

*Notes and Comments*

6. As listed in *The International Who's Who* entry. See also Publications of T.H. Clark as provided by Ingrid Birker of Redpath Museum.

7. Publications of T.H. Clark as provided by Ingrid Birker of Redpath Museum.

**Beatrice V. Simon (1899-1994)**

**Peter F. McNally**

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Beatrice V. Simon, a leading figure in Canadian librarianship, died in Kitchener Ontario, on February 8, 1994. Although her career was spent entirely at McGill University, she enjoyed both a national and an international reputation.<sup>1</sup>

Born on November 29, 1899 she was educated at the Montreal High School for Girls and at Stanstead College (Quebec). As a result of travelling with her parents to Argentina and the United States — where her father worked as an engineer — her education at McGill was interrupted, and she completed her B.A. only in 1943. Her 1950 M.A. thesis in Comparative Literature was on "Autobiographical Writing of Some North American Indians: a Critical Study of Their Origin and Development."

Although she studied art at the Carnegie Institute of Technology in Pittsburgh, Penn. in 1920-1921 and worked for a short period as a freelance commercial artist, her life-long career was to be in librarianship. In 1927-1928 she took the one year Diploma in Library Science which had just been introduced by the McGill Library School. For the next forty-one years, between 1928 and 1969, she divided her career between the School and the McGill Libraries. Her first professional position was in the Medical Library where she served as Assistant Cataloguer (1928-1930) and Head of Serials (1930-1938). During this period she began teaching in the Library School which by now had become a graduate program offering a Bachelor of Library Science. Between 1935 and 1938 she taught as a part-time instructor and between 1938 and 1943 as a full-time faculty member, lecturing on Cataloguing, Indexing, Serials, and Special Libraries.

During this same period, she became active in the Special Libraries Association, becoming President of the Montreal branch in 1936-1937 and Second Vice-President of the international organization in 1949-1950. It was in Britain, however, where she achieved her first international recognition. During 1938-1939 under the sponsorship of the Rockefeller Foundation she undertook surveys of British medical libraries for the Royal College of Surgeons which resulted in the development of co-operative programs. The major publication from this project was *A Survey of Medical Library Facilities in London*. Plans for a similar study in France were interrupted by World War II.

In 1943, at the request of Principal F. Cyril James, she rejoined the Library staff, although she continued giving the Special Libraries course at the School until 1951. Between 1943 and 1947 she established the Commerce Library (forerunner of the Howard Ross Management Library) and ran the Law Library. The Principal was so impressed with her achievements that he appointed her Assistant University Librarian in 1947, concurrently with his appointing Richard Pennington University Librarian.

In theory, the combination of Pennington and Simon should have been excellent. His very unstructured and traditional approach and her very structured and organizational approach should have complimented one another. In fact, their personalities clashed and they were never able to develop an harmonious working relationship. This situation was exacerbated by the Principal having appointed Simon as Pennington's Assistant, without first consulting him.

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That said, Beatrice Simon's contribution to the running of the McGill libraries was enormous. Between 1947 and 1956 she co-ordinated activities between Redpath Library and the various faculty, school, and departmental libraries. During 1951-1953 she developed the Physical Sciences Library (forerunner of the Physical Sciences and Engineering Library) through the amalgamation of a number of departmental libraries. From 1956 to 1965 she was, in effect, the head of public services in Redpath Library.

During the 1950s she was actively involved in the Quebec Library Association, becoming its President in 1959-60. In 1961 she was President of the Canadian Library Association's University Libraries Committee (forerunner of the Canadian Association of College and University Libraries). Her greatest accomplishment of this period, and the one for which she will probably be best remembered, was her 1962 report on libraries for the Canadian Association of Medical Colleges. It was published by the Association in 1964 as *Library Support of Medical Education and Research in Canada*. A French-language version was published the same year as *Les besoins de la bibliothèque médicale pour l'enseignement et la recherche*. It was a landmark study which resulted in an enormous increase of support for Canadian medical libraries. The fruits of her labour continue to be felt today. In 1969 the Special Libraries Association held its annual conference in Montreal where she was awarded its Professional Award in recognition of her outstanding contributions to the practise, study and teaching of librarianship and in particular recognition of her 1962 report.<sup>2</sup>

As for her McGill career it took a radical change of direction in the 1960s. The great initiatives and developments experienced by Canadian higher education in that decade resulted in much critical attention being paid to libraries in general and the McGill libraries in particular. Although criticism at McGill was directed primarily at Richard Pennington and resulted in his stepping down as University Librarian in 1964, some criticism was also directed at Beatrice Simon. Their refusal to speak with one another, publicly or privately, caused justifiable disquiet which undermined the credibility of both. That both should have retired in 1965 seemed ironically appropriate to many people.

At this point she returned as a Sessional Lecturer to what had by then become the Graduate School of Library Science, where from 1965 to 1969 she taught Administration as well as College and University Libraries. Her required course in Administration was part of the reorganized curriculum of the newly inaugurated two year Master of Library Science Program. The course is particularly significant because it was the first attempt in any library school to teach management theory. Students of that period remember her as an excellent lecturer, always able to illustrate theories and principles with examples from her own career. Although her penetrating eyes and questions could be troubling for some people, her effectiveness in communicating the essence of administration was universally acknowledged.

It was with pleasure and surprise that friends and colleagues learned in 1979 of her marriage to Hermann G. Stockwell, following which she moved from Montreal to Ontario. Her later years were marked, unfortunately, by poor health, which thwarted plans to revise her Master's thesis for publication.

Beatrice Vina Simon Stockwell will be remembered as an attractive, energetic and intelligent woman who paid great attention to her personal appearance and stylish wardrobe. She held strong opinions on most issues and expressed them freely and effectively. Neither her competence nor intellectual grasp of situations nor leadership abilities were ever in doubt. The deep satisfaction she took from her association with McGill University its Libraries and Library School was greatly evident. Her commitment to librarianship, and to its highest standards, was beyond question; her contribution to its public recognition as an academic profession was immense. She was an exacting person to work for or to study under. But her very seriousness kept those around her aware of the great importance she attached to librarianship and to intellectual achievement. By any standard, she must be considered one of the most distinguished and effective librarians of her generation.

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### A Selective Bibliography of B.V. Simon's Publications

*A Survey of Medical Library Facilities in London for Post-Graduate Students and Research Workers Including a Suggested Scheme for the Re-organization of the Library of Royal College of Surgeons.* Montreal: McGill University Library School, 1938.

"Planning a Company Library." *Business Quarterly*, v. 16, no. 1 (Spring 1946): 39-46.

"Let's Consider Serials Realistically." *Library Journal*, v. 71, no. 17 (October 1, 1946): 1296-1301.

"The Training of Medical, Hospital and Nursing Librarians." *Special Libraries*, v. 39, no. 3 (March 1948): 71-76.

"Cataloguing of Periodicals." *Ontario Library Review*, v. 33, no. 3 (August 1949): 237-45.

*Library Support of Medical Education and Research in Canada: Report of a Survey of the Medical College Libraries of Canada, Together with Suggestions for Improving and Extending Medical Library Service at Local, Regional and National Levels.* Ottawa: Canadian Association for Medical Colleges, 1964.

*Les besoins de la bibliothèque médicale pour l'enseignement et la recherche.* Québec: Université Laval, 1964.

"The Need for Administrative Know-how in Libraries." *Bulletin of the Medical Library Association*, v. 57, no. 2 (April 1969): 160-170.

## Notes

1. The assistance of the following people in writing this appreciation is gratefully acknowledged: Ms. Fay Lando-Little, Toronto, Ontario; Mrs. M.A. Flower, Kingston, Ontario; Mrs. Nellie Reiss, Mrs. Elizabeth Silvester, and Dr. Stanley Frost, McGill University.

2. "SLA professional award/1969," *Special Libraries*, v. 60, no. 6 (July-August, 1969): 406.

## The Rutherford Museum

By Montague Cohen  
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The Rutherford Museum of McGill University contains a collection of about 35 pieces of original research apparatus designed and used by Ernest Rutherford during his tenure as Macdonald Professor of Experimental Physics from 1898 to 1907. In addition, there are documents, letters, photographs and other memorabilia. Until recently the museum was housed in a room in the old Macdonald Physics Building where Rutherford actually worked, although this building was converted into a library (Physical Sciences and Engineering) in 1977. In 1993 it was decided to move the museum to the new Physics Building, appropriately named the Rutherford Physics Building, on the upper campus. The museum was officially re-opened on October 1, 1993 by the University Chancellor, Gretta Chambers, and a public lecture on "Rutherford at McGill: Life and Science" was given by the Museum Curator, Professor Montague Cohen.