

Building St. Michael's: Three Early Architects, 1895-1950

Teruko Kishibe, Archivist
St. Michael's Hospital Archives

St. Michael's
Inspired Care.
Inspiring Science.

ALBERT ASA POST, 1850-1926

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Albert Post was born in Pickering, Ontario, and attended St. Michael's College in Toronto before entering into an apprenticeship with Henry Langley – one of the first architects born and trained in Canada. In 1879, Post opened his own practice in Whitby, Ont., before joining A.W. Holmes to form Post & Holmes in Toronto.

Amongst his Toronto work still standing today, there includes St. Michael's Roman Catholic College on St. Joseph Street (built 1886-87) and St. Cecilia's Roman Catholic Church (1909) on Annette Street. Post was a devout Catholic, and came to be known as a leading ecclesiastical architect.

BUILDING ST. MICHAEL'S

The Sisters of St. Joseph, who founded St. Michael's Hospital in 1892, hired Post & Holmes in 1894, to design an extension to stand just south of the existing building. This new surgical wing was named the 'Hugh Ryan Wing', as it was made possible by a large donation from the railroad magnate. When it opened in 1895, the new wing housed common and private wards, a one-and-a-half storey operating theatre with a gallery to accommodate over 50 students, and sophisticated heating and ventilating systems.



Hugh Ryan

The three-storey Hugh Ryan Wing is visible to the left of the original hospital, which then became the medical wing. The building between the old and new structures housed administrative offices. All three were joined by corridors.



St. Michael's Hospital, Toronto, Canada

St. Michael's soon began to outgrow its newest wing, and in 1909, Albert Post was called upon again to create an extension to the Hospital. This time, the wing was to be north of the main hospital building, and became known as the D-wing. It was originally three storeys tall (a fourth floor was added in 1921), and doubled the bed count to 350. St. Michael's first x-ray machine was installed in the basement of this wing when it opened in 1912.



The exterior of the D-wing is the oldest remaining part of the Hospital.

JAMES PATRICK HYNES, 1868-1953

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

James Hynes was a Toronto-born architect who lived and worked in this city, designing many notable buildings and leading several architects' organizations. He was president of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada, the Ontario Association of Architects, the Architectural League of America and the Town Planning Association of Ontario. Among his existing work are Our Lady of Lourdes Roman Catholic Church (built 1910), and the Main Street Public Library (1921).



Boiler House, 1974

BUILDING ST. MICHAEL'S

In 1921, Hynes was commissioned by the Sisters of St. Joseph to create a new nurses' residence for the students of the St. Michael's Hospital School of Nursing.

In 1925, Hynes also designed a new laundry and boiler house for St. Michael's. It stood on Victoria Street, south of Shuter, until it was demolished in the mid-1970s.



Engineer in Boiler Room, 1961



The new nurses' residence on Shuter Street, close to Victoria. It accommodated 150 students. The building was also demolished in the mid-70s.

The main floor of the nurses' residence housed a library, and reception and assembly rooms.



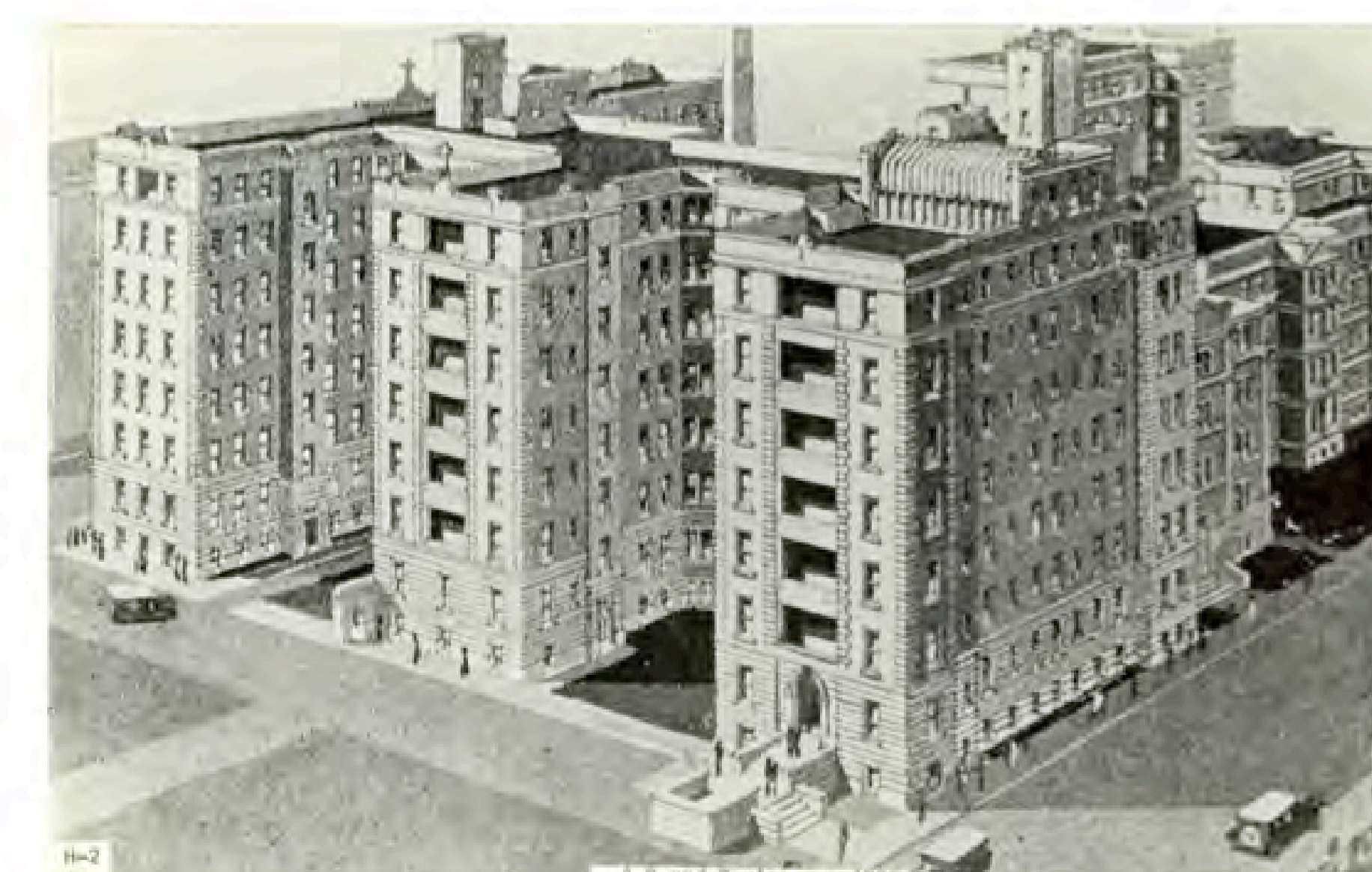
Library Nurses' Residence, c.1925



The top six floors housed student dormitories.

Just one year later, in 1926, Hynes began work on a major addition to St. Michael's in the form of three new wings stretching from Victoria to Bond Streets. These wings added 250 new adult beds and 31 infant beds, bringing the hospital total to 600 beds.

The wings also housed an outpatient department, and emergency, laboratory, and x-ray facilities.



WILLIAM LYON SOMERVILLE, 1886-1965

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

William Somerville, born in Hamilton, and responsible for designing much of McMaster University, practiced in New York before opening an office on Bay Street in 1919. He was a fellow of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada, president of the Ontario Association of Architects and writer for the Canadian Homes and Gardens magazine.

BUILDING ST. MICHAEL'S

At St. Michael's, Somerville is responsible for designing the oldest remaining hospital building standing today, which includes the Art Deco Bond Lobby. The E-wing officially opened in 1937, and housed administrative offices, an assembly hall, a library, private and semi-private rooms, a Gothic chapel, and a sculpture of St. Michael by Frances Loring above the entrance.



Bond Lobby Entrance



Chapel on 3E, 1937



Visitor's Waiting Room, 1937



Somerville was also responsible for working with Sister Margaret Phelan to create the Hospital's first cafeteria in 1949. It stood between the A- and B-wings.

In 1950, Somerville began work on the new AS-wing on Bond Street, extending south to Queen Street East. This wing held private and semi-private rooms for medical, surgical, and postpartum patients, as well as a modern diet kitchen and physiotherapy facilities.

