

---

## Centres of 'Home-Like Influence': Residences for Women at the University of Toronto

ALYSON E. KING

### Résumé

*Vers la fin du siècle dernier et début de ce siècle, l'opposition entre les rôles davantage publics des femmes et le concept persistant de femme au foyer s'est cristallisée dans la lutte en vue d'obtenir des résidences pour femmes à l'Université de Toronto et dans le dessin des locaux. Alors que la présence physique des premières résidences consacrait le droit des femmes à une éducation supérieure, leur conception les apparentait à de grandes maisons bourgeoises. Ces résidences offraient un logement sûr tout en permettant la surveillance et l'orientation des pensionnaires. Les femmes qui ont obtenu de haute lutte ces résidences et les ont aménagées cherchaient à créer un espace où les élèves de sexe féminin pourraient subir l'influence de « dames » chrétiennes cultivées. L'histoire des résidences pour femmes de l'Université de Toronto illustre la façon dont ces élèves étaient perçues aux débuts de l'enseignement supérieur des femmes.*

### Abstract

*At the turn of the century, the tension between women's increasingly public roles and the lingering idea of a strictly domestic sphere for women was played out in the struggle for and designs of women's residences at the University of Toronto. The physical presence of these early residences made concrete women's right to higher education, yet they were designed to resemble a large middle-class home. The residences provided safe accommodation, and, at the same time, allowed for the monitoring and guidance of the women. The women who fought for and organized the residences sought to create a space where women students could come under the moral influence of cultured, Christian "ladies." The history of the women's residences at the University of Toronto serves to highlight the ways in which women students were viewed in the early years of women's higher education.*

---

In 1910, at a meeting of the Victoria College Women's Residence and Educational Association (VWR&EA), the members were given a graphic description of a young woman student of Victoria College: "She came to Toronto, a stranger, and entered an ordinary boarding house. Through neglect and unwholesome surroundings she became a physical wreck and went home to die."<sup>1</sup> Stories such as this circulated around the University of Toronto from the time women were first admitted. Although concern was expressed over the lack of accommodation for women students and their welfare, provision of adequate residential facilities for women students progressed slowly.<sup>2</sup>

Residential life was, of course, only one aspect of the experience of some women university students, however the efforts to provide

residential facilities and the residences that were finally provided can illustrate the multiple ways university authorities viewed women students.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, while the eventual provision of residences showed that the university cared about the students, the details of the design and operation of those residences illustrates the growing desire to control the lives of the students. Often seen as a privilege, dormitories nonetheless increased the ability of university authorities to supervise the students. That women students were viewed in ways quite different from the men is clearly illustrated by the built environment, by the structures used to house the women.<sup>4</sup>

The University of Toronto (U of T) was, and still is, composed of federated colleges which, loosely described, provided the arts courses,

while the university provided the science and professional courses.<sup>5</sup> The three denominational colleges, Victoria, Trinity and St Michael's, and the one non-denominational college, University, were intimately concerned with the welfare of their students. The administrators of each saw their colleges as modelled upon Oxford and Cambridge, but in fact, they had little real resemblance to the British universities. Oxford and Cambridge were designed as residential universities. At the University of Toronto, except in the very early years, residential facilities were infrequently provided. When they were, they were often makeshift and quickly outgrown.

There has been little written on the history of Canadian university residences. When the residences were first built, they were celebrated and described in architectural and university journals. Then, in the 1960s when the universities were expanding rapidly, studies were done on existing residential facilities in order to determine the best way to proceed with new ones.<sup>6</sup> The studies conducted in the 1960s discussed, above all, the purpose of residential facilities on a university campus. First and foremost, of course, was the perceived need to provide shelter for students, especially in places where there were few alternatives like boarding houses. In addition, there was often a sense that the university had to morally and physically protect students who were away from the direct influence of their parents for the first time. Finally, in the case of the University of Toronto at least, there was the desire to emulate the designs of Oxford and Cambridge as residential universities.

Although it is difficult to directly compare the University of Toronto's residential facilities with those in the United States and Britain, two similarities stand out. Women's residences in the early years were designed, first, to provide the security and comforts of a home. Second, they were designed to provide women students with a space free of domestic responsibilities, to allow them to pursue their studies without distraction. Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, for example, has examined the design of American women's colleges in her book *Alma Mater*.<sup>7</sup> In it, she links the variations in design to the changing perceptions of women in general and college women in particular. The women's colleges in the United States were substantially larger than those in Canada and had much greater resources. Despite the similarities, this difference makes any

direct comparisons of the impulses behind particular designs difficult.

Carol Dyhouse's recent study of women at British universities brings to light the emphasis there on the "home-like" qualities of turn-of-the-century and early twentieth-century halls of residence for women students.<sup>8</sup> Canadian architectural historian Annmarie Adams has argued that the nurses' residences of Montreal's Royal Victoria Hospital illustrate a carefully negotiated compromise of private and public space and was heavily influenced by middle-class domestic design.<sup>9</sup> The women's buildings at U of T that were built specifically as residential space similarly reflect the careful planning of public common rooms, for receiving male guests, set well apart from the bedrooms. The two turn-of-the-century residences, Annesley Hall and the first St Hilda's College, were also designed to resemble a large family home. While it is not clear whether the American or British women's colleges had greater influence, the various women's building committees did consult the plans of women's residences in both countries.

A residence for women students was seen as essential not only to ensure the safety of the women, but also to provide moral and social guidance and to encourage collegial feelings. Life in a residence was intended to emulate the ideal of a middle-class family with the head of the residence supplying the moral and social guidance that the student's parents might normally have provided. The idea of higher education for women was made concrete by the physical structure of a building for women students. Indeed one student writing in the University College women students' newspaper, *Sesame*, in 1900 inextricably linked college dormitories to the movement for women's higher education. Dormitories, she argued, were necessary as "centres of home-like influence bringing comfort and social pleasure to brighten the lives of the students during those marked years of strenuous mental growth."<sup>10</sup>

Others saw residences for women as necessary for their protection. One 1903 editorial in the student paper *Acta Victoriana* commented that because young women could not rough it like a man in the boarding houses, residences were required to minimize the dangers of life away from home.<sup>11</sup> Even in 1929, a graduate of Victoria College wrote in the *University of Toronto Monthly* that while a residence for men was hardly more than a dormitory, a residence for women should be a real home.<sup>12</sup>

Although the rhetoric regarding the physical and moral protection of women students was predominant in discussions regarding residences, some women students rejected the opportunity to live in residence because they felt they would lose the freedoms they had in boarding houses.<sup>13</sup> For the purposes of this paper, I will focus on the public rhetoric of those who fought to provide residences for women and the physical results of those efforts. I use the term "residence" to refer to both purpose-built facilities and to houses renovated by the university or the colleges to accommodate women students.<sup>14</sup> The purpose-built residences were permanent measures, while I consider the renovated houses to be temporary, even when they were used for many years. The records detail the varying views regarding residences for women and the steps taken to provide such facilities. Expressed throughout was the desire to provide a home away from home for the women students.

### **The First Residences<sup>15</sup>**

The biggest differences between the men's and women's residences appeared on the exterior. In terms of size, the men's residences were substantially larger and used styles similar to the traditional Collegiate Gothic or Romanesque styles set by the original buildings. Perhaps reflecting the desire to provide a home-like atmosphere for women students, the women's residences were built on a smaller scale than the men's and more closely resembled houses. Apart from the size, the general floor plans of the men's residences were much the same as those of the women's, with the exception of the original University College men's residence. A second difference was in the increased common room space for the women. In examining these differences, it is important to consider both the architect and the period during which each residence was built.

The University of Toronto was originally planned as a residential college. A small number of men students were still occupying this original residence in the 1880s when women students were first admitted. After the residence was closed in 1899,<sup>16</sup> the men joined the women in the yearly rounds of boarding houses. The University of Toronto never regained the position of truly being a residential university — it was only during U of T's very early years that all students could be housed within the confines of the university. The men's

residence for University College was not replaced until 1926 when 73 St George Street, former home of Sir Daniel Wilson, was purchased for the men's use.<sup>17</sup> The University of Toronto residence on Devonshire Place was opened in 1908 for men in all of the university's faculties. Victoria College had had a men's residence in its early years in Cobourg, Ontario. With the college's move to Toronto in 1892, the Victoria men were no longer provided with accommodation.

In the meantime, women students at Victoria College had a new residence, Annesley Hall, by 1903, and University College women resided in Queen's Hall after 1905. From its founding in 1888, St Hilda's College provided a residence for women attending Trinity College, which already had a men's residence. Catholic women students did not have facilities of their own until after Loretto and St Joseph's Colleges affiliated with St Michael's College in 1911. They were, however, able to enroll in one of the other affiliated colleges. For several years at Victoria and University Colleges, women had residences when the men did not. Although many of the interim women's facilities were palatial mansions, they were temporary measures often endured for many years before permanent residences were built. Even then, the permanent women's residences were never built on the same scale as the men's, and they were quickly outgrown.

The external appearances of the first U of T women's residences were quite different from those of the men's. It was not until new residences were built in the 1930s that any similarities in style become apparent. The original men's residence at University College was built as part of the college in the 1850s. This first university building was designed by Cumberland and Storm in a Romanesque style.<sup>18</sup> It drew on an eclectic mixture of other styles that, in the end, produced, as Anthony Trollope described, "a manly, noble structure."<sup>19</sup> The grandeur of University College reflects the importance placed on education in the middle of the nineteenth century and the aspirations to model the U of T on British universities.<sup>20</sup> The residence rooms were generous in size, contained stone mantelpieces and built-in closets, and had the luxury of a watercloset in the basement. The residence design followed the traditional English plan for college rooms with multiple staircases that did not allow for internal circulation from staircase to staircase.<sup>21</sup> No other residence at U of T, for either the women or the men, was ever built along these lines.

Founded in 1888, St Hilda's College held its own charter and was intended to provide higher education for women in affiliation with the Anglican men's college, Trinity.<sup>22</sup> At first, women students attended honours lectures at Trinity and pass lectures at St Hilda's, which was located in a series of houses near Trinity College. In 1894, Trinity opened all of its lectures to women and St Hilda's became a residential and social centre for women attending Trinity College lectures.<sup>23</sup> St Hilda's College built its first "permanent" residence in 1899 — one of the first in Canada built for that specific purpose.<sup>24</sup> After Trinity and St Hilda's moved to the St George campus in 1925, it was thirteen years before another residence for Trinity women was built, and an additional two before the Trinity men's residence was built in 1940.

St Hilda's first purpose-built residence was located within the Trinity College grounds on Queen Street West near Gore Vale. Designed by Eden Smith "with suggestions from Mary Elizabeth Strachan,"<sup>25</sup> it is a good illustration of Eden Smith's style of house, often described as "English cottage." Unfortunately, I have not been able to find floor plans for St Hilda's College dating from these early years. The only ones I have found for that building are retrospectives, dating from 1983, almost ninety years after it was built. The 1983 plans, however, do show a classical floor plan with bedrooms off a central hallway.<sup>26</sup> The building was described by Mabel Cartwright, the second Dean of Women at St Hilda's, in this way:

*Situated on the northwest corner of Trinity's grounds, the windows of its long front looked south, so that the sun poured into many of the rooms, while north and east sides looked out upon the picturesque Gore Vale ravine. A distinctive feature, adding much to the sense of spaciousness of the whole building, was the main stair case, a gift from Dr Jones. The student's rooms, well lighted and comfortable, many with attractive small fire-places, were naturally the centre of much of the social life of the undergraduates; the L-shaped dining room and common rooms with their folding doors could easily be thrown into one; while the large, well-lighted kitchen and pantry, opening from the dining room, were efficiently planned for the serving of meals.<sup>27</sup>*

In addition, there was an infirmary, library, students' common room and a chapel. From the outside, the residence had the appearance of a

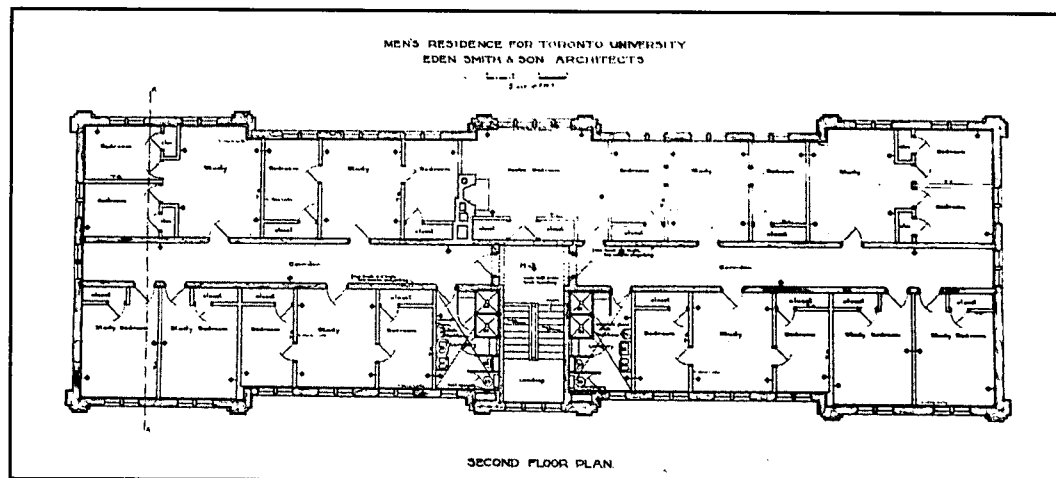
large private house.<sup>28</sup> Indeed, in 1912, St Hilda's principal stated that the aim had always been to preserve the atmosphere of the home.<sup>29</sup> The architect, Eden Smith, was a prominent Anglican and his designs were very popular in Toronto at that time. This, combined with his revolutionary style, makes it unsurprising that he was chosen to design St Hilda's College.

Eden Smith's designs were considered revolutionary in Toronto because they ignored the traditional floor plan of the English detached house. His houses were usually planned to maximize exposure to the sun and access to the gardens — a plan that seems perfect for St Hilda's setting in Gore Vale.<sup>30</sup> This home-like style was very much in contrast with the much more ornate Trinity College, so much so that it caused comment. The Reverend C. B. Kenrick, in 1903, described the style of St Hilda's as severely simple in comparison to the Tudor style of Trinity College with its "graceful pinnacles and cupolas" that gave it such charm. He nevertheless felt that it was "in every way suited to its purpose as a home for young ladies attending lectures at Trinity."<sup>31</sup> Indeed, the new hall was small enough to preserve a "home-like" atmosphere and to maintain personal contact with the students.

The image of a "home" in the design of St Hilda's is emphasized when compared with Eden Smith's other university residence, the University's men's residence on Devonshire Place. Originally built in 1908, plans dated 1917 show Eden Smith as the architect. This residence is much larger than St Hilda's, and although not as ornate as some of the other men's buildings, it is more imposing than any of the women's. It is composed of three houses surrounding a courtyard. The fourth side of the court is Devonshire Place. Inside, it has a central corridor like the women's residences. Off it were some study-bedrooms and, unlike the women's buildings, some suites were also built. The suites consisted of a study and two bedrooms off the study. The main floor had a common room with a fireplace (Fig. 1). The corresponding rooms on the upper floors were double bedrooms, but still had the fireplace.

In comparison with the women's residences, there was less emphasis on providing communal space.<sup>32</sup> New common rooms were, however, built in 1923 and 1924.<sup>33</sup> It is interesting to note that in 1913, a resident wrote that most men preferred not to share a suite, even though each had their own bedroom. As a result, several of the suites were converted into single

**Fig. 1**  
*Devonshire House, the University of Toronto's Men's Residence, designed by Eden Smith and built in 1908. Second floor plan, ca 1917. (University of Toronto Archives, 12.23, A65-0004)*



rooms. He also complained that the benefits of a residence were limited because so few men could be accommodated, and because there was little opportunity for the socializing that could be provided by a residence dining room.<sup>34</sup>

Criticisms such as these may have influenced the designs of the later women's residences since none of them had suites and all had dining facilities. These two buildings by Eden Smith were designed almost ten years apart in two very different locations. St Hilda's College was located in a park-like setting quite apart from the main university buildings. When the men's residence was built, it was located just north of the main university buildings and was probably planned to resemble those buildings. Although this residence was much like others for men, only two years after it was built, Professor V. E. Henderson commented that the buildings were both hideous in colour and lacking in style.<sup>35</sup>

The Victoria College women's residence, Annesley Hall, was built in 1903, eleven years after the move from Cobourg to Toronto, but ten years before the Victoria men's residence was constructed. From the time planning for a Victoria College women's residence finally began with the formation in 1897 of the Barbara Heck Memorial Association<sup>36</sup> by prominent Methodist women, such as Margaret Proctor Burwash, wife of Victoria College's Chancellor, all aspects of the lives of the women students came under scrutiny. The members of the association aimed to generally promote the interests of the college and to advance the cause of women's education within the Methodist Church.<sup>37</sup> But they also intended to provide the guidance that they felt the students were missing by living away from home. After Hart

Massey bequeathed \$50,000 to the Board of Regents of Victoria College for the erection of a women's residence, they examined the buildings of many other women's residences across Canada, the United States and England, including Toronto's St Hilda's College and Cambridge's Newnham College. The resulting plans illustrate the desire to provide a safe, home-like space for the women to live in (Fig. 2).

Designed by George M. Miller, Annesley Hall was a domestic-looking, red brick and cut stone, Jacobean building located on the east side of University Avenue, just south of Bloor Street. Two residences examined by the VWR&EA, St Hilda's College and Newnham College (in England), although quite different in style, leaned more towards the domestic style of architecture than the institutional Gothic that was popular at the time. Some aspects of Newnham's Queen Anne style seem to be reflected in Annesley's design.<sup>38</sup> Newnham, like Annesley, was designed to be aesthetically pleasing and comfortable.

Annesley Hall was planned to be more than simply a residence; it was to become a centre for all women students at Victoria College. Non-resident women were encouraged to use Annesley Hall through, for example, lowered costs of meals.<sup>39</sup> Every effort seems to have been made to make the students comfortable and to provide adequate facilities. On the north side of Annesley was a lawn and facilities for playing tennis, croquet and basketball. The Victoria College Athletic Field lay to the east, and Victoria College and Queen's Park were to the south. Exposure to light and sun were maximized. Forty single rooms and eight doubles were provided on the second and third floors. The ground floor of Annesley Hall





**Fig. 2**  
Annesley Hall, corner of Queen's Park and Charles St (formerly Czar St), the Victoria College women's residence, was built in 1903 and is still in use. (University of Toronto Archives, 53.1, A65-0004)



**Fig. 3**  
The Household Science building, University Avenue just south of Bloor St W. Both this building and Annesley Hall were designed by the same architect, George M. Miller. (University of Toronto Archives, 15.2, A65-0004)

contained offices, sitting rooms, a library and a kitchen, as well as rooms for receptions, assemblies, dining, and music. The students' rooms were designed to be both a study and a bedroom. There were no suites of rooms. To compensate for the lack of adequate university facilities, Annesley also had a small gymnasium in the basement, and an infirmary on the second floor.

The students were not provided with luxuries or waited upon by the staff. Indeed, at both Annesley and St Hilda's, although basic furniture and bedding were supplied, students had to provide their own towels, curtains, and napkin ring. They were also advised to bring a silver teaspoon and a glass for use in their rooms. The fees for Annesley Hall, \$132 for double rooms and between \$165 and \$200 for single rooms, included the cost of a doctor's

examination and physical culture classes. Although there were maids, the students were expected to do a minimum amount of house-keeping. The students took care of their own laundry (not including bed linen), either by using the Hall laundry facilities on Saturdays or by making arrangements to send it out.<sup>40</sup> They were also expected to keep their own rooms neat and tidy. The household staff took care of the more time-consuming tasks, but the students were admonished not to impose on them.

There was concern, too, that students not spend too much time with the servants. In the Annex in 1907, the Superintendent, Mary Sheffield, reported that the laundry arrangements brought the students into too close a contact with the maids, encouraging "an undesirable intimacy" and making it difficult

to keep the students out of the kitchen (where the ironing was done) at other times. She recommended that the students not be allowed the use of the laundry in the future.<sup>41</sup> There were very clear class lines established between the students and the staff.

Although the women planning and running the residence argued that it was to provide a home away from home for the students, it is clear that the type of home being provided was intended to be of an upper-middle-class standard. The women were not waited upon by the servants, but nor were they encouraged to associate too closely with them. Similarly, the style of the building was much grander than what most of the students would have called home.<sup>42</sup> With this in mind, it is interesting to compare the style of Annesley Hall with that of the Household Science Building (Fig. 3). Although built for different purposes, both were designed only a few years apart, for women students, by the same architect.

While Annesley Hall reflects the idea of women's buildings being a home away from home, the Household Science Building was quite different. It is in a Greek style with Ionic pillars to give it "a simple but dignified appearance,"<sup>43</sup> but it seems very far from the image that might be expected for a building used to train women for their work in the home. The building is both beautiful and imposing. Its founder, Lillian Massey Treble, believed that the beauty of the building would help students appreciate beautiful things and its grandeur "would give to the study of household the dignity and standing it deserved."<sup>44</sup> The women who came together to design and plan all of these buildings were often from the more prestigious Toronto families. They came with the intention of raising the standards of the women students, their denomination, and, ultimately, Canadian society as a whole.

### Temporary Measures

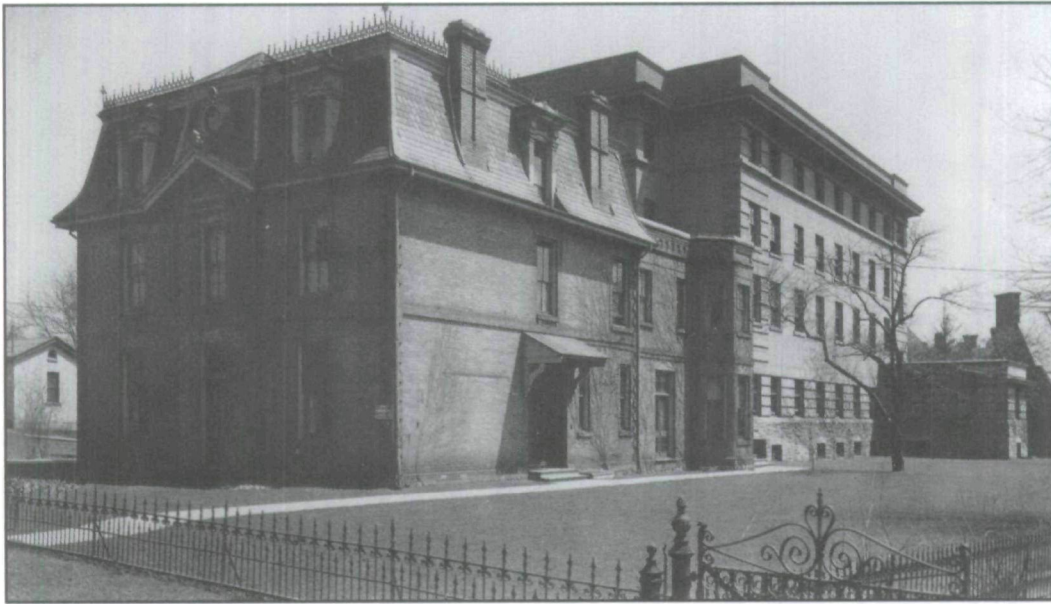
Although women at Trinity and Victoria Colleges had proper residences quite early, women at all the colleges had to deal with temporary measures for quite long periods of time. Indeed, women at University College only knew makeshift residences, collectively known as Queen's Hall, until 1930 when Whitney Hall was built. Both Annesley Hall and St Hilda's College were quickly outgrown and the overflow was housed in temporary accommodations for a number of years. Similarly, Loretto and

St Joseph's Colleges used temporary measures for an extended period until they built specifically designed residences in the 1950s. For the purposes of this paper, I consider temporary measures to be houses that were renovated to provide accommodation for the women students, as opposed to buildings built specifically as university residences. Although these houses often had many inconveniences, they were usually quite beautiful and were originally built as large homes.

The need for a women's residence for University College was discussed quite early. In 1894, for example, efforts to provide a women's residence at the University of Toronto were reported in the Toronto newspapers. One article pointed out that in Toronto, Trinity University had St Hilda's and McMaster had Moulton College, while the provincial university had none at all. A women's residence was supported because the "co-education principle, which has been so successful, [was] not to be abandoned, wholly or partially."<sup>45</sup> However, it was not until the 1930s that a residence was built specifically for women students at University College.

In order to alleviate some of the difficulties faced by the women students living in boarding houses, a lunch room was set up in 1900, and in 1901, the student newspaper *Sesame*, reported that Miss Salter, University College's Lady Superintendent, had rented a house and taken in a few women students.<sup>46</sup> Then in 1904, the university took possession of the Howland residence at 7 Queen's Park and renovated it for use as a women's residence, eventually known as Queen's Hall (Figs. 4 and 5). Donations were received for the furnishing of the house and Mrs John Campbell, the widow of a McGill professor, was appointed as superintendent.<sup>47</sup> In 1911, the old medical library at 9 Queen's Park was taken over as an annex to Queen's Hall.<sup>48</sup> Soon after, Queen's Hall also referred to the house at 4 Queen's Park. However, only a small portion of the women students could be housed there. Even in 1908, the *Globe* reported that only fifty of the 238 women registered at University college could be accommodated in Queen's Hall.<sup>49</sup> In the fall of 1918, a new women's residence opened at 100 Queen's Park with the name Argyll House. It was established through the efforts of University College and the Faculty of Medicine and had room for thirty-one women. The university loaned the building, but left its furnishing in the hands of a "committee of interested women." In 1923, the house





**Fig. 4**  
Queen's Hall, 7 Queen's Park, was used as the University College women's residence from 1904 to 1930. It was formerly a private residence belonging to the Howland family. (University of Toronto Archives, 13.1, A65-0004)

**Fig. 5**  
A student's room in Queen's Hall, the University College women's residence. (University of Toronto Archives, 13.5, A65-0004)

was taken over by the university to house women in Arts, Medicine and Science. In 1930, Argyll House was torn down in order to provide room for the Museum Annex.<sup>50</sup> Hutton House was opened at 94 St George Street in 1919, and by 1930, had extended to include 92 St George Street. The University of Toronto Faculty Residence at 85 St George Street became the University College Women's Union in 1916. Finally, in 1930, Whitney Hall was built in that space and the Women's Union moved to 79 St George Street.<sup>51</sup>

In the meantime, while the campaign for a women's residence continued, many University College women continued to live in boarding houses. Newspapers reported the great inconvenience women students faced in having to find a new boarding house every year. Lists of boarding houses were compiled by the YMCA and, by 1911, also by the wives of University College professors. In addition, Miss Salter, the Lady Superintendent, continued to maintain a list of approved boarding houses for women students at University College.<sup>52</sup>

St Hilda's College used temporary facilities at three times. From the time it first opened and until the main St Hilda's building was constructed in 1899, the college used various houses in the vicinity of Trinity College; again from 1912 when the main building had become too small; and then again, in 1925, when Trinity and St Hilda's moved up to the main university campus. By 1912, there were fifty-three students residing in St Hilda's. With the main building too small, the students were



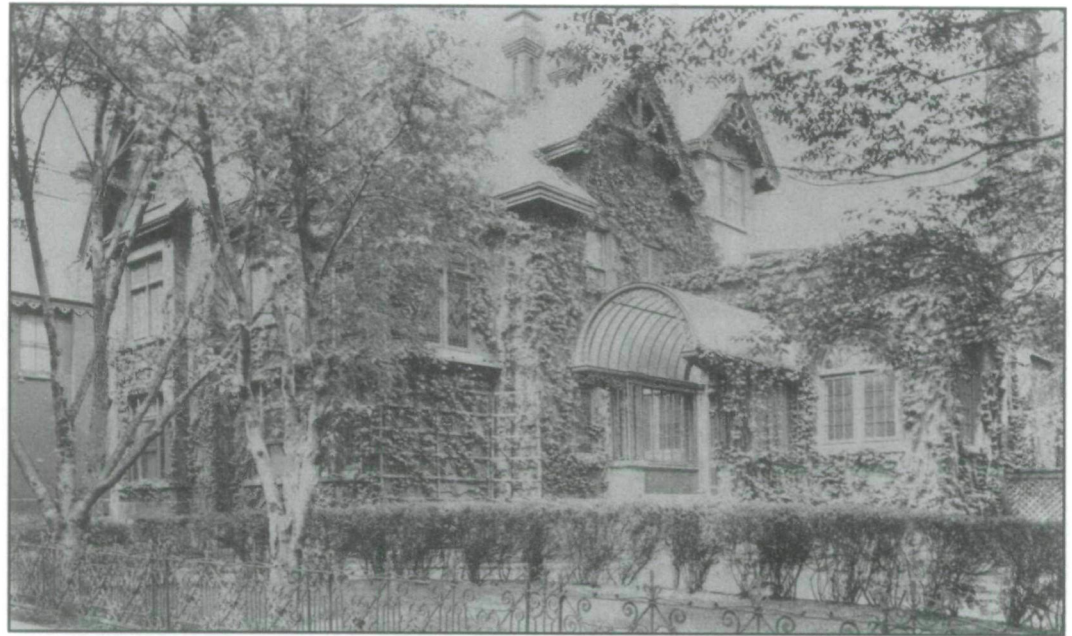
distributed between it and two nearby houses. The students in the two houses used the library, dining and reception rooms in the main building. Because they were anticipating a future move to the main university campus, the administration did not want to spend money on additions to St Hilda's College. Mabel Cartwright expressed great dissatisfaction with the arrangement, but seemed resigned to its necessity as a temporary measure.<sup>53</sup>

Temporary measures were to be the fate of St Hilda's students until 1938. When Trinity and St Hilda's finally moved north to join



**Fig. 6**

"Long Garth," 99 St George St, a temporary women's residence for St Hilda's College students. Originally built in 1882 for Robert Ramsay Wright, Professor of Biology, it had also been owned by Sir Edmund Walker. In 1960, it was torn down to build a parking lot. (University of Toronto Archives, 60.45, A65-0004)



the rest of the University of Toronto in 1925, the women resided in houses on St George Street until the new residence was finally built on Devonshire Place (Fig. 6). Although the facilities were adequate, they not only lost the privacy of the gardens that had surrounded their former home, but also many of the pleasant features of a building specifically designed as a residence for college women.<sup>54</sup>

University authorities at that time continually complained about the number and types of activities in which the students participated, so the proposed move to St George Street caused concern over more than simply the problems of creating a new residence. In an undated memorandum, St Hilda's Alumnae expressed concern that such a move would make St Hilda's considerably inferior to other women's residences by exposing the women students to greater temptations and thereby reducing the more intimate family-type atmosphere. They listed three concerns. First, they felt the women would be compromised

*...not only by proximity to the thousands of men students frequenting the University buildings, but much more by its very close quarters to the hundreds living in Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges, in the University dormitories, in the Fraternity House, and to the multitudes constantly passing to and from the Athletic Field. The publicity and increases of restrictions necessitated by such a situation, must exercise an injurious effect.*

Second, they felt that the number in residence (fifty) had reached the maximum that could be handled with efficiency. Finally, the memorandum supported the decision by the authorities not to allow sororities into the residence.<sup>55</sup>

The St Hilda's alumnae were clearly reluctant to expose the women undergraduates to the temptations of the larger university community. The 1899 St Hilda's residence had been quite secluded from the rest of the university, so the move to St George Street would indeed bring them into much closer contact with the rest of the undergraduate student body. There seemed also to be a fear that they were tampering with a good thing. The alumnae felt that the system in existence was the best, arguing that, as a result of the 1899 arrangements,

*[w]e can point to a loyal and united body of graduates and undergraduate members; to a number of graduates doing excellent work throughout the country in positions of great responsibility; to a good bill of health for the residence; to a high standing in the class lists; above all to an admirable and distinctive type of young womanhood.<sup>56</sup>*

The alumnae concluded that St Hilda's had developed a system of residence that was admired by and provided a model for other women's residences. Its loss, they felt, would place St Hilda's students at a disadvantage. However, it was not until 1938 that St Hilda's had a new residence.

At Victoria College, the need for temporary accommodation became increasingly urgent as the number of women students grew and Annesley Hall became overcrowded. Between 1906 and 1930, additional residence space was acquired through the rental, at different times, of at least six neighbouring houses. These houses, while supervised by Margaret Addison, were managed daily by women graduates or other "suitable persons." In October 1906, the Drynan residence, 75 Queen's Park at the corner of Park Drive, was opened as the Annesley Hall Annex (later called South House) under the supervision of Mary Sheffield. It had space for twenty-three students, but four of the spaces were taken by Professor and Mrs Reynar who occupied the large drawing room and paid what four students would have paid.<sup>57</sup> In 1910, there was further discussion about the advisability of renting more houses or trying to build an entirely new building.<sup>58</sup> In September 1912, the Bloor House Annex opened at 97 Bloor Street West, under Miss Patterson.

By 1913, ten years after the opening of Annesley Hall, the Victoria Women's Association (VWA) continued to maintain a list of approved boarding houses, but only a few were good enough to be included. In that year, Miss Addison reported that there were 95 women students living in the four residences: 58 in Annesley, 23 in South Hall, 9 in Bloor House and 5 in the Annex on Charles Street.<sup>59</sup> Residents ate at both Annesley Hall and South Hall. However, women students living in boarding houses continued to be a concern. In January 1914, when it was reported that twenty-four students were living in unsatisfactory boarding houses, the VWA decided to have individual members befriend one or two of the students and give them the personal attention that was not available at a boarding house.<sup>60</sup>

This move suggests that the members of the VWA were concerned that the women students were coming under inappropriate influence from the women who ran the boarding houses and the other residents. Again, there was a desire to ensure that the women both did not suffer and were not negatively influenced because they were away from the supervision of their parents. The increasing number of women at Victoria, however, caused something of a dilemma for the Victoria Women's Association. On the one hand, they tried to include all Victoria women in their sphere of influence by encouraging those in boarding houses to share meals in the Annesley Hall dining room. On the

other hand, it was felt that this increase in numbers resulted in the loss of a "family spirit."<sup>61</sup>

Although collegial or familial spirit may have been disrupted by the separation of students into rented houses, the sense of family may have been easier to maintain in the Annexes where fewer students were housed. In 1914, Miss Patterson's language when she thanked the committee for appointing her highlights that the rhetoric of the family was pervasive even beyond the organizing committee. She assured them that she had "derived very great pleasure in the performance of [her] duties as mother of this very large family of eight."<sup>62</sup> In 1918, Oak Lawn at 113 Bloor Street, the former residence of Margaret and Nathanael Burwash, was opened as an additional residence. In 1920, the head of Oak Lawn was Cornelia Harcum. She came to Toronto to work at the Royal Ontario Museum. Although she was wary of taking on too much work, she found the "offer of such a comfortable home with college girls [...] difficult to resist."<sup>63</sup> In the summer of 1922, the Committee decided to again rent the "Annex," 81 Charles Street, for five years and to take over 79 Charles Street West.<sup>64</sup> By 1923, there were 277 women enrolled at Victoria College,<sup>65</sup> and in 1926, there were 313 women students, with 152 in residence.<sup>66</sup> In 1928, the number of women at Victoria had risen to 405, with 209 in residence.<sup>67</sup> Then, in 1930, with 540 women students in the College, an additional building, Pugsley House, was rented so that 213 women could be in residence.<sup>68</sup>

In 1913, Victoria College erected a men's residence and dining hall. Built to the north and east of Victoria College in a late Gothic Revival style with rough grey stone, they were designed by the architectural firm of Sproatt and Rolph and resembled the traditional style of men's residence more than the main Victoria building. The 1911-12 *Victoria College Bulletin* described the plans as intending "to produce a structure genuinely academic in feeling." At the same time, it was not meant to be a "slavish imitation of Oxford buildings." The architects used an adaptation suitable for Canadian conditions. As a result, instead of the stair-case system, the plans called for separate houses, each containing thirty students.<sup>69</sup> However, this men's residence was also quickly outgrown. The women living at South House and the Annex were displaced in 1926 and 1927, respectively, by the men. Some thirty of the women were accommodated in the newly opened Wymilwood, but it is unclear where the remainder

were housed.<sup>70</sup> Little comment was made in the student paper beyond pointing out that the opening of Wymilwood really did not provide additional housing for the women.

With the gift in 1925 of the original "Wymilwood" by Mr and Mrs E. R. Wood, women students at Victoria College were provided with magnificent facilities for a Women's Union. A second gift of \$50,000 from Lady Flavelle, provided a similar amount could be raised by the VWA, allowed for the renovation of Wymilwood so that a Students' Union could be housed on the ground floor, residence space could be provided on the two upper floors, and it could be furnished throughout.<sup>71</sup> The establishment of a union also provided facilities for non-resident women students to have a hot meal at lunch time, as well as a place for all women students to gather between classes and in the evening. It went a long way to helping with Margaret Addison's goal of encouraging a collegial atmosphere among all of the Victoria women. When the earlier women students' union at Victoria, established in 1917 through the conversion of part of South Hall, displaced many of the third year women, it was argued that a union allowed all women outside of residence to find "a home-like, social centre and three good, substantial, nourishing meals a day."<sup>72</sup>

The women's residence at Victoria College was intended to provide the young women with an example of a wholesome, but cultured, Christian home that would ultimately benefit themselves personally and Canadian society as a whole when the women graduates went out to work and eventually set up homes of their own. Margaret Addison lauded the achievements of the women's efforts in creating a successful women's residence. In 1908, at an open meeting of the VWR&EA, she claimed that Annesley Hall was an institution of which Methodism might be justly proud. It was successful both financially and in attracting residents, and more importantly, in providing a "wholesome home atmosphere and religious spirit."<sup>73</sup> In 1909, the Dean of Residence reported that a pleasing feature in the life of the residence was

*the democratic spirit in which the rich and poor share alike in societies, and which causes those who have had greater opportunities to share them with those of lesser ones. The moral tone has exceeded that of previous years, the young women acquit themselves well. The number of religious organizations seem,*

*however, rather to dull than to inspire the deepest spiritual life.*<sup>74</sup>

By 1910, the VWR&EA was trying to raise funds in order to provide scholarships to enable more women to live in residence. At one meeting, a Miss Carman outlined the story of the young woman who lived in a boarding house while studying in Toronto, which I referred to in the introduction. Carman used this story to illustrate the need for a scholarship fund to make residence in the Hall possible for every woman student in Victoria College, to protect them from similar fates, and to "give our girls every advantage of a cultured, Christian home."<sup>75</sup> Later that year, a speaker at a VWR&EA meeting argued that there was "no safer place spiritually than Victoria College." He went on to emphasize the value for the nation of educating women. Of the 150 women at Victoria, many would become teachers. Who, he asked, could do "more to raise the standard of the Nation than our teachers." Indeed, he claimed that there was no nobler army of martyrs.<sup>76</sup>

The Anglican women had St Hilda's College and the Methodist women had Annesley Hall, but it was not until 1911 that Catholic women had a residence of their own at the University of Toronto. Until that time, any Catholic women who attended the university did so through University College or one of the other colleges. By affiliating with St Michael's College, both St Joseph's and Loretto Colleges came into being as separate teaching colleges for Catholic women students. Until 1910, even the men at St Michael's College had to register with University College if they wanted to pursue a university arts program.<sup>77</sup> Both Loretto and St Joseph's provided university courses as well as women's residences. In their preparation for the establishment of women's colleges, the Sisters of both orders, like the Methodist and Anglican women, spent much time gathering information about other similar colleges in Canada (including St Hilda's College and its affiliation with Trinity College), the United States and Britain.<sup>78</sup> They received visitors from other communities, as well as travelling to visit established Catholic colleges. Both the St Joseph's and Loretto Sisters pursued the goal of separate affiliation with the University of Toronto at the same time. The compromise solution was that both orders affiliated with St Michael's College, rather than running as

**Table 1**

**Chronology of Women's Residences at the University of Toronto**

**St Hilda's College**

1888-89	48 Euclid Ave
1889-92	Shaw St (north of Argyle St)
1892-99	?
1899-1925	868 [now #790] Queen St W. (designed for St Hilda's by Eden Smith, on the grounds of old Trinity College). The Annex built ca 1911, known also as St Hilda's Lodge
1925-30	99 St George St ("Long Garth," purchased from Sir Edmund Walker's estate; built in 1882 for Robert Ramsay Wright, Professor of Biology; torn down in the 1960s for a parking lot)
1927-35?	101 St George St
1930	111-113 St George St, St Hilda's College Women's Residence
1938-present	St Hilda's College, located on Devonshire Place
1940-present	Trinity College men's residence built, attached to the main Trinity College building.

**Victoria College**

1903-present	Annesley Hall, at the northeast corner of Queen's Park and Charles St W. (formerly Czar St)
1906-17	South Hall, 75 Queen's Park (formerly John Drynan's residence)
1906-18	113 Bloor St W., owned by Victoria College and, prior to 1906, used as Chancellor Burwash's residence (formerly the residence of Lady Matilda Edgar)
1910-present	Birge-Carnegie Library, southeast corner of Queen's Park and Charles St W.
1913-present	Burwash Hall and Victoria Men's Residences, Queen's Park, just east of the main Victoria College building
1912-14	Bloor House, 97 Bloor St W. (several owners, before and after use as residence, including use as a cake shop in 1930)
1914-27	The Annex, 81 Charles St (rented from F. C. Stephenson)
1917-20	South Hall converted into student union and residence
1918-39?	Oak Lawn, 113 Bloor St W., used as a women's residence
1920-21	South Hall reverted to residence
1922-27	The Annex, 79 Charles St W. (rented from F. C. Stephenson)
1926-27	South Hall used as men's residence
1926-59?	Wymilwood, 84 Queen's Park (donated by Mr and Mrs E. R. Wood for use as a Victoria College Women's Union; also used part of building as a women's residence in 1930)
1927-28	South Hall used as administrative offices
1927-?	The Annex, 79-81 Charles St W. (also used as a men's residence)
1930	Waldie House, 127 Bloor St W.
1931	Emmanuel College built on the site of South Hall
1959-present	Margaret Addison Hall, Charles St W.
1959?-present	A new Wymilwood built, Charles St W., just southeast of Annesley Hall



### **University College**

1904-30	Queen's Hall, 7 Queen's Park (formerly the Howland residence)
1911-30	Queen's Hall, 9 Queen's Park
?-1930	4 Queen's Park, University College Women's Residence
1914-16	University of Toronto Faculty Residence, 85 St George St
1916-30	University College Women's Union, 85 St George St
1918-23	Argyll House, 100 Queen's Park (1923-30, used as a University of Toronto residence for women medical students; torn down for building of an annex for the Royal Ontario Museum)
1919-?	Hutton House, 94 St George St
1929-present	University College Women's Union, 79 St George St
1930-present	Whitney Hall, 85 St George St

### **Loretto Abbey College**

1901-12	9-31 Wellington Place
1905-12	9-33 Wellington Place
1912-20	389-403 Wellington St W.
1922	389-417 Wellington St W.
1923-29	389-417 Wellington St W. and 387-398 Brunswick Ave (College and Day School)
1930	387-389 Brunswick Ave (College only)

### **St Joseph's College**

1917-22	25 Queen's Park
1922-23	66 St Albans St
1923-28	89 Breadalbane St
1928-50s?	29 Queen's Park Cres.

### **Other Residences**

1920-30	University of Toronto Women's Residence, 92-94 St George St
1920s-30	Wallingford Hall, McMaster University, 95 St George St

colleges independently affiliated with the University of Toronto.<sup>79</sup>

In the Loretto Abbey College *Annual Report* for 1913–14, there were eighteen Loretto students enrolled at St Michael's College. Residential accommodations, it was reported, had been improved that year by setting aside a corridor in St Theresa's House for some of the university students. This area contained "a common room and several private or semi-private rooms" that allowed for increased comfort and liberty, and improved conditions for study. A small dining room was adequate for the college students, but they anticipated a need for greater accommodation for the coming year when numbers were expected to increase. The report also explained that a "code of rules suitable for women, not children" had been adopted. Among the students, a spirit of comradeship and mutual respect was apparent, and was promoted by various kinds of inter-class events. Spiritual life was also stressed through attendance at daily Mass and a weekly conference and benediction. Loretto Abbey College (LAC) students that year, it was reported, began to take an interest in Settlement Work and to show a zeal for study.<sup>80</sup>

Loretto Abbey College suffered several temporary homes before it had a residence built in the 1950s. When LAC was first affiliated with St Michael's, it was located on Wellington Place. Between 1912 and 1922, the college was housed in several buildings on Wellington Street West. The LAC *Announcement* for 1920–21 described the new building on Brunswick Avenue as leaving nothing to be desired in terms of rooms, light, heat and general comfort. In 1923, college students lived at both Wellington Street and at Brunswick Avenue. By 1930, the college had sole possession of the Brunswick Avenue buildings.<sup>81</sup> It was not until 1937 that two houses on St George Street began to be used, and 1959 that the residence on St Mary Street was built. For students resident in the College on both Wellington Street and Brunswick Avenue, the distance of the college from the university continued to be a major disadvantage, but apparently, one which was accepted cheerfully.<sup>82</sup> But the main meeting place of the LAC students on the university campus was eventually the Newman Club for Catholic students.

In the 1951 Centennial Issue of the *St Joseph's Lillies*, the student newspaper, one student listed the college residences: they were first housed at the Convent; then, in 1917, at 25 Queen's Park; in 1922, at 66 St Alban's Street;

in 1923 at 89 Breadalbane Street; and in 1928 at "the lovely present home on Queen's Park Crescent."<sup>83</sup> Unlike the Loretto Abbey College students, those at St Joseph's were never far from the centre of university activity. Students reminisced in the Centennial Issue about dancing in the common room after supper, sneaking food from breakfast up to a late sleeper, about room-mates and classmates, and dances. From these accounts it certainly seems as if the Catholic women students had as active a social life as their counterparts at the other University of Toronto colleges. Even those at Loretto, physically separated from the rest of the university community, created an active social life. Indeed, Kathleen McGovern believed that because there were so few Loretto students, they had "to be good to survive — or even be noticed." In those days, she argued, life was never dull because so few were involved in so much.<sup>84</sup>

Even when the women lived in temporary residences, which were originally built as large family homes, an effort was made to maintain a sense of "family." The family-model was a patriarchal one of an ideal middle-class, Christian family in which the parents provided moral guidance and physical protection for the children. In the residences, the parental role model was filled by the women deans or supervisors like Margaret Addison at Victoria and Mabel Cartwright at St Hilda's. Among the students, the familial model was apparent in the designation of the first-year students as little sisters and those in the upper years as their elders. Class status was protected by discouraging the women from mingling with the servants, and indeed, in the provision of servants to take care of the daily chores, such as cooking and cleaning, the women would have been expected to do if they lived at home.

In most respects, of course, residence life could not truly emulate family life. With twenty or more young women living together, there was little real resemblance to most families. Indeed, increasing numbers caused laments about the loss of the "family spirit." The number of rules imposed was often greater than what the women might have faced at home or in a boarding house. At the same time, however, there is some suggestion that it may have been easier to circumvent those rules than if they had lived at home. In general, the "family spirit" referred to the provision of a congenial atmosphere in a refuge from the demands of daily life, regular, wholesome meals, and physical supervision and moral direction by a parental

figure. The reliance on temporary measures merely emphasized for the women the need to continue planning for future buildings.

### Future Planning and Building

At all the colleges, the women's groups continued to plan and raise funds for new residences and other facilities. Once the Queen's Hall residence was well established, the University College women divided their attention between promoting general purpose women's buildings and dormitories. By 1919, proposals for University College women's buildings were becoming increasingly elaborate. One plan called for buildings arranged in a quadrangle with residence space divided into houses, one or two dining rooms, as well as reception rooms, common rooms and other recreational facilities. In addition, they felt that a new Union should include a large hall and library where student meetings, assemblies and larger social functions could be held. Allowance was also made for non-residential students so that they could get hot meals in the dining room.<sup>85</sup>

One alumna, Edith Henderson, wrote in 1921 that both St Hilda's and Victoria Colleges had considered it essential to protect their women students by accommodating them in residences or in houses connected with the residences. Women at University College, by comparison, she felt, were "labouring under difficulties no girls should be asked to meet." She went on to describe those difficulties and the dangers of living in a boarding house in the city, calling on alumnae and the public for help in raising funds.<sup>86</sup>

Another group began meeting as a Dean's Council in 1928. This became the University Women's Building Committee, which eventually drew representatives from all the colleges and others involved in the lives of women students. It was formed to discuss ways and means of considering, in particular, the needs of women students not affiliated with a college who therefore had no access to residences or recreational facilities. However, by 1930, they had had little success in achieving their goals despite their vigorous efforts. Their main roadblocks seem to have come from the university administration and from a lack of funds. In April 1930 the Property Committee of the Board of Governors reported that the building the University Women's Building Committee had outlined was more than what the university could maintain, even if it could be acquired, and would

require a prohibitive fee from the women students. If a larger building were acquired, they would also have to have an endowment to maintain it.<sup>87</sup>

The Methodist women, too, had grander plans for the Victoria College women students than simply renting temporary houses as annexes to Annesley Hall. In 1919 and 1929, plans for an addition to Annesley Hall were commissioned. Both were designed by Sproatt and Rolph, the architects of the men's residence, and have features more similar to the men's residence than to the other women's residences. The 1919 plan has the addition circling around the Hall. New residence space and a kitchen wing were set in front of the Hall with a courtyard in between. A students' union curved around from the south side to the rear, again with a courtyard in the rear between the two buildings. The addition was attached to the Hall on the south side and on the northwest corner.<sup>88</sup>

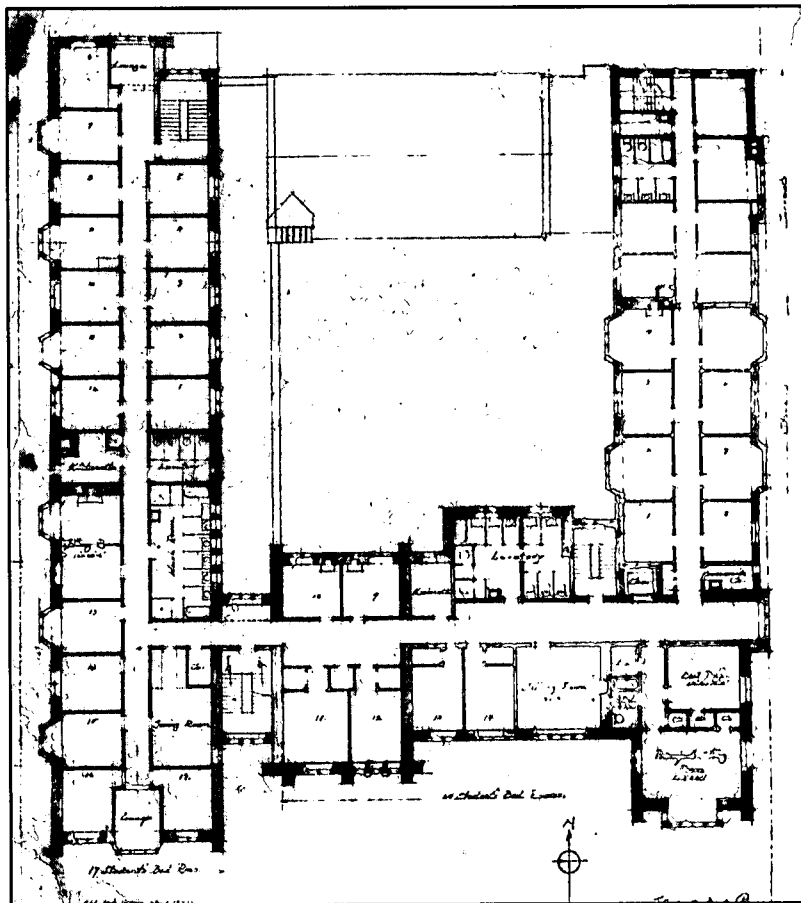
The 1929 plan was more detailed. The addition was only to the rear of the Hall and focused on providing residence accommodation and a kitchen wing. By this time the women students had been given Wymilwood as a Union, so the student's union was no longer part of the proposed plan. This plan is similar to the men's residence in its division into houses. It shows plans for a wing stretching from the northeast corner containing a new dining room and accommodation space for twenty-two students. This house (House #6) was the only one attached to the Hall. On the east side of the Hall, a long rectangular building was planned. It was divided into three houses able to accommodate a total of fifty-seven students. On the south side, between the Hall and east wing, another long building with two more houses were planned, each holding eighteen and nineteen students.

The buildings surrounded a central courtyard. Each wing had three stories and contained common rooms, reception rooms and a don's suite. The bedrooms lined both sides of a central corridor. Between each building an archway was to be built. The total accommodation was for 116 students. This plan allowed for relatively easy supervision, yet still promoted an atmosphere of community through central common rooms, a central courtyard and a dining room able to serve 144 students.<sup>89</sup> A "home-like" facade seems not to have been attempted in the exterior design of these plans, probably because of the need to accommodate many more women. This change in design is apparent in the larger women's residences.

St Hilda's College similarly had plans for larger accommodation (Fig. 7). Mabel Cartwright wrote to the Provost in 1928 describing possible arrangements that would allow all the residents to be housed under one roof. Using 99 St George Street as a centre for social life, she proposed a new wing that would include between 80 and 85 single rooms, 16 bathrooms, separate servants quarters, a basement gymnasium, a chapel, a dining room with a good pantry and hot table that could be used in conjunction with the existing kitchen, a trunk room, a dumb waiter and a staff common room. The existing building was to be redesigned so that the dining room could be used as a students' common room, the servants' quarters as an infirmary, two or three of the bedrooms could be used as year sitting rooms (common rooms for each year's class), "as the new students' rooms would be too small to admit of their being used for these little gatherings." The rest of the bedrooms in 99 St George Street would continue to be used as student rooms, but would hold two instead of three students. Cartwright felt that having all the students under one roof would encourage an improved student life without the cliques that separate houses encouraged. She also felt that non-residents would have more opportunity to participate in college activities with the increased space.<sup>90</sup>

Cartwright was very concerned with creating links between all the students and also with the alumnae of St Hilda's. In 1927, in a letter to the Provost of Trinity College, she had proposed that 101 St George Street might be made into a Graduate House for St Hilda's that would, in particular, provide housing for graduates just leaving college, serve as a club for graduate activities, and serve as a bond between graduates and undergraduates. She even felt that such a house could provide some much needed revenue.<sup>91</sup>

Another undated wish list evokes an image of grand plans. Cartwright proposed two connected dining rooms, an assembly hall with a small stage, a gymnasium and a chapel, as well as office space and a waiting room for gentlemen callers. She proposed having all single bedrooms, but that each would be slightly different with alcoves or little irregularities. In addition, there would be a sitting room for each year, an alumnae suite, guest rooms and staff rooms.<sup>92</sup> There was a clear effort to create pleasant and interesting surroundings for all the residents.



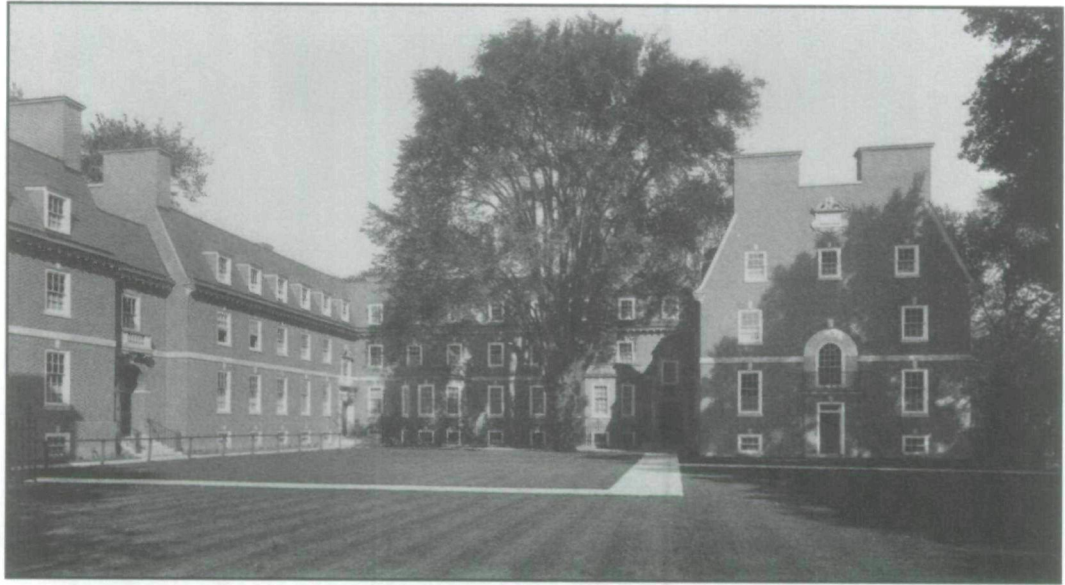
It was not until the 1930s that University and St Hilda's Colleges were able to realise their grand plans. It was even longer for Victoria, St Joseph's and Loretto Colleges. They did not build, or in Victoria's case, build again, until the 1950s. By the 1930s, however, the plans for the University College and St Hilda's College residences were much larger. They less resembled houses, but still were not as grand and imposing as the men's residences. Whitney Hall (Fig. 8), built in 1930 for University College women, is a "self-conscious Neo-Georgian" building.<sup>93</sup> Like the Victoria and U of T's men's residences, it is divided into houses. However, it is different because there is access between the houses. It follows a classical floor plan with a central corridor and rooms opening on either side. Once again, no suites were built. The ground and first floors provide common rooms, reception rooms and lounges, laundry facilities, and a dining room and kitchen. The first, second and third floors hold both single and double rooms and rooms for the servants.<sup>94</sup>

The 1938 St Hilda's College residence is also Georgian in style, built with red brick and white

**Fig. 7**  
An early (1924) floor plan for the first and second floors of the new St Hilda's College eventually built in 1938 on Devonshire Place. (University of Toronto Archives, 60.36, A65-0004)



**Fig. 8**  
 Whitney Hall,  
 85 St George St, the  
 new University College  
 women's residence  
 finally built in 1931.  
 (University of Toronto  
 Archives, 13.49,  
 A65-0004)



limestone trim. Once again the floor plans follow a classical style, but is smaller than Whitney Hall and is not divided into houses. *The Varsity* noted that a "special feature [would] be fireplaces in the larger bedrooms, where students [could] gather for feasts and discussions."<sup>95</sup> This suggests that unlike some of their American counterparts, the St Hilda's administrators did not see a problem with having students socialize in their rooms. Communal space still had more emphasis than in the men's residences.

The 1940 Trinity men's residence was built as an addition to and in the same style as the main Trinity building. It was built as two separate houses, with only single rooms. Some sitting rooms were built, but the larger common rooms were in the main building.<sup>96</sup> Both of these buildings were designed by the architects George and Moorhouse. The men's residence was clearly planned to fit with the pre-existing building. While we might wonder why the women's residence was not also designed to resemble Trinity College, the differences suggest that women's buildings were perceived to have a different purpose than the men's.<sup>97</sup> The interiors of the women's buildings were more inviting; women were encouraged to truly "live" in the residence, to treat it as their home. Even though the exterior designs were less like houses than the earlier residences, the larger bedrooms and common rooms and the division of the larger residences into "houses" suggest that attempts to create a "home-like" atmosphere would continue.

### Conclusion

The physical structures of women's residences and the other women's buildings made the idea of women's higher education more concrete. To keep the concept of university education for women palatable, however, the residences were designed to emphasize the ideal of the middle-class, Christian family. The exterior designs and interior layouts combined with the rules and regulations to reassure parents that the well-being, both physical and spiritual, of their daughters was being cared for. The University of Toronto's women's residences drew on the contemporary movements in domestic and institutional architecture that promoted good health through improved architectural design. What stands out in the records of these residences is the emphasis on small, domestic-style residences for women; the constant use of temporary facilities while plans for more permanent measures were constantly put on hold by either (or both) the university or college administrations; the continual struggle for adequate funds and space for women's facilities; and the modification of grand visions. Expressed consistently throughout the records was the desire to provide a home away from home for the women students.

Unlike the American women's colleges, which used several different styles of residence, those of the University of Toronto were generally the same — first, closely resembling large homes, and later, using a Georgian style. The various women's building committees seem not to have ever considered the seminary-type

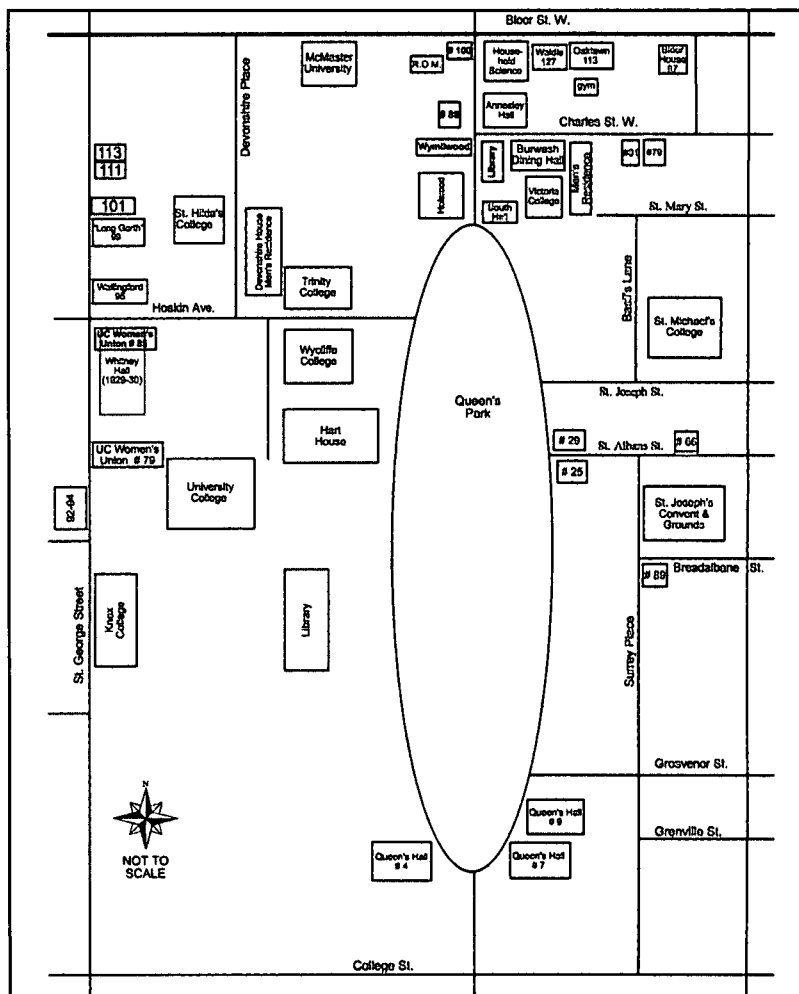
colleges or residences used by the first American women's colleges. Although the early residences, Annesley Hall and the original St Hilda's College, certainly reflected the influences of domestic middle-class architecture, similar to the nurses' residences at Montreal's Royal Victoria Hospital, the women students living in them were freed from the daily chores, which so often hampered women's intellectual pursuits, that women living at home might have been expected to perform.<sup>98</sup>

The influence of Freudian theories seems to have been less at the Toronto residences than at the American ones. Horowitz argues that it was only in the 1920s that the college planning manuals began to suggest that socializing should be moved out of the upstairs bedrooms and into the downstairs common rooms and parlours by recommending smaller single rooms lining a central corridor.<sup>99</sup> Annesley Hall, however, was designed with mainly single rooms and main floor common rooms well before the 1920s. The emphasis on main floor common rooms can also be interpreted as the result of complaints that meetings in student rooms were too noisy for those trying to study. Indeed, an editorial in a 1925 *Acta Victoriana* argued that a completely separate women's union was necessary:

*When parties wax hilarious in the Annesley common-room toward the hour of midnight, the resident who has, for the nonce, gone to bed early, may groan and protest, but, since there is no union where such parties may be held, protest in vain.*<sup>100</sup>

In the 1930s, University College and St Hilda's adopted the Georgian design of some of the 1920s American colleges. Like the residences built by Smith College in the 1920s, for example, both Whitney Hall and the 1937 St Hilda's College had brick walls fronting the street and private inner courtyards. For the University of Toronto, these larger residences finally acknowledged that many women needed to be accommodated. Residences styled as large homes were no longer practical. Although finances certainly had a great deal to do with the type of residence built, it is doubtless that the planning was also influenced by the style of women's residences in the United States and England.

The early residences did indeed resemble houses — if they were not, in fact, converted from houses into residences — thus reassuring



**Fig. 9**  
Sketch map of locations of some women's residences at the University of Toronto.

parents, disguising their purpose as institutions of higher learning for women, and providing a comfortable environment for women to pursue their studies. Even when the increased number of women students made the family model less practical, attempts were made to continue this style. The emphasis by university authorities on maintaining a "home-like" atmosphere reinforced patriarchal assumptions that women students needed more protection and supervision than their male counterparts. These assumptions were manifested in the built environment through the provision of the dining rooms and common rooms that the male students did not always have. Indeed, even the later, much larger women's residences used common rooms and sitting rooms, and the division of the buildings into houses to maintain a "home-like" atmosphere.

## NOTES

- An early version of this paper was presented at the Canadian Historical Association Annual Meeting, June 1996, Brock University, Ontario. I would like to thank Helen Lenskyj, Alison Prentice, Lisa Panayotidis and Sara Burke for their comments on various drafts of this paper.
- Minutes, April 24, 1910. Women's Associations, Victoria Women's Residence and Educational Association (VWR&EA) Minutes, box 1, file 3, Victoria University Archives (VUA).
  - On the early history of women at the University of Toronto, see Nancy Ramsay Thompson, "The Controversy over the Admission of Women to University College," (M.A. thesis, University of Toronto, 1974); and, on the early history of women at Canadian universities, see Paula J. S. LaPierre, "The First Generation: The Experience of Women University Students in Central Canada" (Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 1993).
  - The material covered in this paper is part of a larger project on the experience of women students at Ontario universities between 1900 and 1930.
  - The importance of the physical environment of the schoolhouse in the teaching profession has been demonstrated by Alison Prentice. See "From Household to School House: The Emergence of the Teacher as Servant of the State," *Material History Bulletin* 20 (Fall 1984): 19-29.
  - The four colleges discussed in this paper, Victoria, Trinity, St Michael's (Loretto and St Joseph's) and University were the arts colleges. In addition to these were three theological colleges: Wycliffe, Emmanuel and Knox; and several Faculties and Schools, such as Medicine, Practical Science, Nursing, Dentistry, and Social Service. Loretto and St Joseph's Colleges affiliated with the university through St Michael's College in 1911. On the history of Catholic higher education, see Elizabeth Smyth, "The Lessons of Religion and Science: The Congregation of the Sisters of St Joseph and St Joseph's Academy, Toronto, 1854-1911" (Ed.D. diss., University of Toronto, 1990); and Laurence K. Shook, *Catholic Post-Secondary Education in English-Speaking Canada: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971).
  - See for example: Howard Adelman, *The Beds of Academe: A Study of the Relation of Student Residences and the University* (Toronto: James Lewis & Samuel, 1969); John Bland and Norbert Schoenauer, *University Housing in Canada* (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1966); Jack Klein and Henry Sears, *Room to Learn: A Study on Housing for the Canadian Student* (Ottawa: Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, 1969). More recently, Annmarie Adams has examined the nurses' residences at a Montreal hospital in "Rooms of Their Own: The Nurses' Residences at Montreal's Royal Victoria Hospital," *Material History Review* 40 (Fall 1994): 29-41.
  - Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, *Alma Mater: Design and Experience in the Women's Colleges from Their Nineteenth-Century Beginnings to the 1930s*, 2nd ed. (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1993).
  - Carol Dyhouse, *No Distinction of Sex? Women in British Universities, 1870-1939* (London: UCL Press Limited, 1995), 100. Many other similarities are also apparent regarding the experiences of women at Ontario and British universities.
  - Adams, "Rooms of Their Own," 30, 37. See also, Annmarie Adams, *Architecture in the Family Way: Doctors, Houses, and Women, 1870-1900* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996).
  - Luri Hamilton, "Women's Residences," *Sesame* (March 1900): 7.
  - Acta Victoriana* (November 1903): 99-100.
  - Dean N. W. DeWitt, "The Ideal Women's Residence," *University of Toronto Monthly* 24, no. 7 (April 1929): 258.
  - In 1935, a list of the women at University College, broken down by the number living in and out of residence, indicated that 22 of the 65 boarding (and not living at home) were doing so because they preferred not to live in residence. U.C. Dean of Women, B74-0011/003(5), University of Toronto Archives (UTA). A similar, but much more extreme response occurred among women at Aberdeen University, Scotland, where a women's residence opened in 1896 remained empty for two years before it was rented to a family. Lindy Moore, *Bajanellas and Semilinas: Aberdeen University and the Education of Women, 1860-1920* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1991), 67-68.
  - At various times, I use the term "residence" to refer to a single building, and at other times, to a series of houses that, together, were seen as the residence, for example, of Victoria College women.
  - See Table 1 for a list of the University of Toronto's women's residences, and Figure 9 for a map of locations.
  - Douglas Richardson, *A Not Unightly Building: University College and Its History* (Toronto: Mosaic Press, 1990), 21.
  - University of Toronto Monthly*, March 1939; *Varsity*, 27 January 1939. Office of the Registrar clipping files. A73-0051/220(17), UTA.
  - For details on terminology and a good overview of architectural styles in Canada, see Leslie Maitland et al., *A Guide to Canadian Architectural Styles* (Peterborough: Broadview Press Ltd, 1992).
  - Anthony Trollope, *North America* (New York: Harper, 1862), 73-74, quoted in Richardson, *A Not Unightly Building*, 113.
  - For a discussion of the British influence on the establishment of the universities and the professions in Ontario, see chapter 1 in R. D. Gidney and W. P. J. Millar, *Professional Gentlemen: The Professions in Nineteenth-Century Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994).
  - Richardson, *A Not Unightly Building*, 105.
  - Margaret (Grout) Ham, "Timor Dei Principium Sapientiae," in Barbara Sutton, ed., *Sanctam Hildam Canimus* (Toronto: St Hilda's College, 1988), 16; T. A. Reed, ed., *A History of the University of Trinity College, Toronto, 1852-1952* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1952), 189.
  - Reed, *History of Trinity College*, 193-195.

24. LaPierre, "First Generation," 207–218.
25. Reed, *History of Trinity College*, 190. Mary Strachan was the granddaughter of Bishop Strachan, the founder of Trinity College.
26. St Hilda's College floor plans, 1983. Trinity College Archives (TCA).
27. Reed, *History of Trinity College*, 190.
28. LaPierre, "First Generation," 218.
29. Letter from Mabel Cartwright, 29 March 1912. MS120 Cartwright Papers, Box 10, TCA.
30. Annmarie Adams, "Eden Smith and the Canadian Domestic Revival," *Urban History Review* 21, no. 2 (March 1993): 104–115.
31. The Reverend C. B. Kenrick, *Picturesque Trinity* (Toronto: George N. Morang & Co., n.d., ca 1903), 9.
32. Men's Residence for Toronto University, Eden Smith & Son, Architects. A88-0039, UTA.
33. Devonshire Men's Residence, Physical Plant Department, A75-0027/002(20), UTA.
34. R. G. Beattie, "Five Years of the Residences," *The Arbor* 1, no. 2 (April 1913): 307–315. Beattie seemed to feel that a residence dining room would promote a stronger sense of community by bringing the men together in a place where they could socialize on a daily basis.
35. V. E. Henderson, "The University Buildings of the Present and of the Future," *The Arbor* 1, no. 2 (March 1910): 67–72.
36. The Barbara Heck Memorial Association (BHMA) was organized to raise funds to purchase a site for the residence. It subsequently underwent two name changes: the Victoria Women's Association (VWA) and the Victoria Women's Residence and Educational Association (VWR&EA). For an overview of the Association's evolution and activities, see chapter 7 in Johnanna M. Selles, *Methodists and Women's Education in Ontario, 1836–1925* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's Press, 1996).
37. Proposed constitution and by-laws, undated. Margaret Burwash Papers, Fonds 2045, 92.010V, Box 6, File 95, VUA.
38. Mark Girouard, "Victorian Sweetness and Light: Newnham College, Cambridge," *Country Life* 150 (16 December 1971): 1704–1706.
39. Annesley Hall, Committee of Management, Minutes, 10 January 1905, Fonds 2069, 90.064V, Box 1, File 1, VUA.
40. Untitled, undated description of Annesley Hall. Margaret Burwash Papers. Fonds 2045, 92.010V/6(96), VUA. See also, Barbara Heck Memorial Association Minutes, 1 March 1904, Report of Expenditure. Women's Associations, Fonds 2069, 90.066V/1(1), VUA.
41. Mary F. Sheffield, 10 April 1907. Annesley Hall Annex, Report. Margaret Burwash Papers, Fonds 2045, 92.010V/6(98), VUA.
42. While little statistical research has been undertaken on the family and class backgrounds of women university students, the evidence suggests that it was predominately middle-class families that sent their children to university. See Chad Gaffield, Lynne Marks, and Susan Laskin, "Student Populations and Graduate Careers: Queen's University, 1895–1900," in *Youth, University and Canadian Society: Essays on the Social History of Higher Education*, ed. Paul Axelrod and John G. Reid (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989), 3–25.
43. *Telegram*, 16 May 1908. Office of the Registrar, A73-0051/246(10), UTA.
44. "In Memory of Lillian Massey Treble," *Funerary Tribute*, 9, quoted in Kerrie Kennedy, "Womanly Work: The Introduction of Household Science at the University of Toronto" (M.A. thesis, University of Toronto 1995), 64.
45. Untitled clipping, 6 June 1894. Office of the Registrar, A73-0051/220(18), UTA. It is important to note that although Moulton College allowed McMaster women to live in, it was in fact the Baptist preparatory girls' school, not a women's residence or university-level college.
46. "Editorial," *Sesame* (1901): 74, quoted in LaPierre, "First Generation," 229.
47. Various newspaper clippings, 1904 and 1905, Office of the Registrar, A73-0051/220(18), UTA.
48. *World*, 13 September 1911. Office of the Registrar, A73-0051/220(05), UTA.
49. *The Globe*, 21/10/08. Office of the Registrar, A73-0051/220(10), UTA.
50. Various clippings from the *Varsity*: 2 October 1918; 6 January 1926; 16 January 1929; 20 October 1930. Office of the Registrar, A73-0051/220(10), UTA. Margaret Wrong, U.C.'s adviser for women students and daughter of the history professor, George Wrong, was involved in this committee and donated \$1,000 to get the residence underway, B74-0011/003(9), Notes on the History of Argyll House, by Mrs Leila Howard, 1 August 1950, UTA.
51. University of Toronto *Calendars*, 1900–1930; and Toronto Directories for 1905, 1914, 1920, 1930.
52. LaPierre, "First Generation," 224–229.
53. Letter to The Secretary, Congress of the Universities of the Empire, 29 March 1912. MS120. Cartwright Family Papers, Box 10, TCA.
54. Typescript draft of chapter by Cartwright for *A History of Trinity College*, ed. T. A. Reed (University of Toronto Press, 1952). MS120 Cartwright Family Papers, Box 10 (SHC History), TCA. In this draft, Cartwright pays tribute to the hard work and devotion of the house superintendents and assistants who worked in St Hilda's College over thirty-three years. This tribute did not make it into the final version of the chapter for the above book.
55. Memorandum from St Hilda's Alumnae re: Removal, n.d. MS120 Cartwright Family Papers, Box 10 (SHC Removal), TCA.
56. *Ibid.*, A. B. [sic], "Some Problems of the University of Toronto, The New St Hilda's," *The Arbor* 3, no. 2 (December 1911): 77–80.
57. 9 January 1907. Annesley Committee of Management, box 3, file 15; October 1906, Women's Associations, VWR&EA Minute Book, box 1, file 3, VUA.
58. 8 December 1910. Annesley Committee of Management, box 1, file 1, VUA.
59. 24 April 1913. Women's Associations, VWA Minutes, box 1, file 4, VUA.
60. 13 January 1914. Women's Associations, VWA Minutes, box 1, file 4, VUA.
61. Victoria Women's Association, Annual Report 1912–13, pp. 10–11. Fonds 2069, 90.066V, boxes 2–6, VUA.



62. 8 January 1914. Annesley Committee of Management, box 3, file 17, VUA.
63. Letter to Miss Addison, from Cornelia G. Harcum, 19 August 1920. Annesley Committee of Management, box 4, file 4, VUA.
64. 22 June 1922. Annesley Committee of Management, box 2, file 1, VUA.
65. 25 April 1923. Women's Associations, VWA Minutes, box 1, file 5, VUA.
66. 28 April 1926. Women's Associations, VWA Minutes, box 1, file 5, VUA.
67. 25 April 1928. Women's Associations, VWA Minutes, box 1, file 5, VUA.
68. 30 April 1930. Women's Associations, VWA Minutes, box 1, file 5, VUA.
69. *Victoria College Bulletin* (1911-12): 47-48.
70. *Acta Victoriana* 52, no. 1 (1927): 39-40; 50, no. 30 (1925): 30-1; Dorothy Kilpatrick, 50, no. 4 (1926): 33.
71. Residence Extension Committee Minutes, 24 May 1925, Annesley Committee of Management, box 2, file 2A, VUA; *Victoria College Bulletin* (1925-26).
72. Report to the VWA by M. H. Skinner, Head of Union, November 1917, Women's Associations, box 2, file 18, VUA.
73. 18 November 1908. Women's Associations, VWR&EA Minutes, box 1, file 3, VUA.
74. 11 March 1909. Annesley Committee of Management, box 1, file 1, VUA.
75. 24 April 1910. Women's Associations, VWR&EA Minutes, box 1, file 3, VUA.
76. 26 October 1910. Women's Associations, VWR&EA Minutes, box 1, file 3, VUA.
77. Smyth, "Lessons of Religion and Science," 179.
78. *Ibid.*, 176. See also correspondence, "College; Academic organization and promotion," box 3, Loretto College History, 1911, Loretto Abbey Archives (hereafter LAA).
79. Smyth, "Lessons of Religion and Science," 179-182.
80. Annual Report, 1913-14. "College; Academic organization and promotion," box 1, file 1, Loretto College History, LAA.
81. Toronto Directories for 1901, 1905, 1912, 1920, 1922, 1923, 1930.
82. "Loretto College, 1912-1937," "College; Academic organization and promotion," box 1, file 1, Loretto College History, LAA.
83. Mrs F. James Carson (Victoria Mueller), "St Joseph's College: A Tribute," *St Joseph's Lillies*, Centennial Issue, 40, no. 2 (1951): 163-4. Archives of the Sisters of St Joseph's, Morrow Park (hereafter ASSJ). Exact address, 29 Queen's Park, located in the Toronto Directory for 1928. See also Shook, *Catholic Post-Secondary Education*, 158, footnote 45.
84. Kathleen McGovern, I.B.V.M. (Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary), "Outline of the History of Loretto College," Paper read at the annual dinner in honour of Mary Ward, 22 January 1976. LAA.
85. "New Buildings for Women," *The Rebel* 3, no. 6 (April 1919): 254-255.
86. Edith Henderson, "The Campaign for Women's Buildings," *University of Toronto Monthly* 21, no. 8 (May 1921): 351-352.
87. University Women's Building Committee Minutes, 1928-31, A90-0023/027(03), and A83-0047/001(03), UTA; 4 April 1930, University Women's Building Committee Minutes, A83-0047/01(03), UTA.
88. Proposed Additions to Annesley Hall, 16 December 1919. Sproatt and Rolph, Architects, (no accession number), VUA.
89. Sproatt and Rolph, February 1929. Architectural Drawings of Proposed Women's Residence, 91.086V, Box 3. VUA.
90. Letter to The Provost, 12 March 1928. MS120 Cartwright Family Papers, Box 10 (SHC Correspondence), TCA.
91. Letter to Rev. F. Cosgrave, The Provost of Trinity College, 11 April 1927. MS120 Cartwright Family Papers, Box 10 (SHC Correspondence), TCA.
92. "Suggestions for the Future St Hilda's Ultimate Building." MS120 Cartwright Papers, Box 10: SHC Correspondence, TCA.
93. Patricia McHugh, *Toronto Architecture: A City Guide* (Toronto: Mercury Books, 1985), 120.
94. Whitney Hall Floor Plans, 1930, UTA.
95. *Varsity*, 7 October 1937. Office of the Registrar, A73-0051/220(16), UTA.
96. George and Moorhouse, St Hilda's College Floor Plans, Mechanical and Electrical, 1937; George and Moorhouse, Trinity College, Men's Residence and Dining Hall Additions, 1940. UTA.
97. It is likely that cost was also a factor in the exterior design of the women's residence since brick was less expensive than cut stone. This, in itself, seems to highlight the greater importance given to men's buildings.
98. Adams, "Rooms of Their Own," 30-31.
99. Horowitz, *Alma Mater*, 314.
100. *Acta Victoriana* 49, no. 6 (1925): 17.