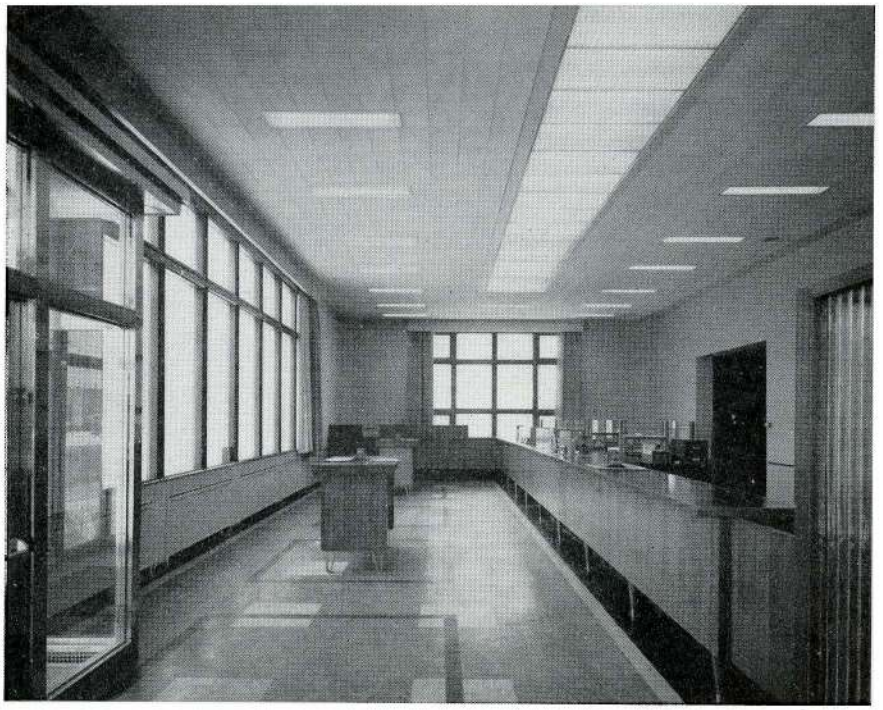






THE BANK OF NOVA SCOTIA, OSHAWA, ONTARIO

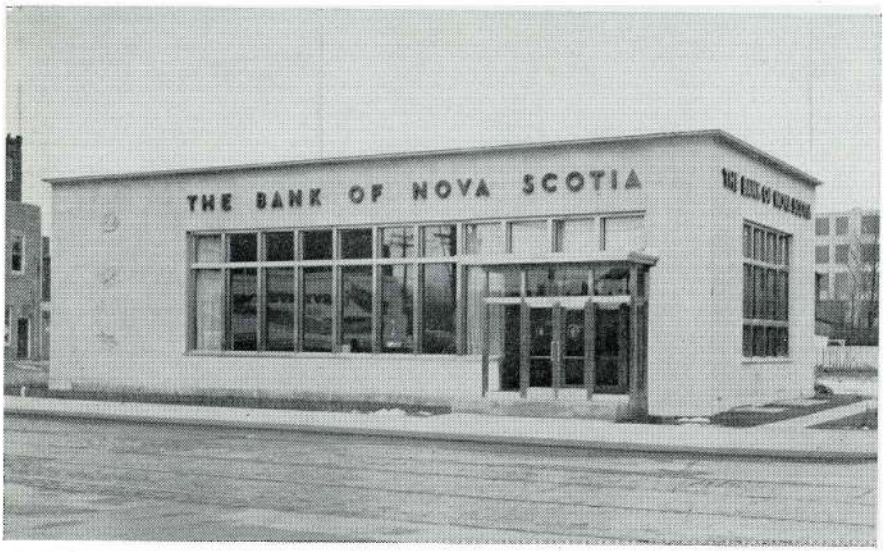
BANK PREMISES DEPARTMENT, ARCHITECTS

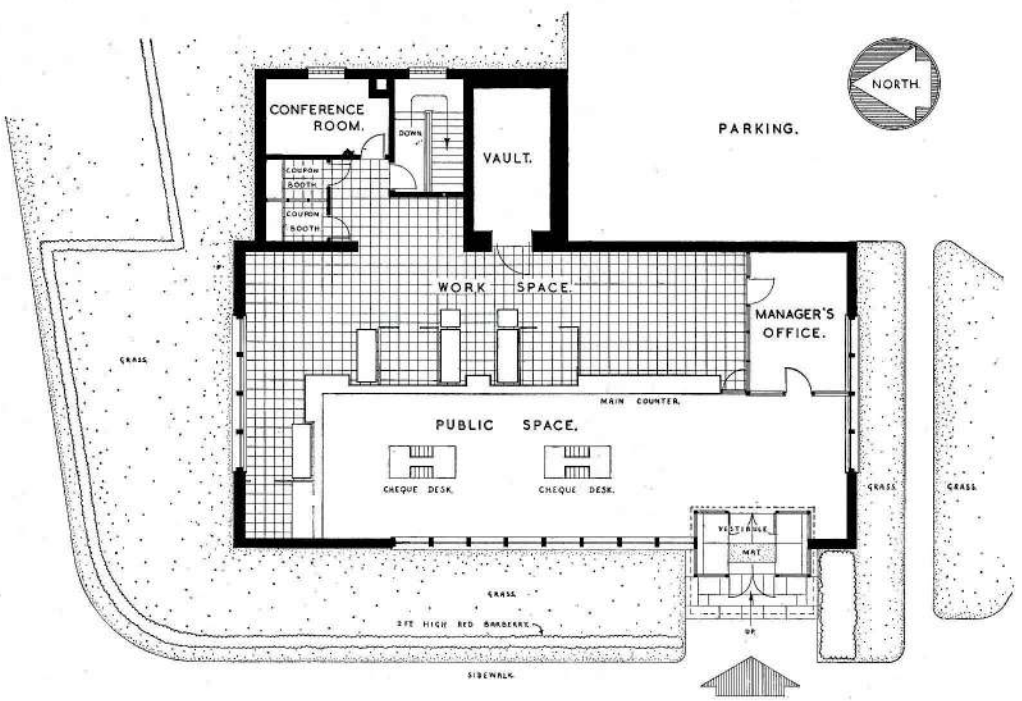


THE BANK OF NOVA SCOTIA,

MOUNT DENNIS, ONTARIO

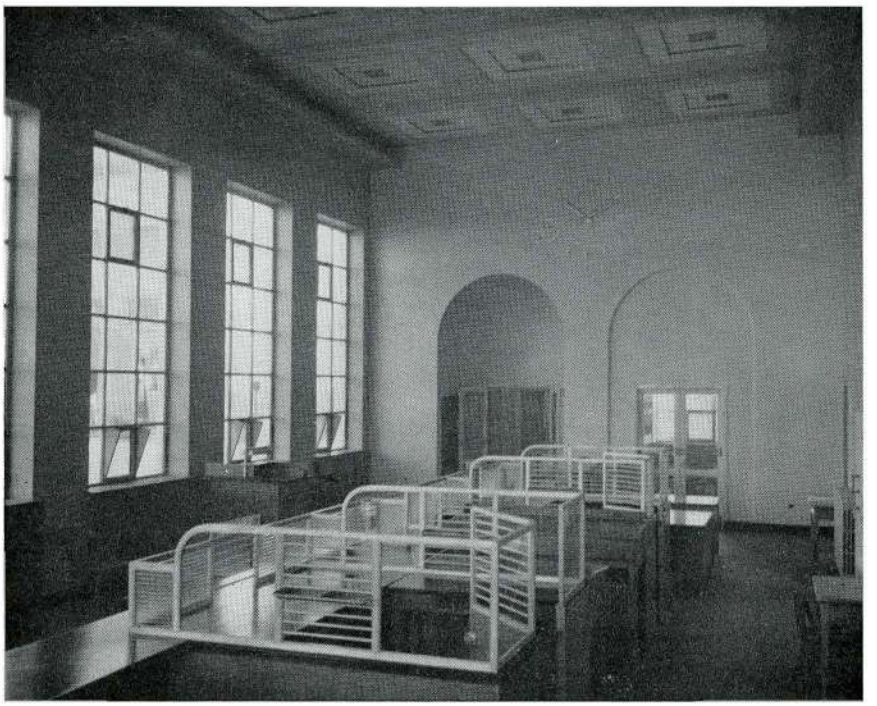
GORDON S. ADAMSON, ARCHITECT

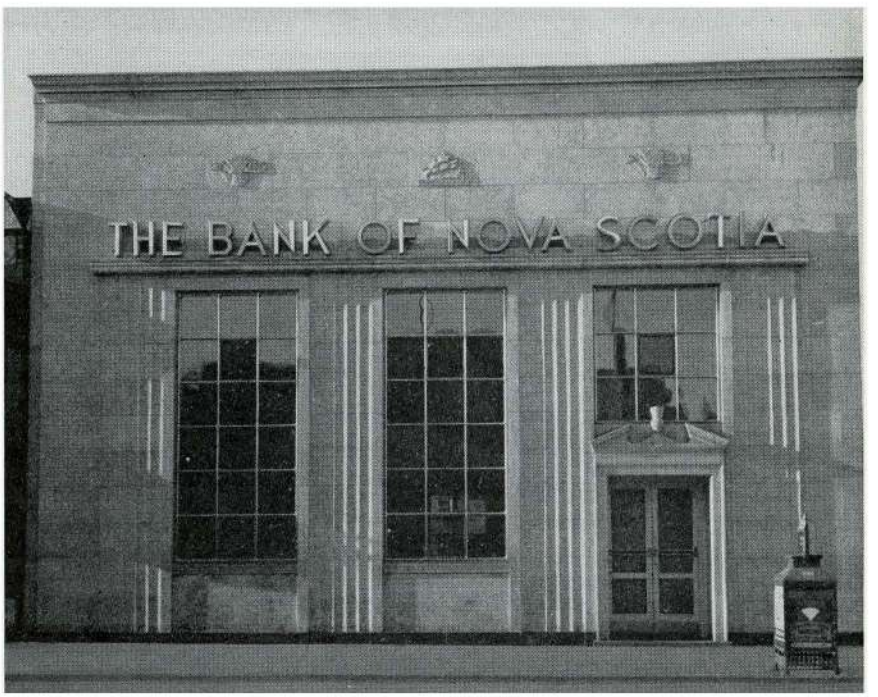




THE BANK OF NOVA SCOTIA, PRINCE ALBERT, SASKATCHEWAN

MURRAY BROWN AND ELTON, ARCHITECTS



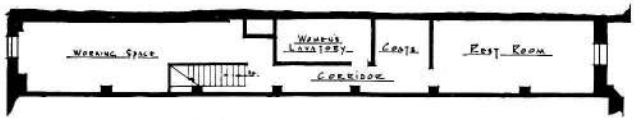


THE ROYAL BANK OF CANADA, CALLE SANTA FE, BUENOS AIRES

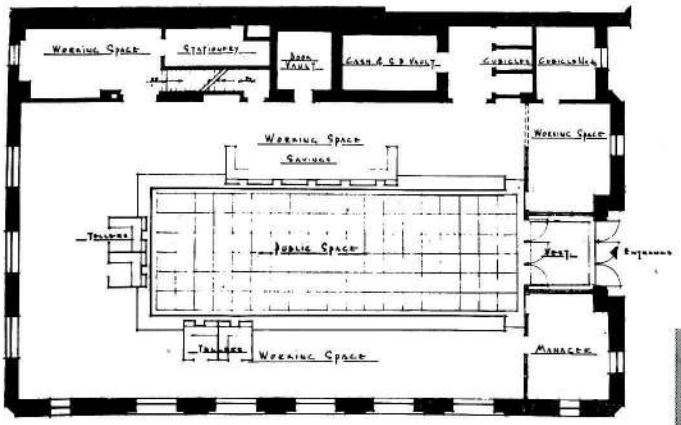
SANCHEZ ELIA, PERALTA RAMOS Y AGOSTINI, ARCHITECTS

No plan of this interesting bank was available

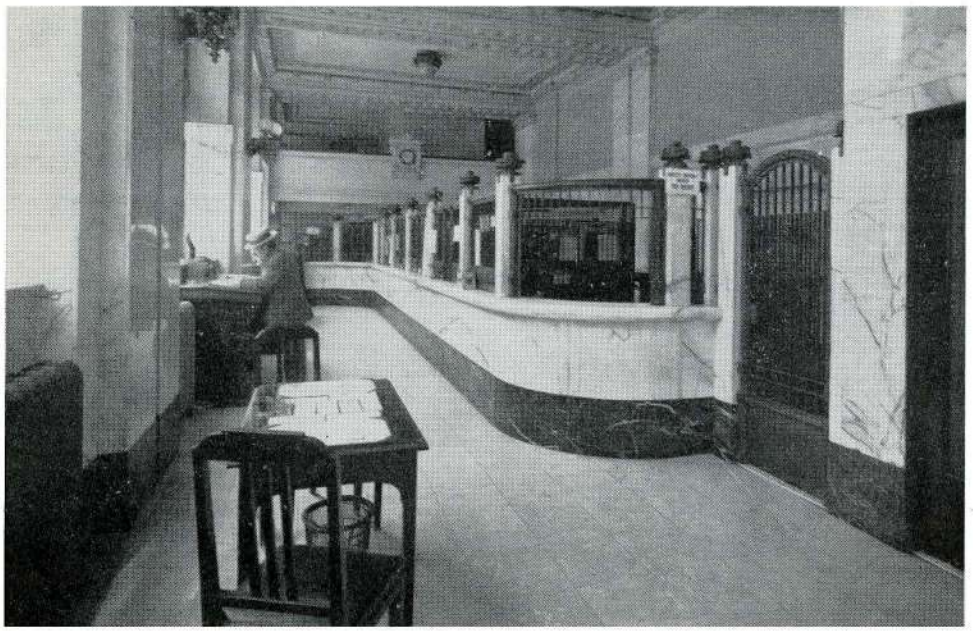
S. G. DAVENPORT, CONSULTING ARCHITECT



MEZZANINE FLOOR



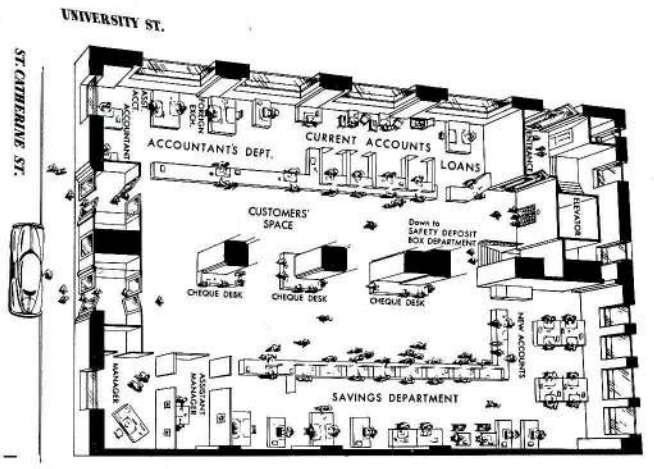
GROUND FLOOR



BEFORE ALTERATIONS

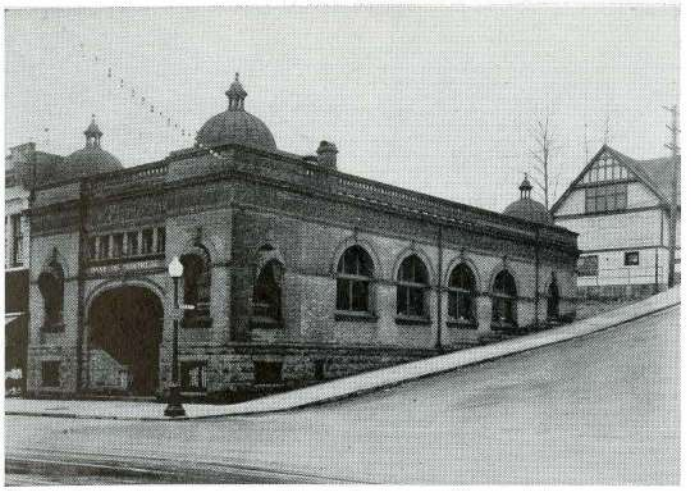
BANK OF MONTREAL, UNIVERSITY AND ST. CATHERINE STREETS, MONTREAL, QUEBEC

OFFICE OF THE ARCHITECT-IN-CHIEF AND LAWSON AND BETTS, ARCHITECTS



AFTER ALTERATIONS

Photograph by Wal-Mir & Company

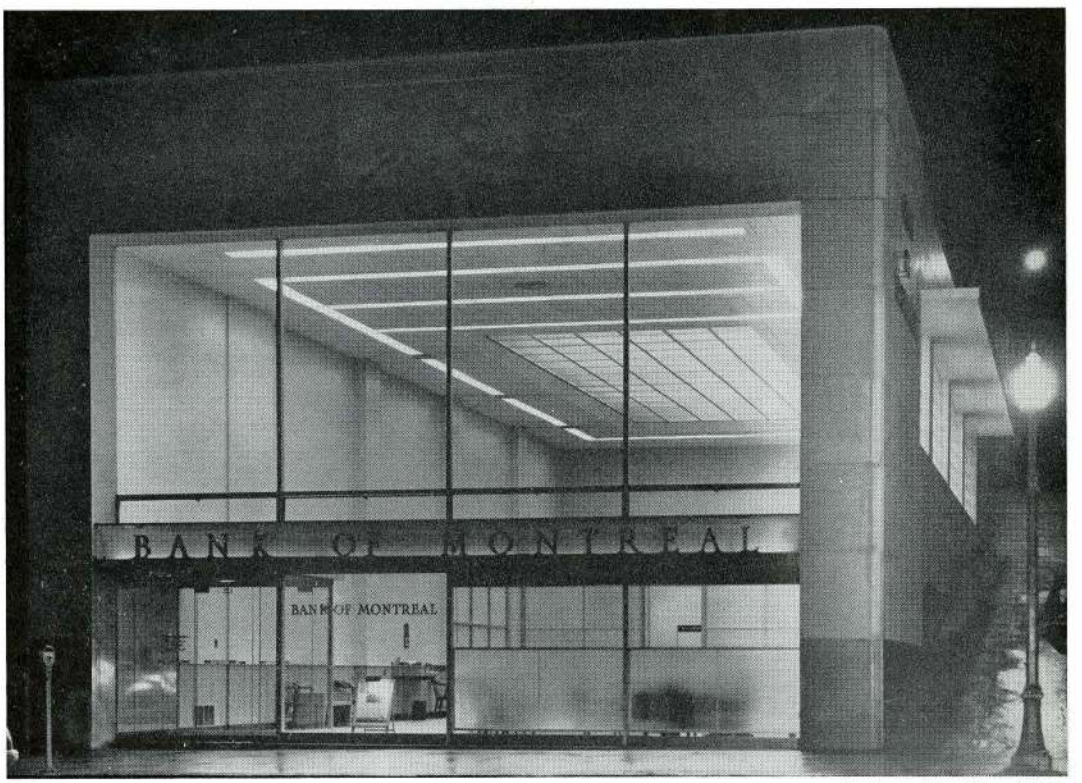


Photographs by Stride Studios

BEFORE ALTERATIONS

BANK OF MONTREAL, NEW WESTMINSTER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

OFFICE OF THE ARCHITECT-IN-CHIEF AND SHARP AND THOMPSON, BERWICK, PRATT, ARCHITECTS



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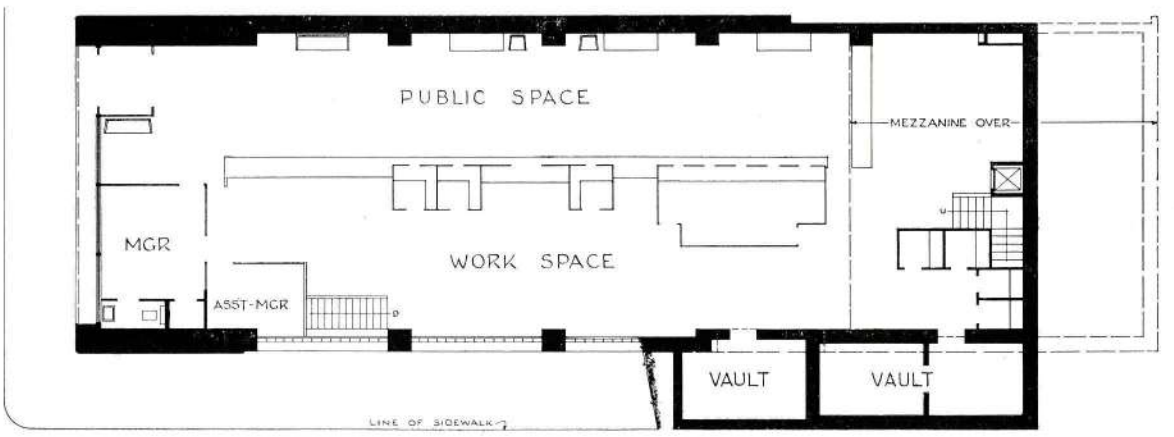
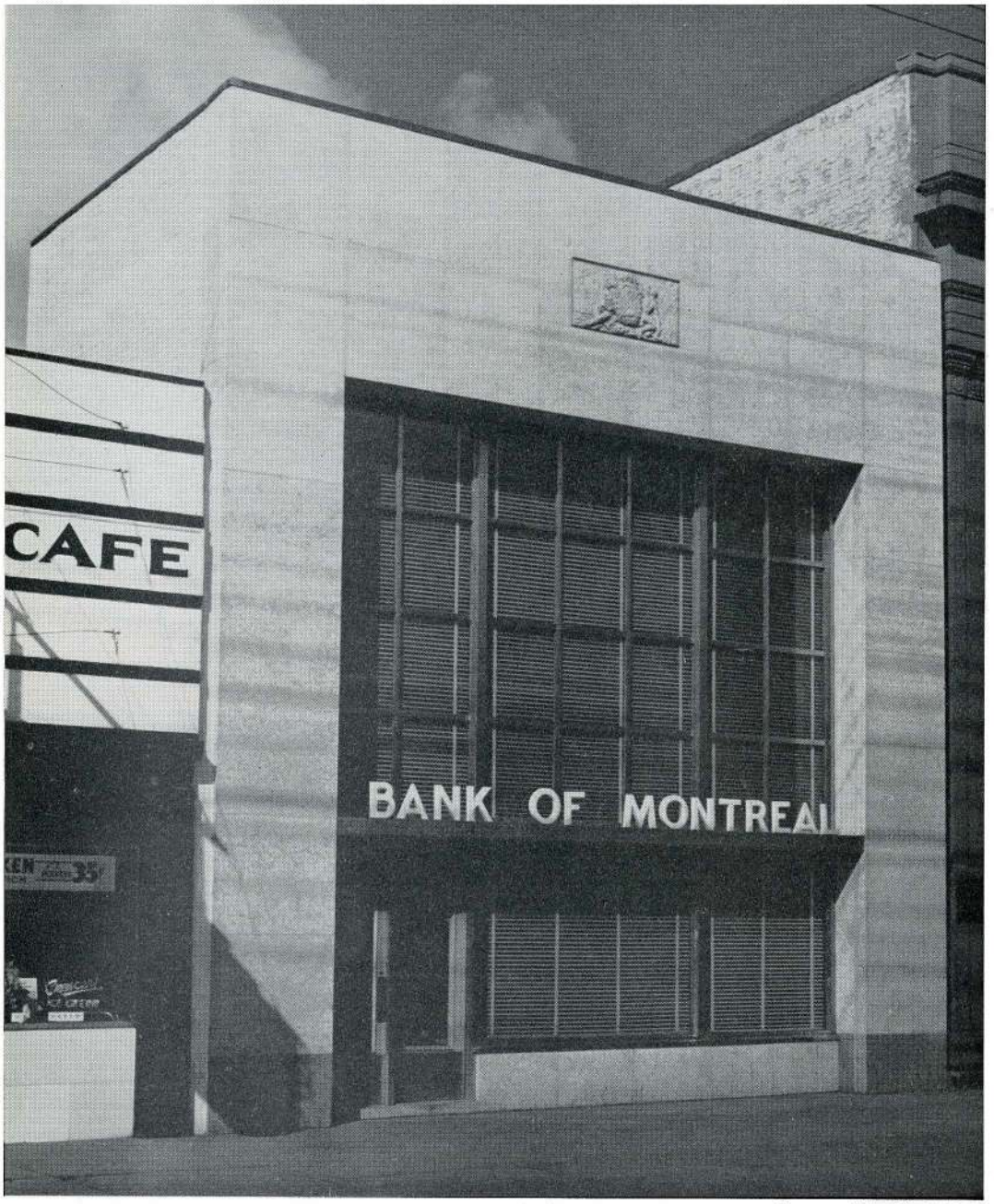
Photograph by Tony Archer

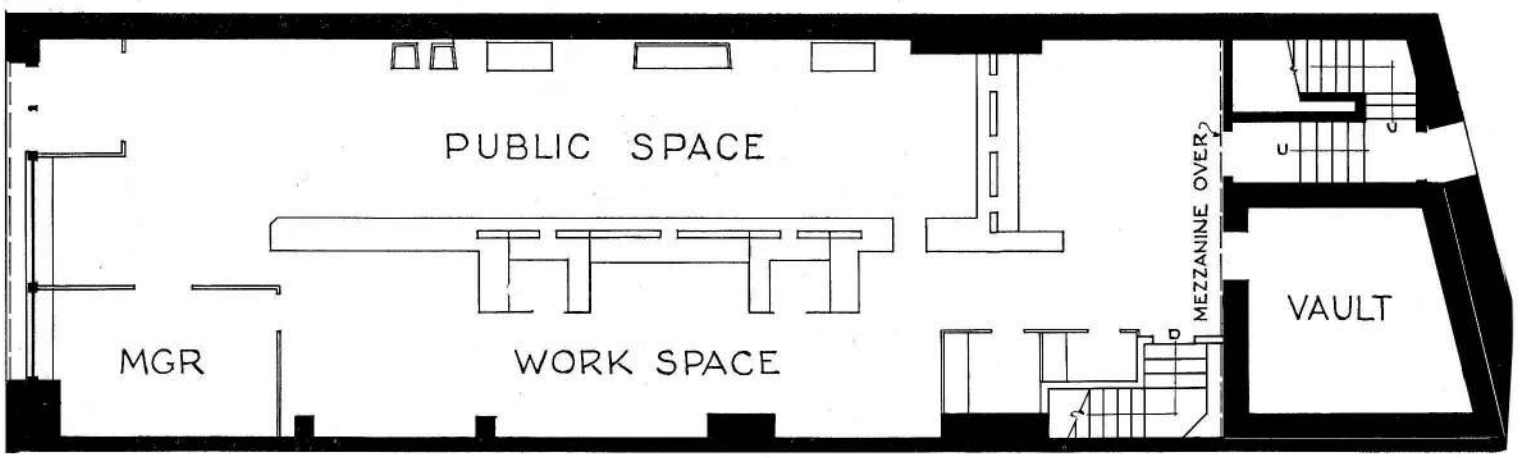




Photograph by M. J. Sym

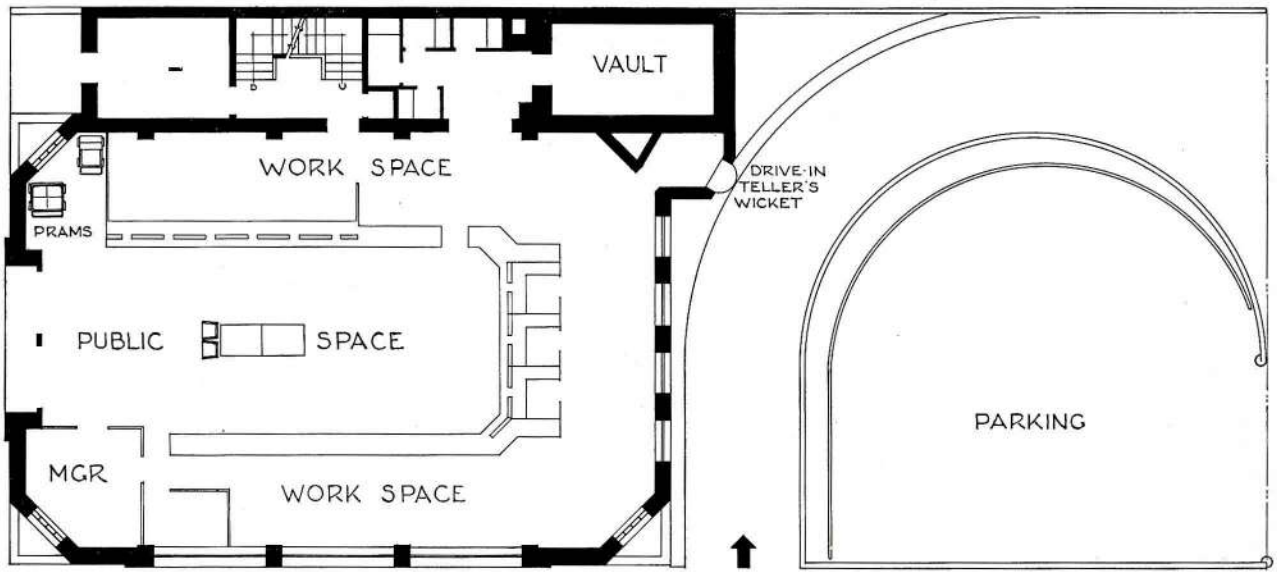
BANK OF MONTREAL, HIGGINS AVENUE AND MAIN STREET, WINNIPEG, MANITOBA

OFFICE OF THE ARCHITECT-IN-CHIEF AND NORTHWOOD AND CHIVERS, ARCHITECTS

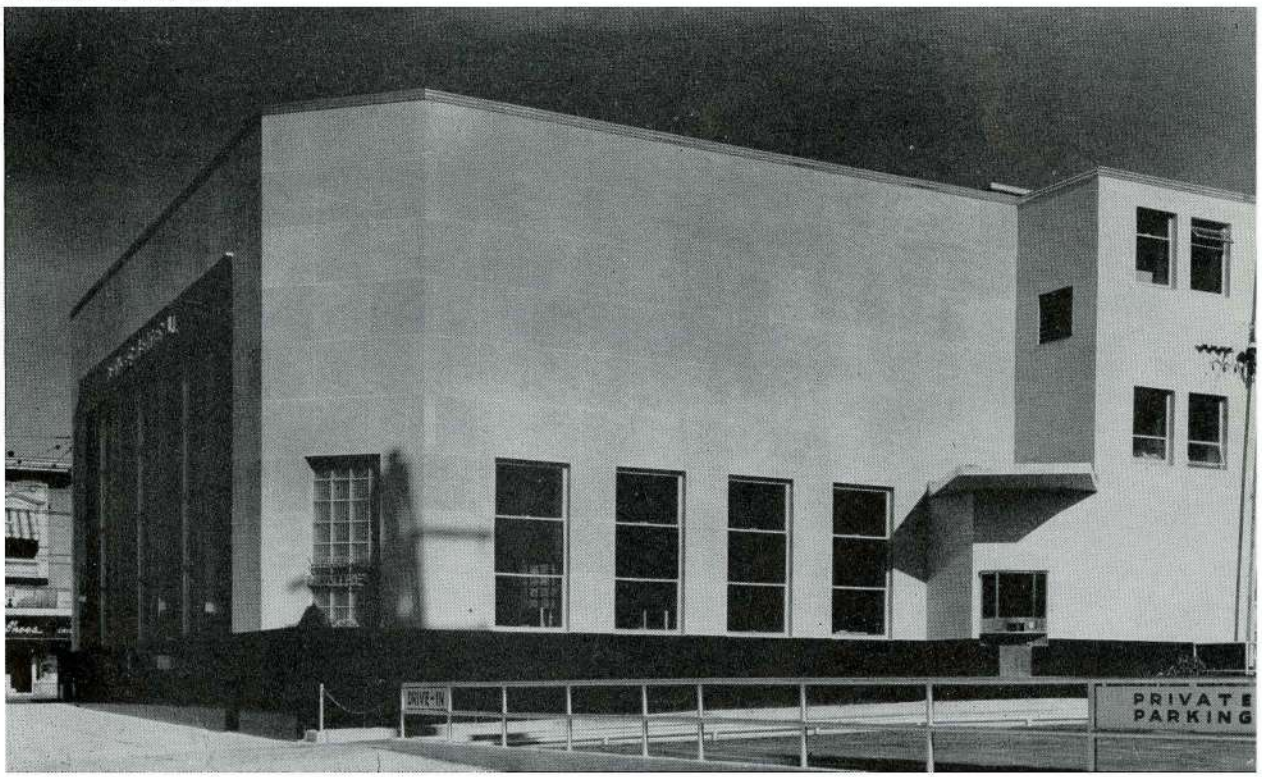


BANK OF MONTREAL, DRIVE-IN BANK, 10th AVENUE AND GRANVILLE STREET, VANCOUVER, B.C.

SHARP AND THOMPSON, BERWICK, PRATT, ARCHITECTS

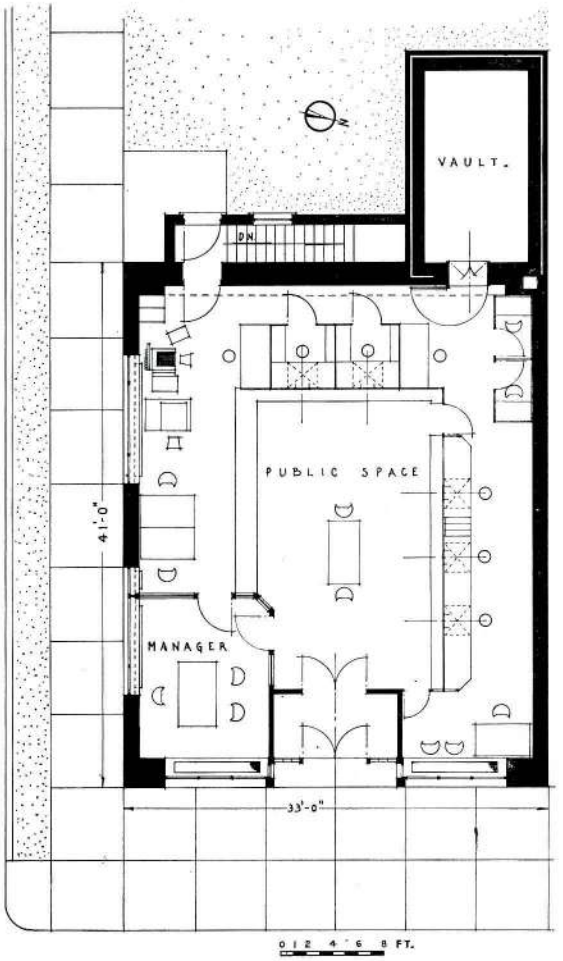


Photograph by Tony Archer

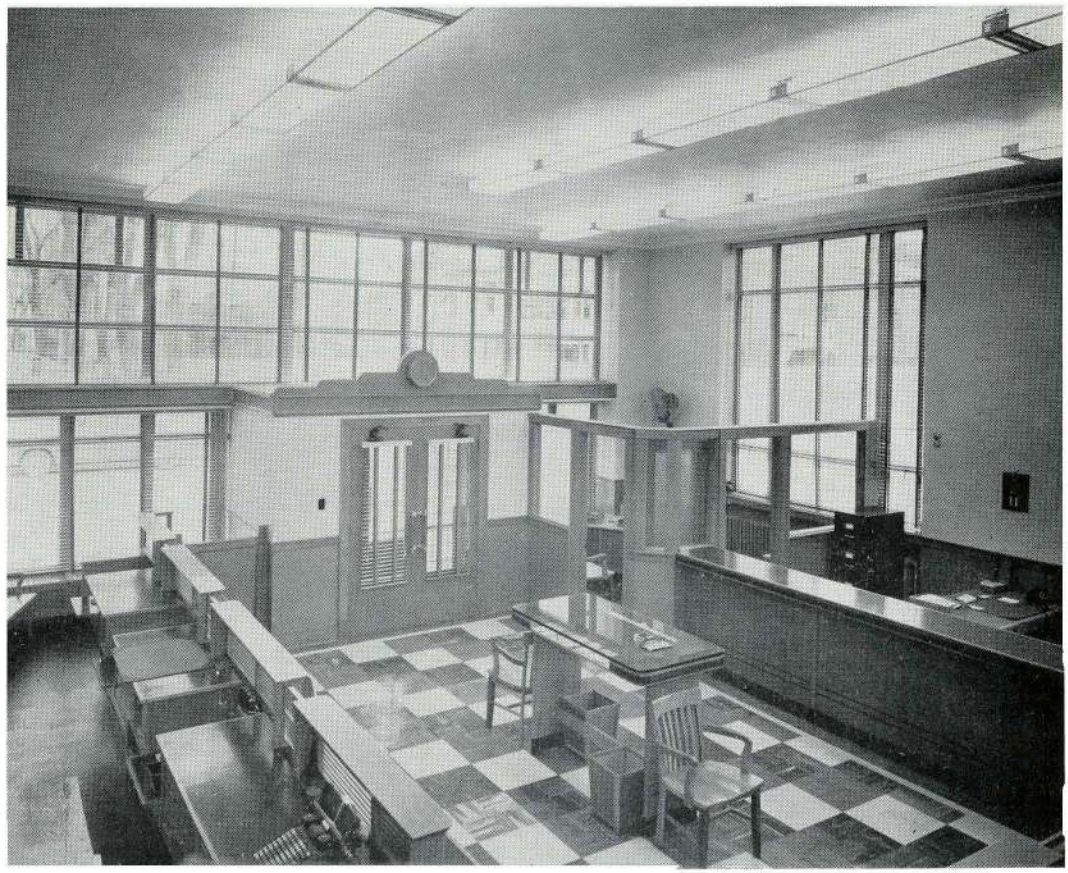


E. M. COLEMAN, ARCHITECT

DAVID SHENNAN, ASSOCIATE ARCHITECT

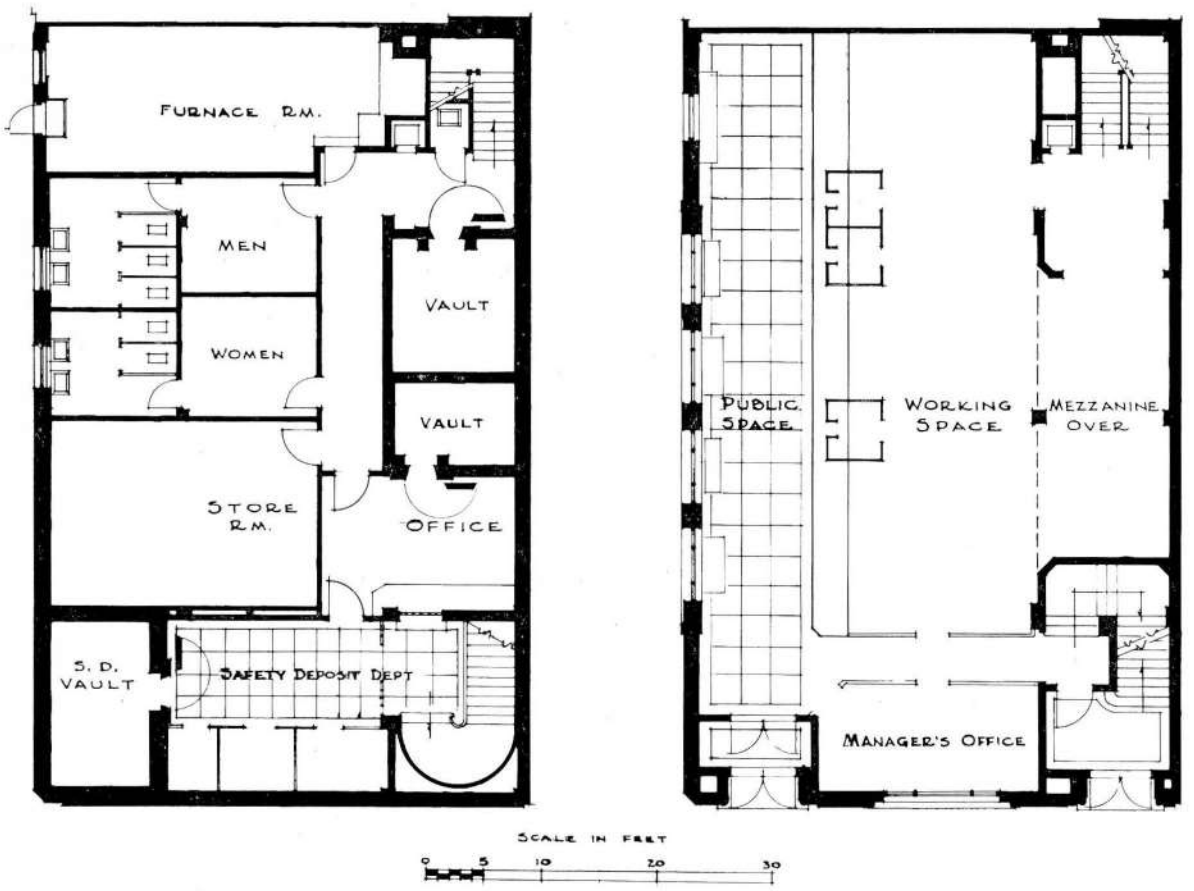


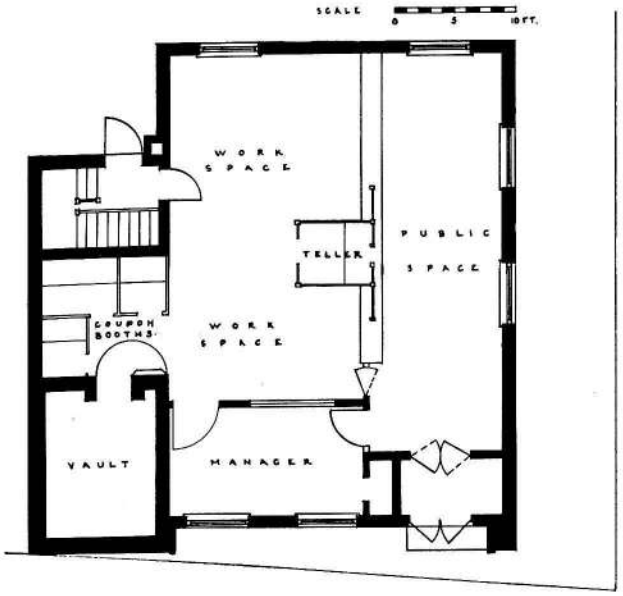
Photographs by Desjardins



IMPERIAL BANK OF CANADA, BLEURY AND MAYOR STREETS, MONTREAL, QUEBEC

ROSS, PATTERSON, TOWNSEND AND HEUGHAN, ARCHITECTS





IMPERIAL BANK OF CANADA, EAST KILDONAN, WINNIPEG, MANITOBA

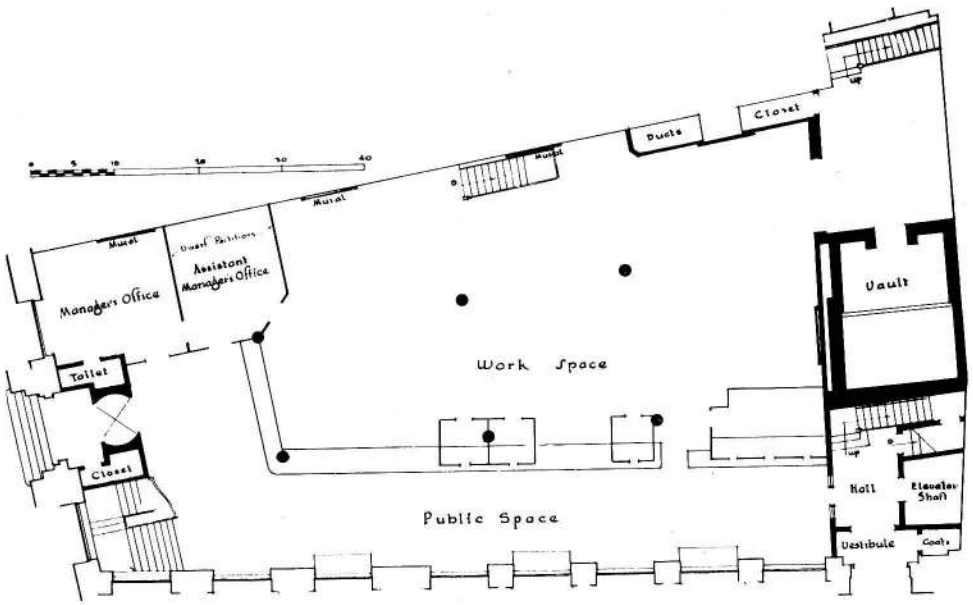
NORTHWOOD AND CHIVERS, ARCHITECTS

IMPERIAL BANK OF CANADA,

McGILL STREET, MONTREAL, QUEBEC

ROSS, PATTERSON, TOWNSEND AND HEUGHAN,

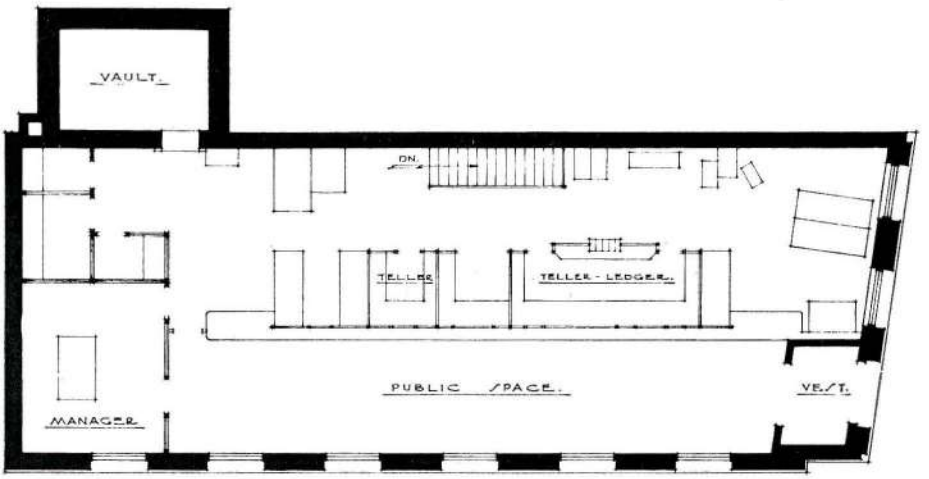
ARCHITECTS



THE BANK OF TORONTO,

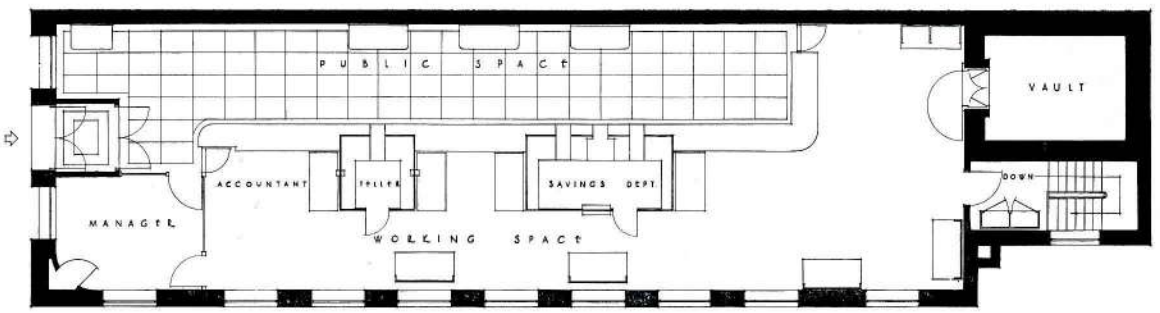
AVENUE ROAD AND HADDINGTON AVENUE, TORONTO

W. AND W. R. L. BLACKWELL AND CRAIG, ARCHITECTS



THE DOMINION BANK, LETHBRIDGE, ALBERTA

BECK AND EADIE, ARCHITECTS



BRANCH BANK INTERIORS

By H. H. G. MOODY

IN an article devoted to the subject of Bank Interiors it will be well to repeat the old cliche familiar to all architects, that the interior plan and design of any building should necessarily be reflected by the exterior design, or in reverse, to be good architecture the exterior design should express the function and planning of the interior. If, in this article, there may be some encroachment into the field of exterior design or the choosing of the site, the writer begs forbearance on the ground that it is difficult to entirely segregate "interior" from "exterior".

Assuming then that the Bank management have chosen a suitable location for the branch bank based upon their own survey of the business potential of the district, it will become necessary to decide on the exact location of the lot, its size, its orientation, and its relation to surrounding streets. All of these factors will be dictated by the interior plan. The size of the lot will depend upon the size of the branch building required, which depends upon the amount of business to be transacted. This in turn is reflected in the internal plan to provide the adequate amount of public space, working space, and total perimeter of counter length. The orientation will be important to the interior design for consideration of such things as good natural lighting, minimum of glare, and exposed glass areas influencing the heating and the cooling of the interior. The relation to the surrounding streets will affect the proper locations for entrances and the considerations of good circulation within and without the building. If the lot has an interior location the problem is a more simple one than if the building is to occupy a corner facing on two streets, or more.

The essentials of plan are generally based upon the relative areas required for public space and service areas, which are separated by the working counter. The three usual arrangements are a straight counter dividing the area into two parts, an "L" shaped counter which will divide the space into an "L" shaped service area and a rectangular public space, and a "U" shaped counter which provides for the public space in the center with the counter on three sides and a "U" shaped service area behind. The "U" shaped plan will require a wider interior site and the main entrance will be located at the open end of the "U" on the one street on which the building faces. If the site is a corner one, with public entrances on two streets, it will be necessary to use either a straight through counter plan or an "L" shaped one. The size of the service area will naturally be in proportion to the size of the public area and both will be planned to accommodate the various functions of each.

Exceptional conditions will of course vary these three standard layouts. Recently there have been branch bank buildings which include a "drive-in" banking service, where motorists can drive in to a wicket adjacent to the drive way and conduct their business without getting out of their car. Sometimes it is desirable to obtain greater service area by designing a mezzanine floor at the back or the side, or both, which has the two-fold advantage of obtaining the necessary work areas and at the same time gaining an extra ceiling height for the public space. In all but the very smallest of branch banks some provision must be made for public safety deposit boxes which will entail a special vault to contain the boxes, as well as an adequate reception area for coupon booths and reception attendants. This department is almost invariably located in a basement or ground floor location because of the vault. To incorporate these exceptional features or supplementary services the plan will have to be varied in order to maintain proper circulation for public and staff. Location of entrances and stairs to different levels must be carefully considered for good circulation both inside and outside the building and in relation to public and employee uses.

In the choice of a lot the orientation is important from the point of view of natural lighting. Good natural lighting for the public area and service departments is essential to a successful design, both for appearance and comfort of staff. The ideal condition is the best possible light with the minimum of glare, which will depend upon the direction the glass areas will face, but can also be controlled to a certain extent through the choice of materials. The modern trend in design is toward a greater use of glass areas to give light into the interior and also to give visibility from the street. This, in turn, raises other problems in the control of heat loss, glare, and excessive heat from the sun in summer months. A north or east exposure will eliminate glare and excessive heat, and the choice of material and detail of design can control all three factors to a great extent. Double glazing will do much to eliminate excessive heat loss, and the design of outside sun visors will control the glare and heat from summer sun. There is a new heat absorbing glass now available which can be used as a single sheet or in conjunction with double glazing. This comes in either plain polished plate, or can be obtained in wired form for use where fire regulations demand this type of glazing. It has a slightly "rosy" cast in the American product, or a greenish cast in the English make, but neither one is strong enough to be noticeable. This glass definitely cuts down the heat from the sun and is to be recommended for southern exposures where substantial glass areas are used.

Most of the Canadian Bank Head Offices employ a full time architect with staff who controls the planning and construction of all bank properties. Branch bank buildings are usually commissioned out to local architects in the various cities, but the bank's own architect generally lays down the principles of the plan, advises on the choice of lot and advises the local architects as to bank requirements. Over and above all these mentioned controlling factors of planning are the various building codes which impose certain restrictions which in turn influence the planning.

The auxiliary services are generally located in the basement. Besides the heating plant and mechanical equipment, the basement can be made suitable for staff lavatories, public lavatories and staff lunch rooms and rest rooms. With the modern mechanical advances in heating, ventilating and lighting, there is no longer the necessity of locations with outside windows, and attractive comfortable accommodation for these auxiliary services can be made in entirely enclosed locations. Banks employ a larger proportion of girls on their staff than most businesses and it is essential to provide them with adequate and attractive rest rooms, cloak rooms and lavatories.

Banking counters and interior fitments have gone through a considerable evolution in the last thirty years. In the earlier days the counters were of heavy marble, generally ornately carved or moulded, and surmounted by tall bronze cage enclosures, also of very ornate design, from which the tellers peeked through grilles like so many residents of Sing Sing or Alcatraz. Customers were interviewed like relatives on visiting days at the federal penitentiaries. Cheque desks for customers were of marble to match the counters, and managers were closed off in partitions of dark mahogany and sanded glass running to the ceilings. All this has gone through a gradual evolution, until today the modern branch bank has a well-lighted colorful interior with counters of clean stream-lined surfaces, generally of light coloured natural-grained wood and surmounted by low screens not more than 14″ to 16″ high made of matching wood or light metal supports, and pleasant fluted glass panels. Generally, the manager's office today is enclosed by low partitions of wood and glass to match, or sometimes he occupies a desk in the general work area with only an open counter between him and the public. This latter plan for the manager's desk space, however, is perhaps a swing too far in the opposite direction; some banks in the U.S.A. have tried this scheme for reasons that they think the manager should be more easily accessible to the public. The Canadian public still have a sense of privacy in regard to their financial affairs and probably prefer to discuss their business with the branch manager behind a closed door and a screened partition.

The design in heavy marble and ornamental bronze of the earlier times certainly gave a very rich, substantial and dignified, if somewhat gloomy atmosphere, and this was in character with the top hat, striped trousers and morning coats worn by bank managers and their more substantial customers. Today, banks like other businesses and institutions, have to cater to a much broader cross section of the public and therefore have kept pace with the changing times in their interior designs as well as the costumes of the bankers themselves. Today the only morning coat that I know of in Canada graces the reception room of the Governor of the Bank of Canada, and who knows but even that may be changed in our life time.

Like the interior fittings, the design and decoration of interior walls and ceilings have undergone great change. Except for very large and expensive buildings, the day for marble wall facings, ornamental plastered and painted ceilings and marble floors has gone. In some of the larger buildings marble wall facings may yet be used in a more simplified way, but the ornamental ceiling, marble floor, dark mahogany or walnut panelling with the heavy mouldings and carvings which used to be the hall-mark of banking interiors, are all relics of a past era. One very practical reason for this change is cost, and the fact that present day costs have forced architects into exerting their ingenuity in devising new methods for using materials has effected a great improvement in the modern cheerful branch bank interiors over their rather lugubrious ancestors. Another reason, of course, is the development of new materials. Stainless steel has replaced bronze to a great extent, its chief advantage is in its easy maintenance and the simple designs as compared with the ornate modelling on the old bronze work is an evolution dictated by the fact that bronze can be cast whereas stainless steel cannot. New plastic floor materials have been invented which are quieter, cheaper, wear better, and are more easily cleaned. Ceilings are usually made in acoustical materials which are now necessary to absorb the noise caused by the many business machines which are used. Plywoods in all varieties of woods are now used almost exclusively for counter faces, wall coverings and furniture in conjunction with other plastic coverings for the counter tops and work surfaces. These plastic materials come in a wide range of colours which when combined with the painted decoration for walls and ceilings give a much more interesting and varied effect as compared with the dark and sombre tones of thirty years ago.

Mechanical equipment for buildings has progressed at the same rapid pace with the invention of new materials, and the modern lighting, heating, ventilating, plumbing and air conditioning of buildings have brought about vast changes in design and planning. Basement and unlighted space which previously were only useful for furnace rooms or dead storage areas can now be used for almost any purpose. Central heating or oil burning equipment have eliminated large coal bins, which space can be utilized for useful purpose. Recessed fluorescent or cold cathode lighting eliminates old dust catching chandeliers and leaves ceilings clean and unobstructed, giving better light and a wide field for decorative effect. Controlled heating systems and mechanical cooling with ventilating are now the rule rather than the exception, thus making the new branch bank building a very pleasant place in which to work or conduct business in all seasons of the year.

In this short article to be entitled "Branch Bank Interiors" and written for the R.A.I.C. *Journal*, one cannot go into any great detail, nor would I presume to attempt to tell members of my own profession how to design or what materials are new. All of this will be very familiar to architects throughout Canada and it of course applies to all types of buildings. However, as the Branch Bank Building is a type familiar to all cities from Newfoundland to Vancouver Island, it may be interesting to the lay public to observe the changes and developments that have taken place in their banks during their lifetime, and to know the reasons for these many drastic changes.

INFLUENCE OF AMERICAN DESIGN ON CANADIAN BANK BUILDINGS

By CHARLES E. PRATT

GENERALLY speaking, Canadian architecture is influenced by American design and ideas. Naturally these influences are felt in Canada, and sift across the border in various ways. Influences are brought to bear due to the proximity of the two countries and the natural consequence of the interchange of ideas. Personal contacts are easily made, and business pursuits cause extensive travel in the two countries. Architectural students very often take their academic and practical training in the United States. American architectural publications are extensively used in all Canadian architectural offices. In many other ways American influence in architecture is felt here in Canada. However, how these influences arrive in Canada or how they are felt is unimportant and need not be further elaborated. The important question is WHAT are these influences?

The topic under discussion needs, of course, at first, clarification of Canadian Bank Building, and possibly some discussion on the influences, which caused the appearance which up to a few years ago, we termed normal Canadian Bank architecture.

There is no doubt that the English influence has been felt on banks all over the world, and particularly it has been felt in Canada. Canada's history, until recent years, has been more tied up with England than any other country. The banking policy has been reflected in the facades and general planning of English banks, and as a consequence the same indications have been reflected in Canadian banks. The word, in my mind, is "dignity" — banks must have dignity and is a quality that certainly English bankers demand in their buildings. There is a studied correctness and formality about these buildings, in facade, in contents, and in the behaviour of the personnel inside, that is a bit overwhelming. "Poshness", if I may use the word, is suggested to me when I am reminded of English banks. The reasons for endeavouring to impart this attitude, to me, and I am sure that I am not alone in my views, are probably very sound and effective. It would be presumptuous on my part to be critical of the banking policy as emanating from English banks, but as a visitor and an architect, I would say that, viewing the exteriors of such institutions, would lead me to believe the English banks cater to a different class of patron than the American banks. One appears to say "You may come in" the other "Please come in."

To me, the American banks I have visited emanate the spirit of the phrase "Please come in." Unconsciously, I feel the American institution has a totally different viewpoint as to what and who is represented by the patrons. The patron, to the American bank manager, whether large or small, is Mr. John Doe. The American businessman is very market conscious, and the whims and fancies of Mr. John Doe are catered to with great care. American business enterprises carefully measure public opinion even to the extent of employing agencies such as Dr. Gallup's to advise and estimate on the state of the market. The phrase "Public Opinion" is an expression almost overused in the United States. Is it any wonder that American banking institutions have endeavoured to cater to this very powerful patron. Their efforts are reflected in the architecture of their banks. A bank appears to make no effort to solicit the business of the so called "Carriage trade." It does appear to solicit the same market that may be found around the corner at the Safeway store. The choice of patron by business enterprise in the American sense does not at all infer that the building shall be cheap or shoddy. It very often means the building shall be the best that money can buy, but withal shall have the common touch. The patron as I have shown him, is not unlike myself. He does not like ostentatious exteriors, they must be good, functional buildings that make it possible to expedite his business in the quickest possible manner. The exteriors, in anticipation of his wishes, should be inviting and not forbidding. It is not to follow a fad of so called "modernism" slavishly that American banks have changed their outward appearance. The resulting appearance has come about after careful consideration of the requirements of the patron, John Doe.

Only recently has the influence of this patron been strongly felt in Canada. Illustrated are some banks completed in British Columbia. To me these buildings are very refreshing. They are simple, and unostentatious and because they have these qualities they are blessed with dignity. These buildings are bright and cheery and appear to be solicitous of the man in the street. They are open to the public and have no imposing stairs. No attempt is made to hide the banking operation. General dignity is retained but there certainly is no aloofness. The structure of the illustrated banks is all very light and airy, however equally as safe as its monumental predecessors.

In conclusion I would like to emphasize that the American influence on Canadian bank design is right and proper. It is right and proper because the design is dictated in tune with the economic organization of America and Canada as we identify it today. There are pitfalls however. The enthusiasm architects have for contemporary architecture sometimes gives forth solutions that verge on the bizarre or flamboyant, and are to be avoided unless the solutions can be well substantiated with logic and reason.

The following are a few influences emanating from United States which are now, more or less, in an experimental stage in Canada.

1. Drive-in Banking

This is still in an experimental stage in Canada. The 10th and Granville Branch of the Bank of Montreal, has

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CONSTRUCTION AND MATERIAL

By JOHN U. RULE

WE have a friend, eminent and sage, in the profession of Architecture, who some years ago explained to us the proper method of dealing with clients recalcitrant, clients meddlesome, and clients apathetic, in fact, any client, *"Tell us what you want, and we'll show you how to build it"*. This seemed to us a simple way of getting a client out of one's beard, and we have tried it with varying (mostly downward) degrees of success. In this instance we feel singularly bereft of the ability to be by any means so deft in the matter of recommendation on construction.

Inasmuch as most of our experience has been restricted to one Province, such recommendations must of necessity be of the Province, Provincial. Also, inasmuch as this particular Province is "feeling its oats" there has been on the part of all Canadian Banks a tendency to furbish up old feed bags, and hang on new ones. These vary in magnificence from articles with richly broidered coats of arms, assets, and balance sheets floating on silken banners from gilded cheek straps, to the lowly bushel measure (in tin) tied on, albeit, with all the security of ancient custom, against the completion of a more suitable and proper feed repository. Our experience has carried us through consideration of edifices varying in value from over a million to as little as twenty thousand dollars.

Recommendation on type of structure here as elsewhere has been based, in recent years, not so much upon purpose, property value and salvagability, etc., but with a sharp eye on material availability, and early delivery (appetites are ravenous and delays not to be tolerated), with the result that in larger structures, structural type has varied from structural steel to reinforced concrete, even to a combination of the two, according to the relative ease with which the required elements are available. If some instances where anticipated supply has not materialized, frenzied substitutions have been made during the progress of work. These have taxed the ingenuity of our engineers and structural designers to the point of throwing things, not to say madness. A number of our efforts lack that "inner beauty", but they are nonetheless sound.

Due to the desirability of unobstructed view in main Banking concourses, some attention has been necessary to the usual girder or truss solution because of increased spans. Rigid frames in steel and concrete (the latter precast) have received some attention. Structural requirement in these elements gives interesting forms, and exposure of such frames has been recommended as a basic decorative pattern in some instances.

Variation in Bank policy has had a definite bearing on structural recommendation. We have found ourselves, in low structures, where rental premises or additional bank space were not required, either in structural steel or one or other of the standard types of reinforced concrete. In either case adherence to a four-hour fire requirement has been maintained. For obvious reasons where multi-story buildings have been concerned, our recommendation has been structural steel. Details of structural design have always been carried out in close association with mechanical requirement and effort has been made to anticipate possible innovations. Ample room for these services, accessibility to service spaces is of prime importance in securing flexibility for the future. The requirement for large numbers of telephones, intercommunication and business devices of one kind and another dictate the use of well laid out systems of under floor duct, or of more recent development, the metal floor known as Q floor. Such items incorporated in bank structure render the utmost in flexibility of arrangement for the future with a minimum of structural change, demolition and making good.

In smaller branches, neighbourhood locations, towns and villages, we have in no instance used anything less than masonry exterior walls, and depending upon local codes and actual structural requirement, interiors have varied from reinforced concrete, steel and concrete, steel and wood joist or laminated floors, mill type to ordinary wood framing.

It has been our mixed experience to sit in the sancta of Bank Managers recalcitrant, and Bank Managers meddlesome (sometimes Bank Managers apathetic) at times of high jubilance, more often in crises of blackest (or should we say reddest) aspect. In addition to the initial chill (this is in crises) or the bemusing cordiality (this is in jubilance) of greeting, we are assailed variously by the must and stagnation of overnight close-up or the semi-suffocation due to a previous, more prosperous customer's cigar fumes. (Even Bank Managers apathetic never offer us cigars.)

In addition to this olfactory assault, we are usually entombed in a cavern encrusted with muddy paste replicas of anthemion, acanthus, and in more scholarly efforts, weighty belts of guilloche, which were the final test of a draughtsman's ability, not to say the final straw which drove him mad (where *does* it go from here?) Panelling invariably dark and somber (the badge of established respectability and affluence) dispirit the most gallant efforts of any light source to shed light on a subject whether critical or jubilant. Moreover, these boîtes have the perversity to exaggerate verbal effort to the volume of public address, or diminish it to the residue volume left after the last but one tube is burned out. The former in crises . . .

During any or all such experiences we have mused upon the possibility of conducting such pecuniary executions or financial reincarnations in pleasanter surroundings, and were resolved that ever given half a

chance, we should remedy the situation at least from where we sat.

The chance came!

Initially we learned that the people with whom we dealt were as keenly conscious of "customer appeal" as any merchandiser we had encountered. Up to this time our wits and persons had been tuned and postured to the parrying and repulsion of the needle, and we had no opportunity to explore any other facet of a banker's character.

Ahead of aesthetic appeal they placed customer and staff "comfort appeal", which meant that both groups should enjoy the usual amenities of seeing, hearing, and being heard together with the assurance that members of either group might leave the premises in something above a state of coma due to vitiated atmosphere. Physical comfort was to be assured in the matter of atmospheric temperature and condition.

What a gleeful assignment! It had its drawbacks, however. We have from time to time counselled with ourselves as to whether or not we were designing out of a small and cluttered room full of manufacturers' samples and mechanical trade catalogues. Had we relegated our last imaginative effort to our very last picture frame?

Of seeing, we have had pleasure in several instances of dispelling gloom with finality. Existing premises in which renovations were carried out have been, in some cases, troublesome. Wherever relighting has taken place, incandescent light has been replaced by fluorescent. In every instance light intensities have been brought up to a required forty to fifty foot candles at working levels. The pattern of lighting has had to be varied to fit existing structural requirement or existing and salient elements of decor; this problem has been solved by strip lighting, mat lighting or by means of isolated light sources. In each pattern it is possible to secure an even distribution of light intensity at required levels. The number of outlets has frequently disconcerted owners who are inclined to view so great a battery of light as extravagant.

In new work the design of light pattern can be given proper consideration, along with other related appointments. It has been possible to use each of the above patterns in new work. Some satisfactory installations have also been made in Troffers combined with acoustic material, which obviates the use of ceiling plaster, and provides extreme flexibility when alterations are required. Because of the tendency to do away with hung fixtures, it has been found expedient in the case of one very high ceiling to use a system of recessed incandescent lighting. The proposal arose out of the difficulty in maintaining fluorescent at such a height with the consequent spotty appearance when tubes failed. The intensity at working levels is quite up to requirement, and in our opinion extremely pleasant.

We have not yet become accustomed to a quality of light which can transform a blooming young ledger keeper into a macabre representation of Mimi or Camille, due to its effect on her rouge, or which renders a normally healthy young manager a green and phosphorescent Mephistopheles, the which we have sometimes accounted him to be.

Fluorescent as we have it is not the final answer to our problem of artificial light.

Of hearing, and being heard: the problem is one of sound absorption from either point of view. Aside from the clatter of business machines which obtains in all departments there is no time during the day when three distinct groups are not vying one with another in an effort to:

(a) Carry on the Bank's business behind counter

(b) Make Bank-customer contacts over the counter, and

(c) Create public noise and conversation.

Control of this sound is an extremely important factor in both customer and staff comfort. It is not the intention of this article to discuss specific products, but in general it has been found necessary in Alberta to discard the much used organic fiber boards, for reason of fire hazard. Manufacturers have been quick to replace them with various types of mineral fiber, almost identical in appearance and acoustic effect. More recent developments include asbestos spray which will adhere to any surface and can be painted without losing sound absorption value. Several acoustic products are available in the form of mineral tile (not fibrous) whose acoustic value is high, but whose color range is limited. These cannot be painted without losing porosity, but can be cleaned. Acoustic plasters have been used, but decorating is limited to water paint. The general happy effect of this sound control is evident upon stepping into the Banking Chamber.

Bank Premises Departments these days are insistent upon the last word in Ventilation systems, air conditioning and control. It has been gratifying to note that when economies are indicated, the parcel labelled "Mechanical trades" has been carefully left until last, and in most instances has been left intact. Our climate leaves us in constant need of humidification, and where ventilating systems are installed, this particular condition is attained by various means, and provided with completely automatic control. Ventilating systems are designed with the same meticulous care that would be given a theater, supplies and returns being located so as to give over all air change without draught. Summer cooling is looked upon as a must in larger branches, and in general the old type water cooling has been displaced by refrigerating units. Heating is in general, steam. The use of natural gas for fuel is rapidly becoming universal in this Province. This has reduced the whole pesky problem of heating to the pressing of a button. Mechanical controls have been developed so that short of actual mechanical failure, heating, ventilating and air conditioning systems have become an integrated and highly efficient robot.

Of floors in general, the tendency in branch premises is toward the sheet or tile coverings in linoleums and rubber. These products not only reduce noise, but are a pleasanter surface upon which to walk than the marbles, tesserae or terrazzo of yesteryear. They also

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INCORPORATED BY THE DOMINION PARLIAMENT 16th JUNE, 1908, 1st APRIL, 1912, AND 14th JUNE, 1929

NEWS FROM THE INSTITUTE

ALBERTA

It is, no doubt, a common experience amongst architects to be approached by persons who wish to build, for their own occupation, small houses of minimum cost. There may be some embarrassment about the situation. To put it baldly, the job is not financially worth the architect's legal fee and yet it is one deserving of and worthy of his attention and skill. It might be supposed that such intending builders could readily obtain copies of standard plans of which many are published and available. Sometimes they do present some such plan to the architect but, almost invariably — such is the incurability of individual aspiration — with the request for a number of alterations which although they may appear minor matters yet they usually involve a complete redesigning of the whole plan as, for example, when a stair or chimney is to be moved about, a flat roof to be substituted for a pitched one or vice versa, or any one of a multitude of possible requirements. An architect with any conscience or any regard for his reputation as a man of special skill must simply approach the problem from a fresh start although he may accept the general arrangement as proposed. This redesigning and redrawing involves much careful thought and some incidental expense.

The special hurdle which such clients must take is the production of a plan (and blue prints) to be presented to and approved by the city building department for permission to build. This is a major consideration of the client although a minor one in the view of the architect. Many building contractors maintain a drafting department or at least a draftsman who can produce such plans, or an architect's draftsman may do so in his spare time. These are not so severely bound as is the professional architect by considerations of finance or reputation. They can leave the onus of ultimate satisfaction upon the client who is quite likely to be not only willing but anxious to accept it though perhaps unwisely.

Architects are not likely to quarrel with these practices for they relieve them of unremunerative work and fulfil a needed social requirement. They may have some definite advantages. They form an understratum of experimental ideas. Under stress of necessity, which is proverbially the mother of invention, many experiments are made — most of them are failures but amongst them there is the occasional successful and fruitful idea which makes its way into common acceptance.

To confine the design of all building to persons trained in settled professional or business methods is an insurance of a certain standard of quality adapted to general uses but it tends also to the continuous treading over of the well worn paths which do not necessarily lead to the best ultimate objectives and has no effect upon these objectives themselves except to gain fixity for those that exist. Fresh developments in science and its industrial applications are responsible for many changes in the art of building. Changes in the desires and ambitions of a people have a different source. These are realized gradually and often unnoticed except on comparison of successive periods of time. They result from the human groping after more desirable ends with intent to their realization. New aspects of life rise gradually into view, change the structure of society and bring with them new ways of living. That the designs of the humbler habitations of man should be open to the ideas of all and to the deeper and broader sources of inspiration is a social advantage. The process is associated with many troubles, drawbacks and wastages but it may well be worth all these. The many troubled and discordant voices of our time are ample evidence that we have not found a solution to a satisfactory way of life.

Cecil S. Burgess

ONTARIO

When the Chairman of the Editorial Board invited me to write the Ontario letter for this issue he mentioned it would feature Banks.

I will say nothing about them other than suggest they and Breweries always add an air of affluence and dignity to any town and we Architects can take pride in the many edifices erected to house these necessary amenities to our everyday life.

It was graciously intimated I could write on any subject, so I take the liberty of throwing out some brief thoughts on "the Fifth Elevation" a subject which has intrigued me ever since I saw the English Aviator, Grahame-White make the first flight over Boston, U.S.A. in 1910. Even then I sensed it as something which would profoundly affect our future way of life. In the 40 years since, man has spanned the oceans and continents with many Air Lines. It has been a fascinating growth to watch into the commonplace of the present Air era. Architects generally seem to have missed or ignored the impact of the flying age on Architecture. The Fifth Elevation, the Elevation we see from above, has not interested them.

Tomorrow our Cities and Towns are going to look very different from the present conglomeration seen as we look down while flying over or coming in to land. Tomorrow, flying Sedans, Taxis, Buses, will be the usual mode of travel even as automobiles are today; only 40 years ago the motor vehicle was beginning to take the place of the horse and buggy.

Tomorrow we won't look along the street to see who is coming, but up into the busy traffic controlled Air Lanes for — "we have slipped the surly bonds of earth" — as gallant young Gillespie Magee, R.C.A.F. finely put it in his inspired sonnet. The "Fifth Elevation" will become the Front Elevation designed so that Air visitors, customers, business men, tradesmen, can identify readily as they drop down onto and rise from.

Already the Four Elevations we have been accustomed to are showing signs of disappearing as certain Factories

go entirely underground; their "Fifth Elevation" designed as Playing Fields and Gardens for the leisure hours of those who work beneath them.

Air parking signs are on the flat roofs of some buildings now, tomorrow, Theatres, Hotels, Department Stores, Office Buildings, Residences, will glow at night with soft light from their sky elevations, while recognition and directional lights stabbing the sky, will guide air travellers along the crowded skyways.

More I could say did space permit. Perhaps these few thoughts may stimulate the up and coming younger Architects to probe further into the future than I, in the late afternoon or cocktail hour of my life can.

For them I echo H. G. Wells, who said — "I am not writing prophecies, I am simply running as hard as I can beside the marching facts, and pointing them out."

S. T. J. Fryer

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Sir:

Arising out of a discussion at a recent meeting of the Standing Committee on Planning of the R.A.I.C., I have prepared an informative document on the architectural control exercised in Ottawa.

I submit it to you herewith for publication in the *Journal:*

Architectural Control in the National Capital Region

Architectural control is a matter of great interest to our profession. There have been numerous examples of architectural control in the past, but they were mostly applied to architectural ensembles, groups of monumental buildings, plazas and portions of streets. Their scopes were generally of a limited nature.

While examples of architectural control are now more scarce than in the past, the need for such is greater and more obvious than ever. It might be the means through which the urban environment in particular could be aesthetically improved and restored.

Such architectural control is, in a measure, now exercised within the limits of what has been defined as the National Capital Region by a joint committee of the Senate and House of Commons. The regulations and procedures, governing such control, as hereunder set forth, will be of interest to the members of our profession:

"Regulations Governing Construction Within the National Capital District, on Land Under the Control of the Government of Canada.

The Federal District Commission Act provides:

1 — The Commission shall co-ordinate construction and development work in the National Capital District in accordance with general plans approved from time to time under this Act.

2 — Proposals for the location, erection, alteration or extension of a building or other work by or on behalf of the Government of Canada or by any person on lands owned, leased, or otherwise controlled by the Government of Canada in the National Capital District shall be referred to the Commission prior to the commencement of the work.

3 — No building or other work shall be erected, altered or extended by or on behalf of the Government of Canada in the National Capital District unless the site, location and plans thereof have first been approved by the Commission.

4 — No person shall erect, alter or extend a building or other work on land in the National Capital District owned, leased or otherwise controlled by the Government of Canada unless the site, location and plans thereof have first been approved by the Commission.

5 — Every person who contravenes or fails to comply with subsection four of this section is guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding five hundred dollars.

6 — In any case where the Commission does not give its approval under this section the Governor in Council may give such approval.

7 — This section does not apply to interior alterations in a work or building.

Procedure

I — All communications shall be addressed to the Secretary, Federal District Commission, 291 Carling Avenue, Ottawa.

II — Previous to the preparation and submission of architectural drawings for any building or buildings, a topographical map of the existing conditions of the site and its immediate environs shall be furnished. Upon this basic plan a tentative layout for the future development of the whole property will be indicated, including the approximate location and shape of the building or buildings, the approaches, parking areas, etc.

III — Following the approval of the site, preliminary sketches, showing plan, elevations rendered in colour and tentative perspective shall be submitted. These will be examined and discussed with the architect. Upon agreement in principle of these sketches a further set of preliminary drawings embodying changes agreed to shall be supplied for further examination and discussion with the architect, to expedite the approval of final drawings.

IV — Two sets of final drawings comprising block plan, plan and elevations (in colour) shall be submitted for the approval required under the Federal District Commission Act. One set certified approved will be returned.

V — Any substantial changes made following the approval as aforementioned shall require the approval of the Federal District Commission before construction is proceeded with.

VI — Where alterations to buildings will materially affect the exterior appearance thereof, elevations of the affected exteriors shall be submitted for the required approval. Discussions with the designing architect may be necessary prior to approval.

VII — Full information should be furnished of the material, texture and colour or tone of the exterior walls and of the height of roof and cornice. Photographs, with the scale indicated thereon, of next adjoining buildings on both sides of building proposed for erection or alteration may be required."

It will be realized that architectural control within the National Capital Region is very limited, as it affects only structures defined in item No. II.

The Federal District Commission acts on the advice and recommendations of the National Capital Planning Committee, the primary function of which is the preparation of a Master Plan and general recommendations for the National Capital. The Master Plan and related studies are developed by the National Capital Planning Service, under the direction of its Consultant, Mr. Jacques Gréber. The Committee, in turn, has sub-committees whose functions are to study more closely different aspects of proposals. One of these sub-committees is the Architectural Sub-Committee, which was initiated in December, 1948. Since that date this Sub-Committee has had numerous meetings and has examined and eventually approved over 25 plans, either plans of buildings, the extensions of buildings, or of different types of structures such as bridges, road approaches, etc. While the authority of the Architectural Sub-Committee is limited to Government-owned property within the National Capital Region, the importance of the structures, their locations and, frequently, their monumental characters, are such that control on their siting and design will have a definite influence on the appearance and the development of the National Capital Region. It is desirable that this Committee should extend its sphere of influence within the Capital Region with the consent of the municipal authorities concerned. These considerations are set forth in the Report on the Planning of the Capital of which a short extract is quoted hereunder:

"The Sub-Committee on aesthetics, already formed within the National Capital Planning Committee, could be the basis of an enlarged organization, possibly participated in by the Ottawa Planning Area Board, and eventually, by the Regional Planning Board of Hull, when appointed, as their Advisory Committee on aesthetics.

This Committee, comparable to the Art Jury of Philadelphia, or to the Fine Arts Commission of Washington, should be composed of eminent architects, partly within and partly without the National Capital Planning Committee, who, in turn, might be seconded by professionals whose occupations permit them to express a worthy opinion on aesthetic matters, such as engineers, landscape architects, art critics, etc. The members of this committee should be outstanding in their respective professions, but should not have any direct professional interest in such matters as are submitted to them. Their considerations should, in principle, be based upon the objectives of the Master Plan.

There is an initial distinction to be made between the elements which are the subjects of aesthetic control, also in the procedures through which this control should be exercised:

Government lands and buildings are already subject to control by the Federal District Commission, whose powers have been set forth in Order in Council P.C. 5635 of August 16, 1945. . . .

But aesthetic control limited to government grounds and buildings, though important and necessary, does not meet the whole problem. It ought to be extended to: Panoramas, perspectives, streets, squares, commons, parks, buildings and structures of all sorts, including utilities.

All plans related to these matters should be passed by the Committee on Aesthetics before issuance of building permits, and, to expedite and make easier such control, they should be previously presented in their preliminary stages to the National Capital Planning Service acting as a co-ordinating agency on behalf of the Committee on Aesthetics. By such procedures, eventual refusals or unnecessary delays would be avoided.

The function of the Committee on Aesthetics and of its technical advisory service should be strictly limited to general principles, exclusive of any personal preferences."

The members of the Sub-Committee at date are Messrs. Charles David, F.R.A.I.C., Montreal; J. A. Ewart, M.R.A.I.C., M.E.I.C., Ottawa; A. S. Mathers, F.R.A.I.C., Toronto; and G. Amyot, Architect, Quebec, with Mr. Gréber as Consultant or, in his absence, representing the National Capital Planning Service, Mr. J. M. Kitchen of Ottawa, or the undersigned.

Edouard Fiset,
Department of Public Works, Canada,
Chief Architect's Branch,
National Capital Planning Service.

HOW THE GREEKS BUILT CITIES
By R. E. Wycherley

Published by The Macmillan Co. of Canada Limited, 70 Bond St., Toronto. Price $4.50.

This is a book of 220 pages. It gives a physical description of a Greek city, and describes the fortifications, the agora, the public buildings, the houses and town planning. It gives examples from all the best sites. Its illustrations are lifted from all the best books. There is nothing very new about what is said but it is said all in one place, and this saves trouble for those who are interested in this subject. It is an excellent book for accompanying a study of Greek architecture, and should be in the libraries of all the Schools of Architecture. My only distress with it is that it does not say how the Greeks built cities, nor how they administered them. What political and financial method did the citizens of Priene and Olynthus, for instance, use when they moved to new sites, and constructed completely new towns from scratch? What bodies were set up to operate the utilities, schools, stedia, etc. It would have been better if these questions had been answered. It would have been better, I think too, if the author had been a little critical of some of the things that went on in those days. Personally, I have the lowest regard for Hippodamus and his civic centre at Miletus. The author is a Welsh Professor of Greek.

Anthony Adamson

THE PILKINGTON SCHOLARSHIP, 1950

Irving Grossman

The Annual Pilkington Glass Scholarship in Architecture, which is open to all graduating Canadian Architectural students, has been won this year by Irving Grossman of the University of Toronto.

Mr. Grossman graduated this year and has been an honour student during each of the five years of his course.

The Scholarship is worth $1,500.00 plus full travelling expenses to and from England, and enables the student to study both in England and on the Continent for a year.

A second prize of $100.00 was won by A. C. Erickson of McGill University, and the third prize of $50.00 was won by A. W. Trimble, University of Manitoba.

Competition for this scholarship is always very keen, and the judges said that the exhibits this year showed the highest standard since the War.

For the first time the Architectural School of the University of British Columbia was able to submit the work of a graduating student.

The Jury in action. Reading from left to right: G. Pokorny, L. E. Shore, G. Desbarats, J. C. Parkin.

INFLUENCE OF AMERICAN DESIGN ON CANADIAN BANK BUILDINGS

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approximately forty (40) automobile customers per day. It would appear that, as the automobile parking problem becomes more acute, as most certainly it will, this type of banking will become more and more important.

2. Parking

This problem is, of course, universal and probably has a direct influence on the evolution of the drive-in bank. Land values are, of course, too high in downtown areas for this to be practical. However, many business institutions are now anticipating any new building they contemplate will have parking as an extra customer service. Suburban banks can more easily handle this problem.

3. Night Depositing

Night depositing is a very useful innovation for all businesses especially those closing after banking hours.

4. Perambulator Parking

In Canada, this requirement may appear quite unimportant. However, in some shopping areas, there is a need for perambulator parking. As trivial as it may seem, it is an indication that the bank is not scornful of this market.

5. Coupon Booths

Coupon booths are no longer the secluded dungeons of the past. The past requirement for complete privacy was probably caused by the fact that in one swift glance, a person's total wealth could be summed up while it was being scrutinized in the coupon booth. Today's business is much too complicated for a glance to take in the wealth of a customer in the coupon booth.

6. Tellers' Cages

Cages are no longer high wire cages. More emphasis is placed on easy customer – staff relations across an open counter. The same easy relationship between customer and Manager is also evident in the Manager's office. This office is simple and unostentatious.

CONSTRUCTION AND MATERIAL

(Continued from page 358)

add to the general color scheme to which banking institutions are paying discerning attention. We are still delighted with the richness of a fine marble floor, but branch premises are ceasing to be small replicas of nineteenth century monuments in Bay Street and St. James. We have recently been commissioned to demolish a prairie landmark in the form of Fortuna Virilis, whose prostyle occupied exactly one third of the property which space might have been crammed with customers.

Of finish materials which are, we believe, treated in another article, we can say in general that they are light and colorful and that color schemes have ranged from restrained elegance to downright exuberance depending upon locality and custom. In every case our Bank clients have proven themselves to be as forward in their thinking on premises as most advanced modernists.

The only reactionary trend we have noted is a tendency to cling to an archaic commodity called collateral.

Author's Note: The "we" used above is an editorial one. It has no connection with my two partners who wrote this article.

MASSEY MEDALS FOR ARCHITECTURE

The exhibition of architectural works submitted in connection with the award of the Massey Medals for Architecture will be officially opened by His Excellency, the Governor-General of Canada on Saturday evening, December 2nd, 1950 at the National Gallery in Ottawa. All members of the Institute will, in due course, receive an invitation to attend the opening on December 2nd, which invitation is to include their ladies.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Editorial Board is indebted to **Mr. Bruce Wright,** who at the Board's request obtained the material for this issue. We speak for Mr. Wright and the Board in thanking the Premises Departments of the banks of Canada and the architects who co-operated in sending in photographs and plans of their work. We are also greatly obliged to Mr. L. W. Townsend, Assistant General Manager of the Bank of Montreal, for his article, and to the architects whose names appear in the contributor's column on this page.

Editor

THE COVER

Bank of Montreal, Pender and Columbia Streets, Vancouver, British Columbia, Gardiner and Thornton, Architects, Photograph by Tony Archer.

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

S. G. Davenport

Born in Framingham, Mass., U.S.A. Graduate of Harvard University and of Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Following graduation spent a year in Spain studying Spanish architecture with a view to a career in the Tropics. Practised architecture in Cuba and designed branch buildings for The Royal Bank of Canada in Cuba and throughout the Caribbean and for points in South America. Appointed Consulting Architect to The Royal Bank of Canada in 1920, was associated with York & Sawyer, Architects, New York, in the designing of The Royal Bank of Canada, Head Office Building, Montreal. Was also associated with Messrs. Marani, Lawson & Morris, Architects on the design and layout for the Bank of Canada Building, Ottawa.

H. H. G. Moody

Born: Winnipeg, 1903, son of Dr. A. W. Moody. Educated: Winnipeg Public Schools, Royal Military College, University of Manitoba. B. Arch., 1926. Worked for Derby and Robinson, Boston, 1927-1928, Sproatt and Rolph, Toronto, 1929-1933, partner Moody and Moore since 1935. Served in late war with R.C.E. Overseas 4½ years. Married, one son, two daughters. Clubs: Manitoba, Winnipeg Winter, Motor Country. Address (home) St. Norbert, Manitoba; (office) 295 Broadway.

Charles Edward Pratt

Born: Boston, 1911. Education: Most preschool Vancouver and Victoria, B.C. Attended University of Toronto, School of Architecture, Graduating 1939. Experience: Returned Vancouver. Went into practice with the firm of Sharp & Thompson as an associate with R.A.D. Berwick. Partnership formed under the firm name of Sharp & Thompson, Berwick, Pratt, 1945. Marital Status: Married, two children. Practice: With partner, Mr. Berwick, have carried on extensive practice in all types of work but their main interest as a hobby and as a business is the solving of low cost housing.

John U. Rule

Mr. Rule's biographical sketch was not available by the time the *Journal* went to press.

L. W. Townsend, O.B.E., M.C.

Assistant General Manager at the Bank of Montreal, is in charge of the Bank Premises, Public Relations and Staff departments. Born and educated in England, he came to Canada in 1912, to enter the B. of M. at Brandon, Man., and he worked at branches in Alberta and B.C. also, before joining the army in 1916. Severely wounded in France, he was awarded the M.C., and was demobilized with the rank of captain. After the war, he served in a number of Ontario branches of the bank, and was appointed Assistant Manager of the Staff Department in 1931. Two years later he became Manager, and he was named Assistant General Manager in 1943. Keenly interested in public service activities, Mr. Townsend was Chairman of the Montreal Y.W.C.A. campaign in 1949, which raised the funds for the new Y.W. building.

Bruce H. Wright, B.A.Sc., F.R.A.I.C.

Born: Toronto. Educated: St. Andrew's College and Toronto University. Practised Architecture in Toronto. President of Ontario Association of Architects, 1942. Fellow of Royal Architectural Institute of Canada, 1943. Chief Architect, Wartime Housing Limited during World War II. Architect-in-Chief, Bank of Montreal, 1946.