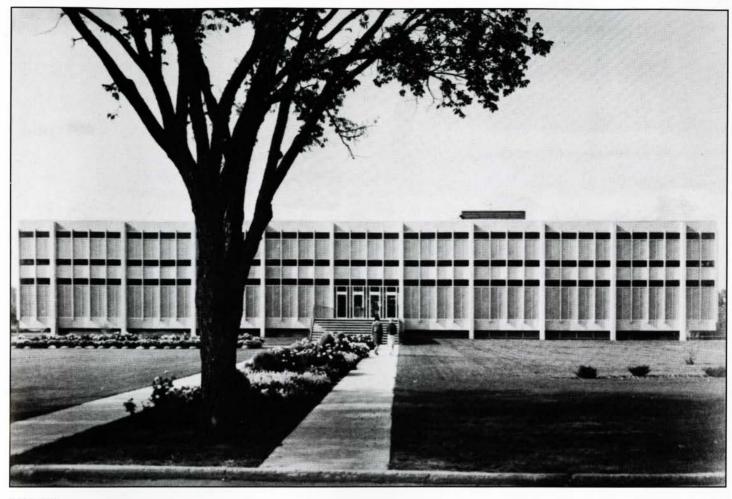
$L_{ m etters}$



7 May 1995

The scale of achievement evident in Harold Kalman's A History of Canadian Architecture is undeniable, as Gordon Fulton rightly recognizes in his review (SSAC Bulletin 20:1). It is a providential circumstance that the Alan Gowans methodological tradition has become a standard for encompassing this land of vast distances and frequently utilitarian or (according to Euro-American bias) "naive" architectural pretensions. All the more that it has taken a form more or less adequate for the time; even Gowans himself has lately termed Building Canada, his 1966 revision of Looking at Architecture in Canada, "obsolete in approach and obsolescent in much factual detail," a point well borne out for anybody recently attempting to use Gowans's text as a survey.

That said, an informed and cautious eye may detect more than a few errors in Kalman's telling, and one noteworthy example passes into Fulton's review without challenge: the attribution of Smith Carter Searle's 1959 J.A. Russell Building at the University of Manitoba to Smith, Carter, Parkin. It was only after the ill-fated merger of Smith Carter Searle and John B. Parkin Associates in 1969, for a short while following John C. Parkin's split to form his own firm at the beginning of 1971, that the Winnipeg office took that name. The firm remains in operation as Smith Carter Architects and Engineers Incorporated.

Adam Sobolak Toronto Smith Carter Searle's 1959 J.A. Russell Building, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg. (Harold Kalman, A History of Canadian Architecture (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1994), 2:812. Photograph by Henry Kalen)

¹ Alan Gowans, Styles and Types of North American Architecture (New York: HarperCollins, 1992), 79, n. 10.