

3. WESBROOK REGIME WORLD WAR I.

*Kitsilano, Capilano, Siwash, Squaw,
Kla-How-Ya Tilicum, Skookum Wah!
Hyu Mamook! Muck-a-Muck-a, Zip!
B.C. Varsity! Rip! Rip! Rip!
V-A-R-S-I-T-Y — Varsity! ¹*

THE CEREMONY of transition from McGill to U.B.C. took place on the first day of lectures, Thursday, September 30, 1915. In late August and early September the usual autumn routine of supplemental examinations in Applied Science and Arts, and the Summer School in Surveying, had taken place. A meeting of the entire staff had been held on September 27, which was also registration day. The number of registered students was 379; 318 were in Arts, 61 in Applied Science. Of the 318 registrants in Arts, 151 were women. More than half of the students were registered in the First Year. Members of staff numbered 34; two of these were on leave for overseas service. In addition, 56 McGill B.C. students who had enlisted, many of whom were already in the battle line in France, wrote the Registrar that they would attend U.B.C. on the fulfilment of their military service. The inclusion of these overseas men brought the total registration of the first session to 435.

The opening of the University was in a very real sense a day of triumph for

¹ Famous U.B.C. "Yell." See page 72.

First Day of Lectures

the President and his Board and Senate. It was the culmination of many months of patient struggle and frustrating compromise. Yet, with an unerring sense of fitness, Dr. Wesbrook realized that, in the prevailing anxieties and stress of the War, now entered on its second year, this was not a time for public fanfare. Staff and students celebrated the occasion with a simple domestic ceremonial in their modest surroundings at Fairview. No formal assembly was possible because there was no auditorium on the "Campus" large enough to hold them all. The students were distributed in four groups to as many classrooms. Here in turn they were visited by the President, Professor George E. Robinson, Registrar, and members of the staff. To each group the President read a heartening letter of good wishes he had received from Premier Sir Richard McBride:

This being the week upon which University work in this Province begins, I take this opportunity of writing to you and expressing my pleasure at the fact that in educational matters we have reached another milestone of progress. I want to congratulate you upon having entered upon the actual duties for which you have for some time been so assiduously preparing, and to congratulate the people of British Columbia upon their at last possessing an institution that will some day rank with the great Universities of the Continent.

It is true that you are not yet fully equipped and much has to be done to properly habitate your students and the members of your Faculty, but a University does not consist of a series of fine buildings for which, unfortunately, we shall have to wait until this War is well over. I am confident that, with your present well-selected and able Staff of Professors, very excellent results will be achieved.

I want you, on my behalf, to extend greetings to your Colleagues and welcome the Students, many of whom will undoubtedly occupy positions of great responsibility in British Columbia, to fit them for which is one of the objects that gave the University being.

After this undramatic opening ceremony, staff and students repaired to their assigned classrooms and the first session of U.B.C. was on its way.

The story of the four years that follow in the history of the University deserves to be written in letters of gold. It should be read and studied by every member and friend of the University in the modern days of its prosperity and greatness. They were for U.B.C. years of "blood, sweat and tears," of trials, which she shared indeed with other universities, but for her, on the very threshold of her life, the period was a supreme test of her ability to survive. That she did so was proof enough that she deserved to survive. The story is one of a child grown adult almost over-night. If we are interested in looking for causes, we shall find them to be mixed and varied. The qualities of her staff and students and the heritage of the stock from which they sprang will provide a basic reason. The three upper years were well-nurtured in the training and discipline of McGill B.C. and were ready to give their best to their new Alma Mater. But this fine material required

Sept. 30-1915

Personal

Dr. H.E.Young,
Minister of Education,
Victoria, B.C.

My dear Dr.Young:

I cannot let the day go by without writing a word to you although you have not yet returned from the north. I knew if you had been here that we should have had a word of greeting from you on the opening day of the University work and so I told the students and the staff this morning.

Owing to lack of an auditorium, we thought it better to assemble ourselves in four of the different class rooms and the various members of the staff, with the Registrar, Mr. Robinson, and I visited each group, giving the necessary detailed information concerning time table, equipment and such other matters.

We very much appreciated the Premier's letter which I presented and at the same time gave the students every assurance of your deep and abiding interest in their welfare and that of the institution. I took the liberty of telling them that you were in the north but that we were all in your thoughts.

I have written a letter to Sir Richard McBride in acknowledgment and have given him a statement regarding the students. The letter was written earlier in the day since which time we have had to revise the list. I enclose copy of it. There are still some students to hear from. In any event, we are all very much gratified at the good start. We have had greetings and good wishes as well as congratulations upon our calendar. It certainly does the Province credit, particularly its press work and general appearance. The text leaves much to be desired but we are making no apologies for it since it must be apparent to every one that there were many difficulties in issuing a calendar before the staff was assembled.

There are thirty-one members of the staff, of whom two are on leave. In addition we have a clerical and technical staff of twelve.

There is nothing but the finest spirit of appreciation on the part of all of the staff and students at the opportunity

which is ours, despite the state of national and world affairs owing to this dreadful war. I think it is quite true that we have been more fortunate in the commencement of our work than any of the other Canadian Universities. I do not now recall any which started with as many students or with as large a staff. When you see our temporary buildings and the provision which is ours, you will agree that we should be in a position to do good work.

The postponement of any demonstration until a more appropriate occasion, namely when we are able to present graduates for their degrees, will I believe, meet with the approval of every one as it did with yours.

We hope to make quite a feature of our military work. It seemed wiser before developing our plans in regard to student affairs, academic costume and other things which should be based upon composite faculty recommendation and senate action, that we should wait until now. Our Faculty has met and various faculty committees with various duties have been assigned, so that we hope it will only be a short time until we may develop University procedure.

In the matter of academic dress, it has seemed to some of us that perhaps this year, caps and gowns for the women students and khaki uniforms for the men might be very appropriate, although no final action has been taken. From present indications there seems to be no doubt but that the University during its first year of existence, will be furnishing its full share of men for overseas.

I cannot let this occasion go by without assuring you of my own personal appreciation of your ever present and always evident help and interest. I shall look forward to an opportunity of seeing you soon to report more in detail and to discuss with you the nature of the formal report which should be made by the Board of Governors through your office to the Government. In addition, we should be discussing very shortly so far as we can at this time, next year's programme.

On behalf of the Faculty, the Senate, the Board of Governors and the students, I take the liberty of extending to you our appreciation.

I am, Sir,

Yours very truly,

J.D. Westbrook.

organization and leadership, both inside the University and before the public, if it was to create and maintain a new institution of higher learning worthy of the name in a world war. With high courage maintained in frequent defeat, and undismayed by innumerable disappointments, Dr. Wesbrook supplied the necessary leadership. Round him rallied staff and students, Board and Senate, in loyal support of their leader throughout the few remaining years of life that were granted him.

The ideals which Dr. Wesbrook cherished for the University and the spirit in which he faced its problems in war-time are perhaps nowhere better seen than in the Invocation he wrote for the *U.B.C. Annual*, 1916, published by the first graduating class.

We, the present student-body, Staff, Senate, Board of Governors and members of Convocation of this infant University, may well be envied by those who have gone before and by those who will come after. To us has come the opportunity of making our Province, our Dominion, our Empire and our world, a better place in which to live. May those for whom we hold these gifts in trust rise up and call us blessed. To meet in full our obligation, may ours be a Provincial University without provincialism. May our sympathies be so broadened and our service so extended to all the people of the Province that we may indeed be the people's University, whose motto is *tuum est*.

Such was Dr. Wesbrook's vision of our University and in her darkest hours he never lost sight of it. He saw the numbers of his staff and students decimated by enlistments and he longed to follow. At the end of the first session, in the early summer of 1916, he requested to be set free to accept an appointment in the Canadian Medical Services at the Front. When the Board of Governors expressed the opinion by formal resolution that his services were "imperatively required here," he loyally accepted their view and threw himself with abandon into his official duties. Under his inspiration, the University was in the forefront of the community in every activity in which its services might conceivably be useful. He qualified as a Field Officer and assumed personal command of the University Contingent of the Officers Training Corps. He encouraged the establishment of short courses in vocational, agricultural and mining subjects for returned soldiers and recommended to the Board of Governors the appointment of Staff Instructors whenever necessary to supply such services. His ambition to expand the educational services of the University remained constant and active and met with some success despite the shrinkage of available funds. He himself retained the Professorship of Bacteriology and gave a course of lectures in this subject, of which he was an acknowledged master.

He pressed continuously for the move to Point Grey and prepared alternate budgets for 1916-17 and for 1918-19, providing for the migration to the

permanent site — all to no purpose. Each year at budget time the University was faced with a financial crisis and only succeeded in maintaining itself intact by ruthless paring of expenses which left facilities as they were and the staff without salary increases at a time of rising costs of living. Three staff resignations occurred on this account. In the 1917-18 budget discussions under Liberal Premier the Honourable H. C. Brewster, the University had to deal with a new Government, elected in November, 1916. Sir Richard McBride had resigned the Premiership to become Agent-General for British Columbia in London. The Conservatives, under the leadership of the Honourable W. J. Bowser, had been overwhelmingly defeated. Mr. Brewster's Government "faced heavy commitments and a shrinking revenue: from over \$12,000,000 in 1912 the revenue had fallen to about \$6,000,000 in 1916."² The new Minister of Education, the Honourable J. D. MacLean, encountered severe criticisms of the University among his own party in the House of Assembly. One point of criticism was the President's salary; another was the necessity of certain advanced courses in Geology and Mining and proposed new courses in Forestry; still another, a drill-hall gymnasium, petitioned for by the students. Dr. Wesbrook at once offered \$2,000 of his salary to the general University expenses of 1917-18 and ruefully submitted to the other reductions required to meet the government appropriation. This meant, among other things, that no Fourth Year work in Mining could yet be offered in the Faculty of Applied Science. Even more difficult was the struggle over the 1918-19 budget — the last to be prepared by Dr. Wesbrook — which was presented to the Government in February 1918. In July, after prolonged negotiations through the spring and summer, a supplementary grant of \$46,000 was secured from a reluctant Government — an amount barely sufficient to relieve the critical financial condition of the University.

The urgent desire of the President to effect the move to Point Grey is readily understood when it is remembered that the work of the University was being carried on during these years in surroundings which were inadequate to meet the growing needs of the University. In the Arts Building, constructed as an adjunct to the Vancouver General Hospital, were accommodated the President's office and other administrative offices, Faculty offices, lecture rooms, students' reading room, and the Library. The other buildings, four in number, as described in an earlier chapter, were cheaply-built, temporary structures. The entire group were crowded together in a small space which could scarcely be dignified with the name of Campus. Its inadequacies can perhaps be better understood from the President's account of what it lacked of facilities regarded as normal in any of the older universities.

² F. W. Howay: *British Columbia, The Making of a Province*. p. 256.

Improvement : Faculty Organization

The students have no recreation or playgrounds, no gymnasium facilities, no assembly or examination hall capable of housing more than one hundred and fifty people, no common room or study room, no adequate locker space, and the present sanitary arrangements render the University culpable from the public health standpoint.

The Library, as a result of the energy and enterprise of Mr. Gerould in the summer of 1914, consisted of 22,000 bound volumes and about 7,000 pamphlets, and was rapidly made available for the use of students in its cramped quarters by the Acting-Librarian and Cataloguer, John Ridington. The actual shortage of accommodation was met to some extent, for the period of the War, by alterations made in the summer of 1916 to the Mining, Science and Arts Buildings, and by the erection of a new Chemistry Building and a new Assembly Hall and lecture rooms, X, Y and Z, adjoining the Arts Building—all constructed of wood at minimum cost. Clearing of agricultural experimental plots at Point Grey, under the supervision of Dean Klinck, had produced some 80 acres of cultivated land by the end of this year, but the separation of offices and classrooms from field work areas was, and continued to be, a real hardship for the agricultural staff and students.

The machinery of University organization received a thorough testing under Wesbrook's regime. Here and there squeaks developed which required to be lubricated by minor amendments to the University Act. Sensible administrative procedures discovered few serious flaws. In internal arrangements, the President believed in and applied the unitary principle of government. The University was a whole of parts: Departments and Faculties existed to facilitate administration. In performing their function they should work together as closely as possible. Supporting this view, he wrote to his friend Walter Murray, President of Saskatchewan University, in October 1916:

So far as I can, I shall guard against the too strict autonomy of the different Faculties, which should be regarded as general Faculty Committees established to facilitate the transaction of business. Anything which divides Faculties too definitely into groups which have a tendency to grow away from each other is to be discouraged.

In conformity with this principle, the three constituted Faculties of Arts, Applied Science and Agriculture were convened as one Faculty for the conduct of all business. To begin with, membership was confined to Deans and Heads or Acting-Heads of Departments. This restriction, apart from being too exclusive, was soon found to place too heavy a burden of committee work on Deans and Heads, and in 1917 Faculty membership was enlarged to include all staff members down to the rank of Instructors with annual, as opposed to sessional, appointment.

In the meantime, the students themselves had been actively engaged with the problems of organization. Following the pattern of the older universities, the

University Act of 1908 treated the relationship of students to University as mainly one of discipline, having to do with "the conduct of all students in their respective Faculties in respect to all matters arising or occurring in or upon such buildings and grounds as shall be assigned for their separate use."³ In such matters, and with regard to "all applications and ceremonials by students and others in connection with their respective Faculties," jurisdiction and decisions were in the power of Faculties, subject to appeal to Senate. The Act reflected the prevailing paternal attitude of universities toward Faculty-student relations, and took no account of important developments already taking place in the area of student government. The U.B.C. Calendar for the session of 1915-16 has this notice under the heading of Special Fees:

In the interest of the student body and by the authority of the Board of Governors of the University, \$2.00 additional will be exacted from all students for the support of the Student Activities Association.

The reference is, of course, to the Alma Mater Society and to the familiar Alma Mater fee. The A.M.S. came into being at a meeting of the student body held early in the first term, in 1915. Sherwood Lett was elected President by acclamation, as he was similarly elected Chancellor in 1951. When he withdrew from the University a few weeks later, to proceed to active service, he was succeeded in the office of A.M.S. President by J. E. (Eddie) Mulhern. Because of the outstanding services which the A.M.S. has rendered to the University, the account of its origin has more than a passing interest. The story, entitled *Student Self-Government*, was contributed by Eddie Mulhern to the U.B.C. *Annual*, 1916, and is, in part, as follows:

At the last meeting of the Alma Mater Executive (of McGill B.C.) a committee of three was appointed to act with a Faculty representative in drawing up a constitution for the student body of the new University. Miss E. Story⁴, Mr. Sherwood Lett, Mr. J. E. Mulhern and Professor H. T. Logan worked throughout the Summer (of 1915), drafting a constitution of the Alma Mater Society of the University of British Columbia, which was adopted provisionally till the beginning of the fall term, 1916. This embodies a great departure from the old system (of McGill B.C.) and provides for almost complete self-government.

The administrative body is known as the Students' Council, which exercises supervision over all the interests of the students and also acts as a disciplinary body, though this latter duty will probably be handed over to a new body, the Students' Court, which is still occupying the attention of the powers that be. The Students' Council as it exists now consists of eight members: the President of the Alma Mater

3 An Act to Establish and Incorporate a University for the Province of British Columbia; Section 83; Sub-Sections (f), (g) and (h).

4 Later Mrs. Sherwood Lett, B.A. '17, M.A. '26, LL.D. 1958.

CONSTITUTION OF ALMA MATER SOCIETY.

Clause 1. The name of the Society shall be "THE ALMA MATER SOCIETY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA."

Clause 2. The Composition of the Society:-

- (a) The Society shall be composed of Ordinary and Honorary Members.
- (b) Ordinary Members shall comprise all registered students and graduates of the University.
- (c) Honorary Members shall comprise all members of the Faculty.

Clause 3. The Object of the Society shall be

to exercise supervision over the Literary, Athletic, Social, Financial and other interests of the Society.

Clause 4. Meetings of the Society.

- (a) A semi-annual meeting will be held within the first ten days of the fall term, at which the Treasurer will make a financial statement, and the Presidents of the Alma Mater and affiliated Societies will give an outline of the activities of the Society.
- (b) The annual meeting will be held in the last week of March at which the reports of each affiliated organization will be presented and passed upon.
- (c) Special meetings may be called at any time by the President on the request of the Students' Council or on the written request of twenty members of the Society.
- (d) Only Ordinary Members may vote at meetings of the Society. Honorary Members may not vote but may take part in all discussions.

Keeness of Senate

as *ex officio* chairman of the Council; the Presidents of the three Undergraduate Societies, Arts Women's, Arts Men's, and Science Men's; the Presidents of the Men's Literary and Women's Literary Societies, and the Presidents of the Men's Athletic and Women's Athletic Associations. These members represent the students and the principal activities. The only additions that will be made to the Council are the Presidents of other Undergraduate Societies, as Law, Medicine or Agriculture.

While all student organisations are affiliated with the Alma Mater Society and consequently under the control of the Students' Council, still each organisation looks after its own especial affairs through its own especial executive which is elected by the members of that organisation . . .

Although the experiment of the first year has proved a decided success and the assurance that it will be carried further gives us great pleasure . . . it is of course impossible to have a smoothly-running machine in one or even two years, but it is sincerely hoped by those who have been here to see the beginning that student life in all its aspects will keep pace with the development prophesied by all for our beloved Alma Mater.

It is clear that, from its very inception, the U.B.C. Alma Mater Society aimed at independence of higher authority, and certain it is that it has attained such independence to a greater degree than is the case with most modern universities.

The University Senate was duly organized at its first regular meeting which was held on February 16, 1916. Faculty had meanwhile completed its own Senate membership with the election of two representatives each from Arts, Applied Science and Agriculture. Keen interest was shown in the large agenda which confronted the members of whom 25 of a total of 34 were in attendance. In addition to the formal organization of Senate, the business included an application for affiliation from the Anglican Theological College and from Westminster Hall, the Theological College of the Presbyterian Church. Senate was doubtful what action to take, and the President was asked to obtain legal advice. In consequence, the University Act was amended giving Senate power, subject to the Board's approval, to pass statutes of affiliation with "any incorporated Theological College in the Province." There were also to be considered by Senate resolutions from the Faculties dealing with courses and calendar for the 1916-17 session. Two adjourned meetings were required to complete the agenda. Even the financial interests of the University were not overlooked and a resolution was passed requesting the Government to extend, for a further three years, the period for selection of the University Endowment Land and urging expeditious action in the selection. The Land Endowment Act of 1907 was so amended, for the fourth time, in May 1916. The deep interest in the affairs of the University displayed by Senate at this first meeting and the obvious determination of its members to see to it that Senate discharge its function as an important component of the U.B.C. Constitution have continued to be notable characteristics of this body. At times they have proved irritating or embarrassing to other elements of the administrative machinery.

On the whole the faithfulness of Senate in fulfilling its duties as the guardian of academic interests has been a prime source of strength to the University.

In 1917 important changes occurred in the personnel of the Board of Governors. Two new members were appointed who were destined to give long and distinguished service to the University: they were the Honourable Mr. Justice Denis Murphy and Mrs. Evelyn F. K. Farris, the first woman member of the Board and already a member of the Senate, elected at the first meeting of Convocation in 1912. Mr. Justice Murphy brought to the deliberations of the Board a wide knowledge of the Province, gleaned as a pioneer citizen and as a representative, for several years, of the constituency of Cariboo in the Provincial Legislature. For a brief period in 1902 he had held the Portfolio of Provincial Secretary. His ripe wisdom and fine balance of judgment were to prove of inestimable value to his colleagues. Mrs. Farris, a graduate of Mount Allison University, founder of the Vancouver University Women's Club, possessed a lifelong interest in higher education whose cause she has served with steadfast devotion, both in the University and in the community at large.

Convocation elections, held in April 1918, gave the University a new Chancellor. The Honourable F. Carter-Cotton, Chancellor of McGill University College during the nine years of its existence and elected first Chancellor of U.B.C. in 1912, now expressed his wish to retire from the office. Members of Convocation chose as his successor R. E. McKechnie, a graduate in Medicine as Holmes Gold Medallist at McGill in 1890, who had done post-graduate study in Vienna. For 25 years he had practised medicine in British Columbia, at first in Nanaimo, as surgeon for the New Vancouver Coal Company, and, since 1903, in Vancouver where he had won an enviable reputation among his fellow practitioners. He was appointed to the first U.B.C. Board of Governors in 1914 and re-appointed in 1917. Thus began a connection with the University which continued unbroken until his death in 1944. To the teaching staff and to generations of students, his familiar greying figure, presiding as Chancellor year after year over Congregation, became almost an institution, a veritable living part of the recurring ceremonial, held in universal esteem and affection.

Members of Convocation also elected 15 of their own number to the University Senate. Twenty-nine candidates were nominated. This election is especially notable because for the first time graduates of U.B.C. exercised their franchise and because the first U.B.C. graduate⁵, Miss Shirley P. Clement, B.A. '17, was elected as a member of Senate. In the summer of 1917, Convocation had been busy, setting its own house in order in preparation for the elections. Rules of procedure were adopted providing for the annual meeting to be held on the evening

⁵ Later Mrs. C. P. Murison.

ERRATUM

Page 65 (Line 13)

For Mrs. Farris, a graduate of Mount Allison University, read Mrs. Farris, a graduate of Acadia University,

Curriculum

of Congregation and for the election of a Secretary, a Treasurer and a Council of 15 members. The Government was requested to amend the University Act in order to validate these rules of order and to reopen the lists of Convocation until December 31, 1918. These changes in the Act were promptly made in the 1918 session of the Legislature. The amending act also authorized addition to the roll of Convocation, from time to time, of members of the University teaching staff whose names were submitted by the President.

The University curriculum underwent important changes in these early years. To begin with, no teaching was undertaken in the Faculty of Agriculture. A general course entitled "The Scientific Basis of Agriculture" was given by Dean Klinck and was open to Third and Fourth Year Arts students. The first students in Agriculture were enrolled in 1917-18, with a Freshman Class of seven. A Second Year was added in the following session. Agricultural subjects taught were: Agronomy, Animal Husbandry, Horticulture and Poultry Husbandry; the remaining subjects in the first two years were taken in the Arts Faculty. The Applied Science Faculty added Third Year work in Chemistry, Chemical Engineering, Civil Engineering and Mining to the two years previously given by McGill College. Shortage of funds prevented further additions to their curriculum during the War, except in Chemistry and Chemical Engineering, in both of which a Fourth Year was offered. War work was undertaken by the Faculties of Agriculture and Applied Science in the form of short course classes in vocational subjects for returned soldiers—a foretaste of what was to come thirty years later on a much larger scale. Abortive plans were made by the Senate and Board in 1917-18 for the establishment of a School of Forestry. The Vancouver Board of Trade got Senate and Board of Governors' approval of its plan for a Faculty of Commerce, contingent upon the Board of Trade raising \$60,000 to finance the enterprise. This it was unable to do and the plan fell to the ground.

The curriculum of the four years' course for the B.A. degree was subjected to close, critical study by the Faculty in the light of each session's experience. The original curriculum, which was followed in the opening session, was a brave attempt on the part of the four members of the Curriculum Committee—Dean R. W. Brock, Lemuel Robertson, Douglas McIntosh and the Registrar, George E. Robinson—to provide, with the available limited staff, a broad, liberal-arts education, free from the traditional attachment to the languages of Greece and Rome. Latin was not made a compulsory subject for the B.A. degree—an innovation in the practice of Canadian universities.⁶ For the session 1915-16,

⁶ Sir Robert Falconer: "The Tradition of Liberal Education in Canada," *Canadian Historical Review*, June, 1927.

Curriculum

courses were offered in: Languages (Latin, Greek, French, German); Mathematics (Algebra, Geometry, Trigonometry); Sciences (Agriculture, Bacteriology, Chemistry, Geology and Mineralogy, Physics); History (with Economics); Philosophy. In 1916-17 were added Biology, Economics (taught in its own Department), and a course in Spanish. The 1915-16 curriculum offered students a choice of three patterns for the B.A. course, viz: Classical, based on Latin and Greek; Modern, based on French and German; or Scientific, based on the Sciences and Mathematics. All students were required to take Mathematics and Physics in their First Year. Three years of work in English were obligatory for all. Five full lecture courses constituted a complete First Year; four courses, a Second Year; seven courses, the Third and Fourth Years, which were treated as a unit. To avoid over-specialization, students in the Scientific course were obliged, in the Third and Fourth Years, to choose at least one subject other than scientific; Classical and Modern students, similarly, had to select a subject from the scientific group. A six-year double course was offered in the Faculties of Arts and Applied Science, leading to the degrees of B.A. and B.Sc.

For the 1916-17 session, the three-pattern-course plan was dropped and the foundations laid for the subsequent Pass Degree curriculum. The First Year course, comprising six subjects, was made almost uniform for all students—English, History, Mathematics, Physics and a choice of two subjects from Chemistry, French, German, Latin, Greek. In the other years, there was a broad choice of subjects. The Second Year consisted of four subjects, which must include English and a language, other than English, taken in the First Year. The other two subjects were selective. The unit system of evaluating subject courses now made its appearance for the first time, a unit being one hour-long lecture or a laboratory period of not less than two or more than three hours in length. Full Third and Fourth Year courses were made to consist of 15 units each, with free choice of subjects, except that English Composition remained compulsory and one 3-unit subject taken in the Third Year must be continued in the final year. Further modifications of the curriculum were made by Faculty during the sessions 1916-17 and 1917-18. The chief of these extended the unit system to the First and Second Years. Honours Courses had not yet been introduced but were foreshadowed by the provision of Distinction Courses in the first two years, and continuation courses in the other two years. A Distinction Course consisted of a Pass Course of three units and a supplementary course of one unit. Distinction Courses were necessary for first-class standing in any subject; all First and Second Year students had to take at least two Distinction Courses and three Pass Courses—a minimum of 17 units. In the Third and Fourth Years a total of at least 8 units must be included of a subject taken in the Second Year. Generous provisions were made

for the academic standing of enlisted students, not only in all University years but also in the matriculation class of any high school in British Columbia.

Graduate study was not overlooked. Already, in November 1915, Faculty adopted the report of a committee, of which Dean Klinck was chairman, giving procedures of study for the degrees of Master of Arts and Master of Science, which set the pattern of graduate study for many years to come.

The introduction of course credits, both for graduate and post-graduate degrees, calculated by mathematical units of value instead of by lecture courses and subjects, reveals the influence of staff members who had received an important part of their education in universities in the United States. An element of compromise in the structural arrangement and evaluation of undergraduate courses, arrived at with members of staff whose educational experience had been in the universities of Canada or the United Kingdom, is seen in the retention of the system of Honours and Pass Courses. As the years have passed the growing emphasis on graduate studies and graduate degrees is a reflection of the increasing preponderance of North American and Continental influence in educational thinking and practice.

A prominent feature of the curriculum in these war years at the University was the work of the Canadian Officers Training Corps. A contingent of the C.O.T.C. had been organized in McGill College, in the autumn of 1914, by Captain E. E. Jordan (Mathematics) and Lieutenant H. T. Logan (Classics) of the M.B.C. staff with such assistance as could be placed at disposal of the Corps by the over-worked Headquarters of the 23rd Infantry Brigade in Vancouver. The McGill College students who enlisted for overseas service in the spring and summer of 1915 had received their initial training as members of this unit. President Westbrook assumed command of the C.O.T.C. Contingent in the session 1915-16. Under U.B.C. regulations, as we have already seen, military training in the C.O.T.C. was made compulsory for all male students during two University sessions. The work, comprising a minimum of two hours' drill and lectures per week, carried no academic credit. Certificates of proficiency were granted to all who qualified; "A" Certificate for two years' efficiency service with the Corps, "B" Certificates for three years or more. The Certificate entitled the holder to officer rank in the Canadian Militia.

Undergraduate enrolment in the University fluctuated from year to year due to war conditions. Ten fewer students were in attendance during 1916-17 than in the first year, with 38 fewer men and 28 more women. Registration included nine returned soldier students, one of whom, Merrill Des Brisay, having enlisted with the first U.B.C. overseas detachment, had been wounded at Sanctuary Wood and was now invalided out of the Army. He graduated with the Class of

New Appointments to Faculty

1917. In the session 1917-18, the total registration was 416, of whom 371 were in Arts, 38 in Applied Science and 7 in Agriculture. The 200 women enrolled in Arts outnumbered the men for the first time. Numbers showed a substantial increase in the session 1918-19, totalling 538, made up of 467 in Arts, 54 in Applied Science and 17 in Agriculture. Including the veterans and others taking short courses given by the University, the registration showed a total this year of 917.

These early years saw numerous new appointments to the staff, in addition to those who had carried the teaching load for the first session, 1915-16. Subsequent appointments in the war years included others whose names became familiar to generations of students: Alden F. Barss (Horticulture), Theodore H. Boggs (Economics), Paul A. Boving (Agronomy), A. F. B. Clark (French), Robert H. Clark (Chemistry), F. M. Clement (Horticulture), John Davidson (Biology), Percy H. Elliott and T. C. Hebb (Physics), Andrew H. Hutchinson (Biology), Harry M. King (Animal Husbandry), R. H. Mullin (Bacteriology), Wilfrid Sadler (Dairying), Walter N. Sage (History), Garnet G. Sedgewick (English), Otis J. Todd (Classics) and W. L. Uglow (Geology). Many of these men, whose average age was in the early thirties, came from careers of promise elsewhere. Theodore Boggs, graduate of Acadia and Yale, was Assistant Professor of Economics in Dartmouth College, New Hampshire; Boving, a graduate of Malmo, Sweden, was a member of the Faculty of Macdonald College, McGill's agricultural affiliate; F. M. Clement, of Guelph, was Director of Vineland Experimental Station in the Niagara Peninsula of Ontario; Sedgewick, of Dalhousie and Harvard, had practised his brilliant talents as a teacher in the schools of his native Nova Scotia and British Columbia and later as Assistant Professor in Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri. Their names complete the roll of Wesbrook's men who laid the foundations of scholarship on which the University rests today.

Faculty and undergraduate life was dominated by the War which, in one way or another, influenced the work of all Faculties and entered into the routines of every member of the University. Dr. Wesbrook did everything possible to see to it that the University participated to the full in the war effort. For him the War created, for the University, "conceived in prosperity . . . born at the time of the world's greatest tragedy . . . the opportunity of learning the fundamental lesson of service to humanity."⁷ From the very outset, in 1916, vocational training classes for returned soldiers were organized and conducted by members of the staff. In the session 1918-19 there were 379 veterans and others registered in short courses which included instruction in General Agricultural Problems, Horticul-

⁷ Dr. Wesbrook's *Invocation* in U.B.C. Annual, 1916.

ture, Fruit Growing, Agronomy and Animal Husbandry. Short courses were also given in Mining and Prospecting, Assaying, and Mechanical Engineering for the training of technicians. Many members of the staff took military training in the C.O.T.C. along with the men students; H. Ashton (French) and Paul Boving (Agronomy) accepted commissions in the Corps. Student enlistments depleted the University classes. Five members of the staff went overseas. By the War's end no fewer than 697 members of the University or of McGill B.C. had joined the forces, of whom 78 had made the supreme sacrifice. These men had received a total of 131 decorations and awards including four D.S.O.'s, 47 M.C.'s, three D.F.C.'s, one D.C.M., and 29 M.M.'s. As the Honour Roll grew, it cast a shadow of sorrow, tinged with pride, over the whole University. A branch of the Canadian Red Cross Society was organized with Miss Isabel MacInnes as President and women undergraduates worked strenuously at the preparation and despatch of parcels for the boys overseas. Wives of the Faculty took part in this activity. Women students, in their keenness, requested permission to knit for the soldiers in lecture periods. A small newspaper containing University tidbits of news was printed specially for the U.B.C. men at the front.

The majority of McGill B.C. men who had enlisted in 1915 were recruited by the McGill University Companies in Montreal for service with the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry Battalion. In December 1915 was formed the plan to create a battalion composed of students from the four Western universities. The plan, first devised by the Manitoba Officers' Training Corps, was approved by the four University Presidents and their recommendation was agreed to by the Minister of Militia. So came into being the 196th Western Universities Battalion, with its four companies to be supplied by the Universities of Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Alberta and British Columbia. Saskatchewan arranged that one of the Platoons of its Company would be recruited by Brandon College. U.B.C. undertook to raise the personnel of D Company. Dean R. W. Brock was appointed Senior Major and Second-in-Command of the Battalion: D Company was placed under the command of Captain O. E. LeRoy, a former colleague of Brock's in the Canadian Geological Survey, Ottawa. This plan to keep them together in their service proved popular with undergraduates in all four universities, and especially in U.B.C. D Company reached the training grounds at Camp Hughes, in the summer of 1916, with a strength of 239 all ranks. Before it left for overseas in November, its numbers had risen to 300, making it the largest of the four Companies. Among the Officers of the Company were Stuart J. Schofield, Professor of Geology and Harry F. G. Letson, who, having completed the Second Year of Applied Science at U.B.C., had received his commission in August through the C.O.T.C. The Company included in its strength many other

Student Life

leading students of the University. On its arrival in England, to the great disappointment of its members, the Battalion was sent to the 19th Reserve to be broken up and used as reinforcements. Some of the officers and very many of the men went to the 46th Canadian Infantry Battalion and to other Western units. Captain LeRoy met his death in October 1917, at Passchendaele, fighting with the 46th Battalion. Dean Brock, after serving for a time as Director of the Khaki College at Seaford, Sussex, was posted to the British Army in Palestine as Geological Officer. A reinforcing Platoon of one officer and 50 other ranks was recruited at the University during the session 1916-17 and went overseas in November 1917. The Platoon was under the command of Lieutenant (formerly Captain, C.O.T.C.) E. E. Jordan (Mathematics). S. Mack Eastman (History) and Thorleif Larsen (later a member of the Department of English) went overseas with the reinforcing Platoon. Most of these men went to the 7th and 29th Battalions. Lieutenant Jordan was posted for duty to the Khaki College, Seaford.

In spite of the disorganizing effect of war conditions, student life at U.B.C. appears in other respects to have pursued a remarkably normal course. There was much creative work to be done in a new university in the process of establishing its own character and individuality. The student organizations, clubs, societies, traditions inherited from McGill College had to be converted to the more complex needs and demands of a university with three faculties. These undergraduate problems were faced conscientiously and with enthusiasm by student leaders, with the sympathetic help of the Faculty. University publications were developed gradually but with studious care. The Senior Class of 1916, following a precedent set by McGill B.C., produced an *Annual* of over 100 pages which might serve as a model for such publications. The editor of this forerunner of the *Totem* of later years, who had spent three years as a student of M.B.C. and only his final year in U.B.C., wrote gallantly, as he laid down his pen:

That we should be writing at once a salutation to a new University and our own requiem seems incongruous. But we leave these halls with one thought to gladden us: the U.B.C. is truly our Alma Mater, for we have aided in laying her traditions and defending her youth.

Each succeeding graduating class since 1916 has published an *Annual* (or *Totem*), with the exception of the classes of 1943 and 1944, which refrained from doing so because of shortages of materials in World War II.

In December, 1916, the first undergraduate journal made its appearance in the form of a 40-page monthly, named *Anonymous*. The name of *Ubicee* was given to the third number, February, 1917, with this key to its pronunciation:

*Get used to the name as soon as you can,
And say it correct like a good little man;*

*If you can say 'Odyssey' rightly and good,
You'll quickly say 'Ubicee' just as you should.*

In the following session, the *Ubicee* was replaced by an 8-page weekly, bearing the same name but with the familiar spelling, *Ubysey*. Through the open windows of these publications we see the student body at work and at play. We read the usual complaints of "lack of college spirit;" of the "feeble demonstrations of the Rooters' Club at most of the games," despite the winning play of the Varsity Rugby teams against "Rowing Club," "Seaforths," and other opponents. U.B.C. "yells" began to appear early. The favourite of these, which retained its popularity through three decades, was the famous "Kitsilano," composed by Art Lord with the assistance of Joe Johansson. It was printed in the 1916 *Annual*. The first three lines are a medley of local Indian place names and words from the Chinook jargon:

*Kitsilano, Capilano, Siwash, Squaw,
Kla-How-Ya Tilicum, Skookum Wah!
Hyu Mamook! Muck-a-Muck-a, Zip!
B.C. Varsity! Rip! Rip! Rip!
V-A-R-S-I-T-Y — Varsity!*

In athletics, in addition to rugby, Varsity fielded men's teams in basketball and ice hockey, and women's teams in basketball and in both ice and grass hockey. New undergraduate clubs, sponsored by members of staff, began to appear. The University Players' Club, under the inspired direction of Frederic G. C. Wood, the Glee Club, and Orchestra, directed by E. Howard Russell, Le Cercle Francais, fostered by Dr. Ashton, and the Chemistry Society, by Douglas McIntosh, were early on the scene, followed by the Musical Society, the Junior Economics Discussion Club, aided by Theodore Boggs, and the Wireless Society. The Y.W.C.A. and Y.M.C.A. had active University branches. The Men's and Women's Literary Societies were organized separately under the Alma Mater Society, and carried out ambitious programmes of inter-class and extra-mural debates, public-speaking contests, lectures, etc. On March 3, 1916, was held the first inter-collegiate debate between U.B.C. and the University of Washington, Seattle. Social events at the University, which were the responsibility of the Undergraduate Societies, were severely conditioned by the War. This problem of adjustment was met squarely by the students who could not be denied their occasions of relaxation and fun. In the 1917 *Annual* we read:

The Social activities of the College this year, though as numerous as ever, have been for the most part very informal and simple. With such a number of our men at the front and so many more going, we have not felt like doing anything on a very large scale. Our affairs have all been held in the College itself and have been open only to the students and their friends. This has been no detriment to

Influenza Epidemic : Degrees Conferred

our enjoyment of them, however, owing to the facilities for entertaining at our disposal in the new wing of the Arts Building, and to the congeniality of the student body as a whole.

Class parties, tea dances, freshman receptions, dances of the Arts and Applied Science Faculties and graduation functions provided oases of gaiety. The annual frivolities of High Jinks, an adventure in merriment invented by the Women's Undergraduate Society, for women students only, were a standing provocation to the curiosity of the men. Each year, on the day after High Jinks, were to be found individuals who boasted that they had succeeded, by skilful impersonation, in gaining entrance to the forbidden rites.

Amid this galaxy of extra-curricular activities, superimposed upon military training and other war duties, students still found time to attend to the regular routine of lectures, which provided not only a stimulus to study, but also, as always, much of the materials for undergraduate humor. This routine was unexpectedly interrupted when, in the autumn of 1918, shortly after the opening of term, the influenza epidemic reached Vancouver. So serious were its proportions that University lectures were suspended for five weeks on October 20. All undergraduate operations, including publication of the *Ubysssey*, ceased. The Auditorium and adjacent classrooms were converted into hospital wards for influenza patients. Some of the staff and students heroically took on orderly and nursing duties. Three students died, victims of the plague. The disruption of the University's regular activities was borne with equanimity by staff and students. Examinations usually held before Christmas were postponed till February and the second term was extended two weeks. Looking back at this unhappy period at the end of the session, the writer of the Foreword in the 1919 *Annual* said:

The work of all classes was much disorganised and everyone felt a little out of poise. But it has been highly pleasing to see the mutual feeling between the Faculty and student body in attempting to regain that which was lost, and to make the present count for the most.

At the three war-time Congregations a total of 109 students received degrees, one of which was conferred in Applied Science on C. A. H. Wright in 1917, the others in Arts. Fourteen enlisted men received their degrees without examination. There were 40 graduates in 1916, 35 in 1917 and 34 in 1918. The First Congregation took place in the ballroom of the Hotel Vancouver, situated at the southwest corner of Georgia and Granville Streets; the other two Congregations were held in the newly-built University Auditorium-classroom building at Fairview. The Ceremonies Committee worked with the President to make the First Congregation, held on May 4, 1916, as impressive as possible. The entire student body was invited to join in the procession which included, besides the Graduating Class, members of Convocation, the University Faculty and Govern-

ing bodies and dignitaries of Church and State. At the head of the procession was D Company, 196th Battalion, under command of Major R. W. Brock. Robing rooms were provided in the Court House. From here the procession walked via Hornby and Georgia Streets to the Hotel entrance. Every seat in the Congregation hall was occupied. Five-minute addresses were given by the Chancellor, the Honourable F. L. Carter-Cotton; the Lieutenant-Governor, the Honourable Frank Barnard; the Premier the Honourable W. J. Bowser; the Honourable Henry Esson Young and Dean R. W. Brock. The Congregation address was delivered by Dr. H. M. Tory, then President of the University of Alberta, who had played so large a part in establishing McGill College of British Columbia. On rising to speak on "The Value of an Education," Dr. Tory was given a warm ovation. He "congratulated the University on the public interest evinced in its work," and declared that he "had never seen a graduation ceremony which had attracted such widespread attention of all classes of the community as had the first Congregation of U.B.C. He regarded this as a most hopeful augury for the future."⁸ Premier Bowser said that, although he had been a member of the Executive Council in Sir Richard McBride's Government, it was Dr. Young who had done the most to forward the interests of the University. "Dr. Young," he said, "was the father of the University." In expressing his congratulations and good wishes, Dr. Young "was sure that, no matter what Government might be in control of the affairs of the Province, the University would always receive sympathetic and generous consideration." The Governor-General's Medal, awarded to the head of the Graduating Class, was presented by President Wesbrook to Lennox Algernon Mills. In the evening, the Graduating Class were guests of honour at a dance in Lester Court, given by the Alma Mater Society. The actual ceremonial used at this first graduation has been followed, with minor changes, through all the intervening years. It was described a few days after graduation by one of the degree recipients as follows: "There wasn't much to the mere form of graduation. We simply marched up in a long line one after the other; Dr. Wesbrook put the hood over our shoulders and called out our name very loudly. Then we passed to the Chancellor who tapped us on the head and said, '*admitto te*;' then to Mr. Robinson who gave us our diploma and then on and around to our seats."⁹ A striking feature of the printed programme of Congregation was a list of 115 students and two Faculty members who had enlisted. At the 1917 Congregation Dean Robinson read the names of 29 students who had been killed in action; the names of 400 enlisted students were recorded on the programme—a reminder of the growing tragedy of war. An added solemnity was given the proceedings of this

8 *The Daily Province*, Friday, May 5, 1916.

9 Miss Ada Vermilyea, now Mrs. A. M. Menzies, in a private letter.

Death of President Wesbrook

Congregation by the sudden death in graduation week of Miss Pansy Munday, a brilliant Junior student, editor-in-chief of the monthly *Ubicsee*, and of the 1917 *Annual*.

These were indeed years of sorrow and of aching hearts, however successfully they might be concealed by a brave and cheerful countenance. For Dr. Wesbrook they were years, as well, of disappointment and futility as he strove to bring into being at Point Grey the University of his dreams in a community which lacked his enthusiasms and seemed at times to withhold, with indifference, the support he had been led to expect when he accepted the post of President. Gradually his seemingly inexhaustible resources of physical strength began to fail under the strain. After presenting his 1918-19 University budget on February 4, 1918, he fell ill and was absent from his office in the University for several weeks. Following Congregation on May 7, he visited Eastern Canada to attend the Conference of Canadian Universities and to interview possible appointees to the U.B.C. staff. On his return he was again forced by illness to relinquish his duties. Unable to attend the opening ceremony at the beginning of term, on September 25, he sent a warm letter of welcome and advice which the Acting-President, Dean Klinck, read to the assembled students. Dr. Wesbrook's health deteriorated rapidly and three weeks later he died at his home on October 19, 1918, three weeks before the Armistice. The funeral took place on October 22. He was 50.

Of the many tributes to his memory one of the most touching is that which recorded the sorrow of the University of Minnesota Medical School in the death of their former Dean:

The men and women of the Faculty who worked with him and knew him intimately for many years know . . . that a scientist in medicine who ranked among the marked men of his day is gone. But they know, too, that a leader whom they gladly followed, an administrator who directed with intelligent power the destinies of the School, a counsellor in whom they trusted, a friend of golden days gone by whom they loved, has passed into the Great Beyond.¹⁰

The students of U.B.C. felt they had lost a personal friend:

The breadth of the President's sympathy and his extremely lovable disposition endeared him to everyone with whom he came in contact. He was personally greatly interested in all the students and was an ardent supporter of student organisations. Intensely patriotic, he took an especial and personal interest in the student-soldiers, and kept in close touch with as many as possible.¹¹

Resolutions were passed by Faculty, Senate and Board poignantly expressing, for Dr. Wesbrook's University co-workers, their deep sense of loss. The Faculty

¹⁰ *Minnesota Alumni Weekly*, October 28, 1918.

¹¹ *Ubysey*, November 28, 1918.

had found in their President a man who, they felt, understood them individually and their work:

Perhaps nowhere did the true character of the President shine out more clearly than at the Council-table of Faculty, and in his relations with his colleagues. Here his ripe wisdom, sound judgment, wide outlook, and grasp of affairs were always apparent, but still more apparent was his simple manliness, the elevation of his moral aims, his unaffected kindness and cordiality, and his sympathy with every right and just cause. . . . He has passed away while his natural force was not abated and his mental vision undimmed, and the image of what manner of man he was in his strength will remain stamped on the minds of all who knew him.

The Senate resolution said, in part:

Coming amongst us with the most democratic conception of a University . . . he kept this view steadily before him and, so far as the financial depression would admit, laid a foundation broad and deep for a University worthy of our Province. . . . His scholarly attainment, his executive ability and his versatility of talent . . . were devoted unreservedly to the interests of the University.

The Board of Governors had shared more intimately than any others Wesbrook's struggles, successes and disappointments. Their resolution of sympathy read, in part:

The members of the Board of Governors of the University of British Columbia . . . desire to express their profound sense of the great loss that the University and the Province have sustained . . . During the too short period of his presidency much was accomplished, and though the ideal on which his heart was set is still far from achievement . . . he always met impediments with resolute courage and disappointments with manly fortitude.

The Board went on to express their feeling of personal bereavement in the loss of a friend and comrade as well as a leader. The resolution concluded:

Our deep sympathy goes to Mrs. Wesbrook and her daughter in this time of sorrow. We trust that they may find some consolation in the thought of Dr. Wesbrook's service here and elsewhere to his fellow men and in the assurance that must have come to them from many quarters that their grief is shared by all with whom he was associated in his work.¹²

Dean F. H. Soward has well summed up Wesbrook's aims and achievement and the esteem in which he was held by the community:

Dr. Wesbrook was to experience, like Moses, the disappointment of never entering the Promised Land towards which his eyes had turned in the stern war years. He had been obliged to see promises and plans postponed, mutilated or abandoned but he never ceased to hope or to work for the good of the University. In all the rush and worry of his duties in wartime he found time to correspond

¹² Mrs. Wesbrook survived her husband 39 years and witnessed the fruition of his labours. She continued to have a lively interest in the University, as she had done during his lifetime. She died on September 17, 1957, at the age of 90.

Tributes

personally with members of the staff and student body overseas, to lead in war efforts at home and to link the University as much as possible with the community. The choice of the people of Vancouver of the President as their chief orator on the annual day of remembrance, August 4, 1918, was an indication of how deeply his services were appreciated and utilised by his fellow citizens.¹³

¹³ Frederic H. Soward, B. Litt., Associate Professor of History, The University of British Columbia: *The Early History of the University of British Columbia*.



ALMA MATER SOCIETY
OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

VANCOUVER, CANADA

Students of the University of British Columbia:

We respectfully draw your attention to the following Resolution, which you enthusiastically supported at the Annual Alma Mater Meeting, April 7th, 1922.

RESOLUTION:

Moved by Mr. J. A. Grant, seconded by Mr. A. H. Finlay, that the Student Body of the University of British Columbia go on record as being in favour of a campaign of extension, and that we get behind and co-operate with the Students' Council in any plan that they may adopt or in any attitude that they may assume toward the suggestion that the University Students take some definite share in the Extension work of the University of British Columbia.

Carried unanimously

As a student of the University of British Columbia, you are asked to feel an individual responsibility in this campaign launched by the Students to hasten our move to Point Grey.

As your personal contribution to this movement you are asked during your summer vacation to obtain the signatures and addresses of twenty-five electors and mail the filled-out forms to the Alma Mater Society, University of B. C., by the end of July, if possible. To avoid duplication of names of electors, please be sure that they have not already signed a similar form.

The Petition is being sent out with you at vacation time in order that electors in every part of the Province may be reached. The results obtained in the Petition will be an indication of the attitude of the Student Body toward the campaign. It will give a more definite idea of the feeling of the Public Mind on this question and will serve as a guide for our future plans.

The obtaining of twenty-five names entails a comparatively small effort on your part. The combine effort means twenty-five thousand electors pledged to back the campaign. The Petition will be presented to the Provincial Government when the campaign is concluded next year.

If the forms are returned filled out it will be a great inspiration to "carry on." Is it worth while? That rests with you. Let us work hard to make it worth while. Get your twenty-five names.

Additional forms may be obtained from the University upon request.

Yours for the success of this Campaign,

A. E. RICHARDS
J. A. GRANT
A. H. FINLAY

Committee

This letter, signed by the Campaign Committee in the Spring of 1922, pictures the beginning of the Campaign to Build the University at Point Grey.