

1-1-2015

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Recommended Citation

Grant, John N. (2015) "The Tradition of Academic Costume at Acadia University," *Transactions of the Burgon Society*. Vol. 15. <https://doi.org/10.4148/2475-7799.1134>

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The Tradition of Academic Costume at Acadia University

By John N. Grant

In the history of post-secondary education in Canada, the creation of Acadia University in Wolfville, Nova Scotia, might appear to be part of the pattern of denominational colleges in Nova Scotia. More accurately, however, Acadia helped to establish that pattern. In 1838, despite the 1818 founding of Dalhousie University in Halifax, the University of King's College (est. 1789) in Windsor was the only chartered institution of higher learning that was active in Nova Scotia. King's, however, was part of an Anglican establishment and until 1829 graduation required subscription to the thirty-nine articles of the Church of England, a requirement which made it impracticable for a Baptist, or a member of any other church, to attend. Dalhousie University had no religious test, but for its first twenty years it had no professors and no students.¹

In the mid-1830s many Baptists anticipated the rejuvenation of Dalhousie as their principal hope for the higher education of their young men. Paradoxically, 'it was the reorganization of Dalhousie in 1838 which led directly to the founding of Acadia a few months later.'² In 1838 the Revd Thomas McCulloch, a Presbyterian clergyman and principal of Pictou Academy in Pictou, Nova Scotia, became the first president of Dalhousie University and the whole institution took on a decidedly Presbyterian hue. 'The Baptists had supported Dalhousie on the founder's original premise that any Christian body endowing a chair should be entitled to a voice in its government.' The new president, however, 'insisted that all three of the professors at Dalhousie should be Presbyterian' and the Baptists 'seceded from the scheme.' Part of their disappointment was that the 'most learned classical scholar in the province,' Edmund Albern Crawley, the 'gifted pastor of the Granville Street Baptist Church in Halifax, was not appointed to the chair of Classics at Dalhousie.'³ Crawley was personally insulted and by extension, many of his churchmen concluded, had been all the Baptists in Nova Scotia.

1 See P. B. Waite, *The Lives of Dalhousie University* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994), Vol. 1, *1818–1925: Lord Dalhousie's College*, for an engaging account of the early years of Dalhousie University. Also see Vol. II, *1925–1980: The Old College Transformed* (1998), and *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, s.v. 'George Ramsay, 9th Earl of Dalhousie' (by Peter Burroughs), Vol. VII, p. 723. King's College (New York) was closed during the American Revolution while King's College (Windsor) and King's College (Fredericton) were established as a result of that war and subsequent arrival of the Loyalists.

2 Barry M. Moody, *Give us an A: An Acadian Album* (Wolfville, NS: Acadia University, 1988), p. 11. Also see Moody, 'The Maritime Baptists and Higher Education in the Early Nineteenth Century', in Moody, ed., *Repent and Believe: The Baptist Experience in Maritime Canada* (Hantsport: Lancelot Press for Acadia Divinity College and Baptist Historical Committee of the United Baptist Convention of the Atlantic Provinces, 1980), pp. 88–102.

3 W. S. MacNutt, 'The Universities of the Maritimes—A Glance Backward', *Dalhousie Review*, Autumn 1973, p. 436; J. R. C. Perkin, *The College on the Hill: A Brief Historical Sketch of Acadia University, 1938–1988* (Wolfville: Acadia University, 1987), p. 1.

In response, the Nova Scotia Baptist Education Society met ‘on business of special importance’ on 15 November 1838.⁴ At that meeting, ‘after a night in discussion and prayer,’⁵ the decision was made that the Baptists would establish their own college.⁶ To reinforce the Baptist position of religious tolerance in education, the

Act of Incorporation of 1840 includes the statement: that no religious Tests or subscriptions shall be required of the Professors, Fellows, Scholars, Graduates, Students or Officers of the said College, but that all the privileges and advantages thereof shall be open and free to all and every Person and Persons whomsoever, without regard to Religious persuasion⁷

Despite lacking money, facilities, a charter, and a name, the College held its first classes on 21 January 1839 in rooms provided in Horton Academy. ‘With twenty-one students, the new institution was suddenly the largest college in the Maritime colonies—and one of the largest in British North America.’⁸ The Baptist Education Association wished to name its new institution Queen’s College to honour the young Queen Victoria who had ascended the throne in 1837. Apparently, however, Victoria was unmoved by the pretensions and presumptions of a ‘Dissenter’s college’ and, after three years of consideration, permission was denied. Accordingly, in 1841 Queen’s College became Acadia College and in 1891 Acadia University.⁹ Probably as a consequence of the financial difficulties faced by the institution, student life at early Acadia was not without physical challenges. In 1842, College authorities requested window glass because the ‘students are complaining that they take colds for the glass being out,’¹⁰ which was not an unreasonable request given Nova Scotian weather.

In 1843 Acadia conferred its first degrees (the Bachelor of Arts) on four young men. Its survival to do so was the most remarkable aspect of the attendant celebration. Unlike Dalhousie College, Acadia had no Castine Fund to draw upon and no noble patron to advance its interests.¹¹ Most of its supporters were richer in faith than otherwise and there was no financial support from the provincial government for the construction of buildings.

While financial issues were always important,¹² the ‘College on the Hill’ could count on the loyalty of the Baptist Convention. Government support for post-secondary educa-

4 Moody, ‘Give us an A’, p. 10.

5 Perkin, *College on the Hill*, p. 2. Also see, J. R. C. Perkin, *Towards Two Hundred: Acadia’s Jubilee, Centenary and Sesquicentennial* (Wolfville: Acadia University, 1990).

6 A decade earlier (1828) the Society had created Horton Academy. ‘One of the chief reasons for founding the College was to ensure that a “complete course of instruction may be afforded and that the young men educated at the Academy be under no inducement to seek in a foreign country the advantages of a collegiate education”’. (Perkin, *College on the Hill*, p. 2; Moody, ‘Maritime Baptists’, pp. 97–98).

7 *Christian Messenger*, Halifax, 7 Dec. 1839.

8 Moody, ‘Give us an A’, p. 13.

9 Perkin, *College on the Hill*, p. 13. Acadia was the anglicized form of l’Acadie, the historical French name for the territory that was Nova Scotia. It was derived from a Mi’kmaq word meaning ‘place of’ or ‘place where’.

10 Moody, ‘Give us an A’, p. 15.

11 The Castine Fund consisted of some twelve thousand pounds (Halifax currency), held in the Nova Scotia treasury, which had been collected during the British occupation of Castine, Maine, during the War of 1812–14. Lieutenant-Governor Lord Dalhousie was determined to establish a university in Nova Scotia and the Fund was dedicated to that use.

12 Robin Harris, *History of Higher Education in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976), p. 11.



FIG. 1 'Acadia graduating class, 1858'. Acadia Photo Collection 366, Esther Clark Wright Archives, Acadia University.

tion was less dependable. Joseph Howe, Nova Scotia's best-known political leader in the nineteenth century, supported the ideal of a central, non-sectarian university (i.e. Dalhousie) and condemned the creation of Acadia. Nonetheless, he prophesied its future. In a somewhat rueful 1849 speech to the Legislative Assembly on the issue of the government's financial support for post-secondary education, he said:

You may withdraw your public money, but there will be more socks and mittins [sic] knit in the hills of Wilmot—more tubs of butter made—more fat calves killed—and more missionary travellers sent through the country—and Acadia college will stand on the hillside in spite of withdrawal of our (Government) grant.¹³

The Baptists were also concerned about the education of their daughters and a Ladies Seminary was established in Wolfville in 1861 and in 1877 the women were given permission to attend classes given at the College. Despite the president's admonition to the students of the Ladies Seminary that 'You must not consider yourselves members of the College, young ladies,' in 1884 the first woman received an Acadia degree.¹⁴ Historian

¹³ Waite, Vol. I, *College*, p. 279. Earlier, Howe had 'declared that he would not give a schilling to denominational schools, and the debate on "the college question" at this stage determined political alignments that lasted for a quarter of a century' (MacNutt, 'Universities', p. 436).

¹⁴ Perkin, *College on the Hill*, p. 5.

Barry Moody reports that ‘the only comment in the minutes of the Board of Governors about this momentous event was that “As yet there are no indications that a mistake was made in admitting women to the privileges of the College”¹⁵ In 1880 the *Acadia Athenaeum*, the voice of the students at Acadia, reported: ‘We are glad to announce that the door to our beloved Acadia has been thrown open to the ladies of our country, and there are already three studying in the Freshman class ... ’ Perhaps, however, the young men who then dominated the student body had a different motivation than did the pioneer women students. ‘We hope,’ the editor continued, ‘that at no distant day there will be at least an equal number of the fair sex in each class, i.e., a lady for every gentleman. We believe in the principle of co-education.’¹⁶ Unlike their sisters at Dalhousie, the female students at Acadia accepted academic costume.¹⁷ The 1884 picture (see Fig. 2) of Acadia’s graduating class shows its first female graduate, Ms. Clara Marshall, seated in the midst of her male classmates, all robed in cap and gown.

Robin Harris, in his *History of Higher Education in Canada*, contends that the history of Acadia was a story with three acts. He described the early period of the story of Acadia as ‘essentially the story of the triumph of the individual,’ and the second was one of ‘... survival and modest consolidation,’ and finally, its establishment ‘as a sound liberal arts college ... ’¹⁸ Today, Acadia University, having severed its links with the Baptist Convention in 1966, is a public university. Acadia serves some 3,600 primarily undergraduate students and has earned public recognition for the quality of its degree programmes by, for example, in 2007 being judged first (jointly with Mount Allison University) and second in 2014 for best overall in the Primarily Undergraduate University category in *Maclean’s* annual rankings of Canada’s universities.

In March 1906, Herbert Creed, a member of the Class of 1865, remembered his years at Acadia. There was then, he wrote, ‘no foot-ball, nor hockey nor basket-ball of course; there was no ball-ground till we made it; there were no college colours nor class colours, no college “yells”, no medals, and few if any prizes.’¹⁹

There was, however, a tradition of academic costume at Acadia. The cap and gown had been part of student life at Acadia since its establishment and no doubt the physical challenges of their accommodations made the extra layer of clothing no discomfort. The Nova Scotia Baptist Education Society eschewed ostentation and when it established Horton Academy (1829): ‘it was suggested that the diet and dress of the Scholars should be of the plainest kind.’²⁰ Ten years later, when the Society created Acadia College, that premise applied to its students as well except for the distinction of the College students wearing

15 Moody, ‘*Give us an A*’, p. 36.

16 *Acadia Athenaeum*, 7.1 (Oct. 1880), p. 9.

17 John N. Grant, ‘The “Canadian Tradition” of Academical Costume in Nova Scotia: The Dalhousie University Model’, *TBS*, 9 (2009), p. 205.

18 Harris, *Higher Education*, pp. 35, 104.

19 Tom Sheppard, *Acadia University* (Halifax: Nimbus, 2013), p. 143. The College ‘Yell’ that Creed missed originated with the students of the Ladies Seminary. In 1905, a new physical education teacher, ‘feeling that the Seminary yell was rather more poignant than forceful,’ added ‘these immortal words: “Give them the axe – the axe – the axe / Hull-a bal-oo / Hull-a bal-oo / Acadia.”’ The College ‘became enamored of this reverberating sonority’ and annexed the Yell over the futile protests of the Seminary girls. Thus did the Axe become an Acadia shibboleth [sic]’ (*The Axe: Centennial Year Book, 1838–1938*, The Editor’s Page).

20 Perkin, *College on the Hill*, p. 1.

FIG. 2 The first female to graduate from Acadia. 'Acadia graduating class, 1884'. Acadia Photo Collection 330, Esther Clark Wright Archives, Acadia University.



a plain black gown. A picture of the seven-member graduating class of 1858 (see Fig. 1) shows them all in cap and gown (and bow ties)²¹ and in 1878 the *Athenaeum* noted that the 'opening of College saw the Freshmen assemble. How picturesque they looked in cap and gown.'²²

In 1881, the thirty students attending the College, when classes ended at four o'clock, 'donned their "college costume" and assembled for evening prayers.'²³ The 'college costume' was, however, meant to be worn on a far more regular basis.²⁴ In 1880 the *Acadia Athenaeum* reported that 'the "Gown" is again in "Town" and "Town" has resumed its customer-y application to business.' While underscoring the economic importance of the College to the community, the *Athenaeum* also emphasized that '... the donning of college regalia brings with it show and dignity.'²⁵ In 1879, however, a letter published in the *Acadia Athenaeum*

21 Sheppard, *Acadia*, p. 109.

22 *Acadia Athenaeum*, 5.1 (Oct. 1878), p. 7.

23 Sheppard, *Acadia*, p. 145.

24 *Catalogue of the Offices and Students of Acadia College, Nova Scotia for the Year 1863-64* (Halifax: 'Christian Messenger' Office, 1863), p. 13. Therein are quoted 'Extracts from the "Laws and Regulations for Students"' concerning discipline and may well have contained directions concerning academic dress also. Despite a dedicated search by Acadia University Archives personnel, no copy of these 'Laws and Regulations' has been found, so this is conjecture.

25 *Acadia Athenaeum*, Oct. 1880, p. 6.

lamented that there 'was a time, and it was not so long ago, when College students were expected to attend class and all meetings of the College dressed ... in cap and gown, but ... this time-honored custom ... has fallen into disuse.' Moreover, the writer complained, 'the authorities expect the students to go to the expense of purchasing gown and cap, for the purpose of appearing but twice a year, at Christmas and in June, arrayed in such costume.' While students did wear their gowns to the monthly lectures organized by the *Athenaeum* Society, this was in accord with 'a law which they themselves have made, and not because the Faculty expect them to do so.' The writer, self-styled as 'Undergraduate', further complained that the alumni did not wear 'their appropriate regalia when they return to the anniversaries in June,' and commented that 'our appearance as a body of students is rendered both strange and irregular by the presence of those dressed in College regalia, together with those who have no distinguishing mark whatsoever.'²⁶ By October 1880, however, the *Athenaeum* reported that the 'cap and gown question has at length been settled. No student is allowed to take his place in the college lecture halls without being clothed upon by his gown, and it is deemed essential that he should wear the prescribed College cap, going to and from lectures in the capacity of a student. The change is generally approved of by students.'²⁷ The decision of the faculty was reinforced and 'the dignity of our institution ... sustained'²⁸ by the 1881 publication of the *Laws of Acadia College and Horton Collegiate Academy* which stated that 'College students will wear gowns whenever they meet for any College exercise,' including classes. Moreover, the regulation continued, 'if a student appears on the grounds of the College or in the street with the gown, he must also wear the cap.'²⁹

This was likely the expectation of the College from the beginning. However, because of two disastrous fires at Acadia (1877 and 1920) which destroyed many of the records, it is not always possible to tell. Certainly the minutes of the board of governors, and especially those of the Senate, suggest reports concerning academic costume that no longer seem to exist. In 1885, for example, the Senate struck a committee 'to consider and report upon the *form of cap* to be worn by members of the Faculty.'³⁰ The cap committee reported promptly, recommending that 'the clause of the regulations concerning costume pertaining to the head covering be rescinded; and that the *cap* hitherto worn in this University be still the recognized form for the Faculty, the Senate and the students in general.'³¹ This reaffirmation of tradition was approved and the mortar-board remained, and remains, the official academic costume cap of Acadia University. However, the 'regulations' referred to

26 *Acadia Athenaeum*, April 1879, pp. 85–86. By 1883, however, the *Athenaeum* complained that while the rule to wear cap and gown at classes 'is well observed, but the same cannot be said of public lectures.' *Acadia Athenaeum*, March 1883, pp. 1–2.

27 *Acadia Athenaeum*, Oct. 1880, p. 10.

28 *Acadia Athenaeum*, May 1880, p. 91. The decision was first reported in May, 1880. Students also had to wear the cap and gown 'on all public occasions'. There was not universal agreement among the students. Some argued that the college uniform was an 'unnecessary appendage'.

29 Acadia University, *Laws of Acadia College and Horton Collegiate Academy* (Wolfville: Printed at the 'Star' Office, 1881). See Law No. 16. Academy students did not wear gowns and it was the mark to 'distinguish the students of the College from those of the Academy' (*Acadia Athenaeum*, April 1879, p. 85).

30 Acadia University, SPACA, Senate Minutes [hereinafter Senate Minutes], 5 June 1885, p. 32. This is not an original research concern at Acadia. As early as 1888, President Sawyer complained that the 'records of that early period are very imperfect ...' (*Jubilee of Acadia College and Memorial Exercises* (Halifax: Holloway, 1889), p. 75).

31 Senate Minutes, 5 June 1885, p. 33.



FIG. 3 W. W. Robson. 'Josephine Osborne Bostwick, '01'. 1901. Acadia Photo Collection 841, Esther Clark Wright Archives, Acadia University.

by the cap committee do not appear to have survived. A tradition at Acadia that survived, perhaps borrowed from the Intercollegiate Costume Code, although modified, is that the tassel adorning the cap denotes the faculty. Since at least 1911, the official faculty colour and the tassel have been coordinated: i.e., the golden-yellow of Science and the then red of Theology. The exception was the Faculty of Arts where the official faculty colour is white but the tassel was then black, although today it is white.

The record of the life of Acadia University confirms that caps and gowns were worn. However, despite the 1881 *Laws*, there is still some question of how consistently they were worn. In 1889 the *Athenaeum* noted that the 'custom of wearing caps and gowns, which has been abolished in so many universities, is still understood to exist at Acadia.' The student forum acknowledged that there were valid reasons for the decision in other institutions, but did not 'advocate such a departure here, nor do we think the body of Students would regard with favour any propositions to discard the college uniform.' The editor of the *Athenaeum* remarked, prophetically, that while the gown was 'a mark of distinction to the College student ... it had better be abolished at an early date than for its observance to become optional or a matter of indifference.' In 1889 at Acadia, 'the rule that students shall appear in gowns [in class] is very generally applied but as the caps are only demanded on more public occasions, ... a great number of students neglect to provide themselves with this part of the uniform.'³² In 1895 the issue of academic dress was reported to the

³² *Acadia Athenaeum*, 15.7 (1889), pp. 79–80. I am grateful to Catherine Fancy of the Acadia

board of governors. 'There was,' the board's minutes reported, 'an irregularity about it that seemed undesirable [...] Some wore their gowns—Some did not. The students complained that it was inconvenient to carry their caps & gowns to & from class.' Consequently, they requested lockers in College Hall 'furnished with lock & key in which they may deposit their toggery, while out of class,' and consented 'to the imposition of an annual tax of 25 cents, for the purpose.' A year later the executive committee reported to the Board that 'lockers sufficient to accommodate the three higher classes have been placed in the cloak room' and thereby, unintentionally, perhaps contributed to the decline of the tradition of academic dress at Acadia.³³

The lockers, however, did not prove to be a permanent solution. In 1901, the Senate, no doubt aware of the earlier student comment and 'in view of the report of the Visiting Committee respecting the lack of uniformity in the wearing of gowns in the College classrooms,' struck a committee 'to take into consideration the question of wearing gowns at College exercises.' Evidently, the issue remained unresolved as it emerged again in 1906 when 'the matter of Academic Costume was referred to the Faculty.'³⁴ Whether on the initiation of the Faculty or not, the University Calendar for 1910/11 provides the first calendared instruction on the College's expectations concerning academic costume. While it was probably reinforcing common knowledge, it again stated that: 'All students must appear in class in college gowns, and when the gown is worn upon the street it must be accompanied by a college cap.' The Calendar specified that the 'gown should be of black worsted stuff, reaching to the shoes, and with full sleeves. The regulation college cap should be of the same material ...'³⁵ At least some students were attached to their gowns. One former student admitted that when University Hall was burning in 1920 his only concern was to get into the building's basement and rescue his gown before the fire consumed it.³⁶

The regulations concerning academic dress remained consistent until 1923/24 when the demanding 'must be worn' became the equally clear 'shall be worn' and the tassel colour for Theology was changed from red to garnet.³⁷ In 1928/29, the new Faculty of Music was added to the University's offerings with 'royal blue' as its official colour.³⁸ In 1926/27, however, the 'shall be worn' was removed from the clause and replaced with 'College gowns may be worn by all students in class.'³⁹ The change does not seem to have been due to any demand from students. In January 1927, the Athenaeum noted that 'it was with consideration' of the University Archives for this reference. Perhaps the 'general' application of the rule suggests that it was not universally supported.

33 AUA, Minute Book of the Board of Governors, 1895–1908, pp. 297, 300.

34 Senate Minutes, 3 June 1901, p. 146; Senate Minutes, 3 June 1906, p. 166.

35 *Calendar of Acadia University*, 1910/11 [hereinafter *Acadia University Calendar*] (Wolfville: News Publishing, 1910), p. 25. Note that the cap was no longer required to be worn on campus.

36 Interview with the Revd Roger Prentice, 28 Aug. 2014, the former University Chaplain, to whom this story was told.

37 *Acadia University Calendar*, 1923/24, p. 34.

38 *Acadia University Calendar*, 1928/29, p. 41. In 1997/98, the Faculty of Professional Studies was created which incorporated a number of former departments and schools including Education. Currently, the tassel colours have expanded. The modern tradition is that the colour of the tassel is linked to a narrower field of study than the administrative unit. So while the Faculty of Science tassel continues to be golden yellow, the Education tassel is green; that of Business Administration is red, while the colour of the Theology tassel is burgundy. The Faculty of Music has become a Department of the Faculty of Arts, but its tassel colour remains blue.

39 *Acadia University Calendar*, 1926/27, p. 35.

able surprise that we read in the University Calendar for 1926/27, "College gowns may be worn by all students in class." The editorial explained that

(the) gown was worn at all classes in this university until the destruction of College Hall by fire in 1920. In that disaster most of the gowns of the students and faculty were destroyed. Since then the student body has not been required to wear the academic costume at class because of the lack of proper accommodation. However, with the opening of the new College Hall last year, the last excuse for further dallying in this matter vanished.⁴⁰

While the *Athenaeum* acknowledged that the change in the Calendar reflected the truth, they regretted 'that the truth was not reached through the enforcement of the older regulation.'⁴¹ Instead, apparently without further student comment, the regulation was further softened in 1935/36 to read 'College gowns *when worn* should be of black worsted stuff, with full sleeves, and reach to the shoes.'⁴²

The Acadia University yearbooks published between 1928 and 1951 reflect the changing tradition surrounding the wearing of academic gowns. In 1928 the picture of the 'Deans of the University' shows them all in gowns and several wearing their academic cap. In 1933 most of the faculty still wore academic gowns, at least for their picture, but the number so garbed fell over the succeeding two decades. Some professors, however, retained their gowns well into the 1960s. Nonetheless, the 1960s effort of a supporter of the University to revive the dying tradition of the gowned professor by purchasing gowns for the faculty was a failure.⁴³ The same pattern was repeated within the student population. The freshmen class picture in 1928 shows most of them in cap and gown as are the majority of the members of the student clubs and societies. The numbers, however, gradually diminish over the years until, by 1950, the only academic costume in the yearbook is worn by the senior class in their graduation pictures.⁴⁴

In 1927 the editor of the *Athenaeum* had expressed the concern that, because caps and gowns were then no longer mandatory, there would not be enough 'College costume' on campus to accommodate the graduates. While apparently the required academic dress was supplied, the need grew with the size of the graduating class. In 1939, the *Acadia Bulletin* announced that the classes of 1939 and 1940 co-operated to 'present to the University 130 gowns and 144 caps, a gift which we are sure will be appreciated for years to come.'⁴⁵ However, the fears of the 1889 *Athenaeum* about academic costume becoming 'optional or a matter of indifference' were realised as the tradition was allowed to wither and wear out gradually at Acadia. The only changes thereafter were in 1964/65 when the length of the gown was altered 'to within twelve inches of the floor,'⁴⁶ and the description of the gown and cap was changed from 'black worsted stuff' to 'black worsted material' by 1970/71.⁴⁷

40 *Acadia Athenaeum*, 54.3, (Jan. 1927), pp. 50–52. The *Athenaeum's* editor expressed the concern that there were not enough caps and gowns on campus to accommodate the needs of the 'eighty or more graduates' who would be expected to wear the 'College costume' at convocation.

41 Ibid.

42 *Acadia University Calendar*, 1935/36, p. 73. Emphasis mine.

43 Interview with the Revd Roger Prentice, former University Chaplin, and University Archivist Patricia Townsend, 28 Aug. 2014. The financial supporter was Ms Connie Hayward.

44 *Acadia University Year Book*, 1928–51.

45 See note 27, above, and *Acadia Bulletin*, 25.4 (July 1939), p. 7.

46 *Acadia University Calendar*, 1964/65, p. 86.

47 *Acadia University Calendar*, 1970/71, p. 34. This was only a change in wording rather than a change in the composition of the cloth.

Even that description of the material of the gowns was likely outmoded, as the University had already elected to make a change from the traditional wool content. The explanation at the University for the alteration is that it was due to a sudden rainstorm during a convocation procession in the late 1960s. The dye in the old gowns ran badly and wet wool takes time to dry. The complaints of the wearers and the damage to the gowns themselves prompted university officials to obtain new gowns in lighter, modern fabrics although they retained the traditional style of the gowns that were replaced.⁴⁸ The 1960s brought another change to Acadia's Convocation. In 1898, the Senate had created a committee to prepare 'English forms for conferring degrees.'⁴⁹ In 1962, President Watson Kirkconnell (1948–64) 'announced that he had received a request from the Graduating Class of 1962 to have their diplomas printed in Latin.' The Senate, after discussion, split on the vote; the chair voted in favour of the students; and the ancient tradition was restored.⁵⁰

In 1970, Hugh Smith described the pre-deluge academic costume of Acadia University as a gown of 'black worsted stuff ... of the patterns laid down by the Intercollegiate Code and a black cloth mortar-board cap.'⁵¹ While I have not found anything in the extant Acadia records that states that the University directly subscribed to any part of the Academic Costume Code, its gowns certainly moved in that direction.⁵² Smith also pointed out that the bachelor's gown of the Code 'is worn closed in front and is distinguished by its pointed sleeves, resembling in this respect the Oxford University Bachelor of Arts gown,'⁵³ which might also point to the direct ancestor of the Acadia gown. It would not be surprising if this were the case. The Oxford gown was historically worn by the students of both the University of King's College and Dalhousie University and the 'men who were the foremost in the founding of [Acadia] College were graduates of King's ...'⁵⁴ Moreover, while the

48 Interview with Kathy O'Connor, Acadia University, 14 July 2014. Since 2010 the gowns and caps have been furnished by Gaspard & Sons through a rental agreement.

49 Senate Minutes, 31 May 1898, p. 131. In 1899, however, 'the ancient and honored Latin formula' was still employed (*The Acadian* (9 June 1899)).

50 The diplomas had been printed in Latin before they were printed in English. Senate Minutes, 10 March 1962.

51 Hugh Smith, *Academic Dress and Insignia of the World: Gowns, Hats, Chains of Office, Hoods, Rings, Medals and Other Degree Insignia of Universities and Other Institutions of Learning*, 3 vols (Cape Town: A. A. Balkema, 1970), Vol. I, p. 142.

52 The Intercollegiate Code of Academic Costume, or Academic Costume Code, was created in 1895 in the United States and provided a standardized approach to the formal wear of the university. See Stephen L. Wolgast, compiler, 'The Intercollegiate Code of Academic Costume: An Introduction', *TBS*, 9 (2009), pp. 9–37; Robert Armagost, 'University Uniforms: The Standardization of Academic Dress in the United States', *TBS*, 9 (2009), pp. 138–55; and among other sources, Eugene Sullivan, 'An Academic Costume Code and An Academic Ceremony Guide', *American Universities and Colleges*, 15th edn (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1997), online at <<http://www.acenet.edu/news-room/Pages/Academic-Costume-Code.aspx>> (accessed 18 March 2016). A number of Nova Scotian universities follow this tradition in their academic costume. However, a close reading of the Acadia University records to 1970 does not reveal any reference to the gowns of the Academic Code.

53 Smith, *Academic Dress*, Vol. II, p. 1528.

54 In 1807 King's proclaimed its 'Habits to be the same as worn in Oxford, their dress plain, decent, and cleanly, without lace, or other expensive or coxcombical ornaments.' See: University of King's College, By-Laws, Rules and Regulations of the University of King's College made by the Board of Governors (Jan. 2004), pp. 15–16. The 1842 Code of Rules at Dalhousie University decreed that 'the undergraduate Gown shall be of the same pattern as the undergraduate Gown now used in King's College, Windsor ...'. Dalhousie University Archives, Board of Governors Minutes, 5 Nov.

Code specifies three distinct gowns (bachelor's, master's, and doctoral), Acadia traditionally used only the bachelor's gown for its earned degrees. But, whatever its genesis, today Acadia's academic gown conforms to the American style. It is described as 'a standard "bachelor" gown that would generally be worn at other institutions granting bachelor degrees.' It is a zippered gown, but can be worn open or closed, depending on the tradition of the university. At Acadia, it is worn open. It is currently worn by the recipients of both undergraduate and graduate degrees and Acadia has 'moved to a souvenir "one size fits all" cap'.⁵⁵ The academic costume to be worn by the graduands of the joint PhD programme (Education) in the Faculty of Professional Studies and other PhDs offered at Acadia University was determined at an 11 April 2016 meeting of the Senate. The passed motion declared that the academic costume of all 'earned doctoral degrees at Acadia University be a navy blue robe, a red garnet hood that will be lined with white satin and navy blue satin piping, and a navy blue velvet befeater hat with red garnet strand and tassel'.⁵⁶

The honorary degrees presented by both Acadia University and the Acadia Divinity College (whose degrees are granted by Acadia) involve a variety of gowns. The Acadia University honorary doctorate recipients wear gowns that follow the style of the US Code. The body of the gown is, however, red and, for example, the DSc (Hon.) gown has golden yellow facings with the three bars of the same colour on the sleeves. The cord and tassel on the black stuff mortar-board are also of golden yellow. The exception was the gown of the DD (Hon.), which appropriately used the 'pulpit' gown accompanied by a mortar-board with a garnet cord and tassel although the tradition has changed since 2011.

The Acadia Divinity College was established in 1968 and operates as both a seminary of the Convention of Atlantic Baptist Churches and as the Faculty of Theology at Acadia University. It is located on the Acadia University campus and shares facilities with the University. The College offers earned degrees at the graduate level, including a Master of Divinity, a Master of Arts (Theology), and a Doctor of Ministry. Serving as the Faculty of Theology, Acadia University, it offers the Bachelor of Theology programme. The bachelors wear the regular Acadia undergraduate gown and mortar-board with a burgundy cord and tassel. The academic dress designated for the College's master's degrees includes the undergraduate gown and the mortar-board with a white cord and tassel marking the MA (Theology) and a burgundy cord and tassel for the MDiv. The DMin gown is of the American doctoral style. The body, however, is dark navy blue with front panels and sleeve bars of red velvet. The cord and tassel on the cap are the same red.⁵⁷

1842, p. 42; 2 Feb. 1843, p. 50 (*Jubilee of Acadia College and Memorial Exercises* (Halifax: Holloway, 1889), p. 75).

⁵⁵ E-mail from Kevin Knight, manager, Acadia University Bookstore to Kathy O'Connor, executive assistant to the president and vice-chancellor, secretary to the board of governors, 21 Nov. 2014, and forwarded to the author; Website, 2015, Acadia University Convocation. 'Academic Attire', which states: 'In all cases, the academic gown should be open and flowing. Do not button it up.'

⁵⁶ The PhD (Education) at Acadia University is part of a joint degree programme in cooperation with St Francis Xavier University and Mount Saint Vincent University (telephone interviews with Dr Ann Vibert, Director of the School of Education, Acadia University, 18 Nov. 2014 and 13 April 2016; Minutes of Senate, Item 4, e, Motion to Senate re: Academic Regalia for the PhD program, 11 April 2016).

⁵⁷ Senate Minutes, 13 June 1968; email from Brian Weese, vice-president, Harcourts, to the Author, 4 Dec. 2014, with attachments on the gowns, etc., of Acadia University's Honorary Doctorates, Chancellor's and President's Robes and caps; telephone interview with James Marquis of Gaspard & Sons, 2 Dec. 2014. I am grateful to Dr Robert Raeside (telephone interview, 19 Jan. 2015), the

The academic costume of cap and gown at Acadia University is complemented by the hood. The first reference to a hood was, however, incidental to any ceremonial discussion. In the University Calendar's 1869/70 list of the prizes available to students, the 'Catalogue' states that 'In case there shall be less than ten matriculates in any year, the money shall be expended by the Faculty to procure gowns, caps, and hoods, for the occasional use of non-resident Alumni.'⁵⁸ However, even this listing disappeared after 1875 and the other records, including the minutes of the board of governors, do not tell us if any articles of academic costume were acquired, their intended use, or, indeed, which hood would be purchased. It could be concluded, however, that their primary purpose would be at the University's Convocation exercises, the chief ceremonial occasion of the university year.

At Acadia, convocation was traditionally held in early June in concert with the annual meeting of the board of governors. Convocation was historically the centrepiece of the celebration of the 'Anniversary' when degrees would 'be conferred with the usual public solemnities.'⁵⁹ In 1888, however, to mark the University's fiftieth anniversary, the ceremonies were held on 29 August. The University Senate was apparently concerned about the solemnity of the ceremony that year as they resolved that 'the members of the Faculty be requested to wear their Academic costume at the exercises tomorrow afternoon.'⁶⁰ Similarly, in June 1895, the Senate determined that 'all students be required to march in the procession on Anniversary Day and that we request the Faculty to enforce the wearing of caps and gowns.'⁶¹ This resolve on the part of the Senate could well have been, in part, a response to the 1889 article in the *Athenaeum* in which the editor noted: 'On graduation day those who appear in full uniform will be conducted to the seats reserved for "the members of the college" but unless a little more stress is laid upon the college law in regard to caps and gowns the whole number of students will not be present.'⁶²

When the hood was introduced as part of the graduating student's full-dress academic costume is not completely clear. It is my opinion, however, that the hood was used from the beginning, which, again, would be consistent with the King's College tradition of many of Acadia's founders.⁶³ While the earliest available sources are unhelpful and do not refer

University Marshall, for further clarification about the colour of the honorary doctoral gowns.

58 *Catalogue of the Officers and Students of the University of Acadia College, for the Academic Year, 1869-1870* (Halifax: Christian Messenger Office, 1879), p. 12. The only award for other than academic prowess was one for cricket. The entry does obviously suggest that hoods were then used at Acadia.

59 Minutes of the Board of Governors, Annual Meeting, 7 June 1861, p. 112. The 'Anniversary' was described in the 1854 'Catalogue' thus: 'A public anniversary is held in the month of June in every year, when Candidates for Degrees deliver public exercises; addresses or essays may be given by persons connected with the College, or otherwise selected for this purpose; a meeting of the Governors takes place; and Degrees are conferred' (*Catalogue of the Students of the University of Acadia College, also of the Teachers and Pupils of Horton Academy, 1854* (Halifax: W. Cunnabell, 1854), p. 18).

60 Senate Minutes, Special Meeting, 28 Aug. 1888, p. 63.

61 Senate Minutes, Special Meeting, 4 June 1895, p. 117. Because it was necessary to make the request, it suggests that otherwise the caps and gowns might not have been worn.

62 *Acadia Athenaeum*, 15.7 (1889), pp. 79-80. 'Why,' the editor asked, 'should not this be as rigidly enforced as the requirement that students shall provide themselves with text-books?'

63 One of the founder's predecessors, Myles Cooper, had been the president of King's College (New York). Cooper, MA, DCL (Oxon), originated King's academic dress requirements in 1763, which he based on his days as a student at Queen's College (Stephen Wolgast, 'King's Crowns: The History of Academic Dress at King's College and Columbia University', *TBS*, 9 (2009), pp. 80-137, at

to hoods directly, the newspaper account of the 1843 convocation, Acadia's first, describes the procession, assemblage, the 'themes' presented by the seniors and others, the choir's contribution, and the degree-granting ceremony. The 'four candidates,' it relates, were 'introduced by Mr. Elder, who in a Latin address requested for them admission to the degree of Bachelor of Arts. Professor Crowley replied in Latin and having conferred the degrees delivered to each his diploma on parchment, printed in Latin. The graduates then retired, and soon returned attired in the badges of their lately acquired literacy distinction.'⁶⁴ While the 'badges' are not described, the most identifiable badge of the bachelor's degree is the academic hood. In 1868, at Acadia's twenty-fifth convocation, the senior class of ten students 'in their College costume' gave their 'orations' and were presented for their diplomas. 'These being handed to each with the usual, 'Admittimus te, Domine, ad gradum Baccalauri in Artibus, et ad omnes ejus honores et dignitates, &c.,' they retired for investiture and appeared again with their Bachelor's hoods ...'⁶⁵

Over thirty years later, the 1899 description of convocation included the 'strains of a well executed march' and the long procession with 'president and professors in scarlet hoods, with 23 seniors in cap and gown.' After the presentation of senior themes, the class '... retired to don their bachelor's hoods.' In a slight alteration to the earlier ceremony, the 'graduating class then returned and with the ancient and honoured Latin formula were severally received with the B. A. Degree and given the customary parchment.'⁶⁶ The consistency of the tradition of the ceremony suggests the use of the hood as the 'badge' of the bachelor's degree from the first convocation. It is notable that while hoods appeared in the graduating class picture in 1879, otherwise they were not normally part of the pictures of graduating seniors until the twentieth century.⁶⁷

Acadia was not immune to the growing North American interest in academic ceremony at the turn of the twentieth century. The *Acadia Athenaeum* revealed in May 1901 'that a growing sentiment in favour of the general use of the college regalia is developing' and in June reported that 'Thirty-one young men and women arrayed themselves in ermine, received their diplomas.' The 1903 commencement exercises featured the 'usual stately procession of professors in caps and hoods of many colors.' Then, 'after the delivery of essays,' the senior class was introduced 'as candidates for degrees,' and the 'Class of Nineteen Hundred and Three, Acadia University, were duly capped and ermined and parchmented ... before a large assembly in College Hall.'⁶⁸ The June 1901 graduation pic-

pp. 82, 86). I am grateful to the editor for this observation.

⁶⁴ *Christian Messenger*, Halifax, 7 July 1843, p. 214. Despite a search in the available records, Mr Elder has not been identified.

⁶⁵ *Christian Messenger*, Halifax, 17 June 1868, p. 202.

⁶⁶ *The Acadian*, Wolfville, 9 June 1899. The tradition of retiring and then returning wearing the bachelor's hood and being so greeted is referred to in a number of the other newspaper accounts of convocation.

⁶⁷ See the collection of pictures in the University Archives. One picture, identified as the Class of 1879, shows them wearing hoods. Later graduates, until the turn of that century, are in only cap and gown, which suggests either a tradition was broken in 1879 or pictures were taken prior to graduation and no degree no hood! Hoods were mentioned in the official records in 1895, but not so as to suggest that there was anything new or unusual in their use (Governors Minutes, 1885–1908, 3 June 1895; Report of the Senate, p. 270). Item No.7 of the Senate's Report, which was supported by the Board of Governors, recommended that the fees charged for BA and MA degrees be set at \$5 and \$10 respectively but that the graduands would receive 'gratuitous use of hoods in both cases'.

⁶⁸ *Acadia Athenaeum*, May 1901, p. 249; June 1901, p. 314; June 1903, pp. 363–64.

ture of Josephine Osborne Bostwick (see Fig. 3) shows her in a full-length white dress, a black Acadia academic gown, and a long black hood edged in white fur (ermine) and a pronounced liripipe, but without her cap.⁶⁹

University records do not reveal the source of that particular hood but it had probably always been used at Acadia. However, what Smith described in 1970 as the 'distinctive simple shape' of the Acadia hood was initiated in 1912.⁷⁰ The attention of the Senate meeting on 27 May 1912 was drawn to 'the adoption of some specific design for hoods for the several degrees conferred by Acadia' and, after a description of 'the styles followed in English and American Universities,' the Senate resolved that 'the question be left to the Faculty with power to act.'⁷¹ It is unclear how quickly the Faculty, who had likely initiated the discussion, responded as the University Archives picture collection reveals that the nineteenth-century hood continued to be used for a number of years. The 1922 picture of the graduating class shows them all wearing the hood edged with ermine. In an obvious gender distinction, the nineteen women in the fifty-four member class all wore their gowns open while the men wore the gown closed.⁷² In 1923 the Senate discussed the 'advisability of conferring hoods with honorary degrees' and recommended the establishment of a joint committee with the governors to further consider the question. In addition, the committee was 'asked to prepare a descriptive list of appropriate hoods for the different degrees.' Later that year the 'Committee on Hoods and Academic Dress' recommended that 'an appropriate hood be presented with honorary degrees' and reported the creation of a sub-committee 'to present a report re. schedule of hoods ...'. The May 1923 report of the sub-committee was adopted⁷³ and appeared for the first time in the 1923/24 University Calendar. The colours ascribed by the 1923/24 schedule of hoods have been consistent, although new degrees and additional colours for hoods have been added over the years. The colours also consistently featured, especially in the honorary degrees, the garnet and royal blue official colours of Acadia University.⁷⁴

The new Bachelor of Arts hood was described as being of 'Black goods with border of white silk' while that of the Master of Arts was of 'Black goods with white silk lining.' Baty's comment on these hoods in 1934 was that the 'aesthetic efforts are good: but the B.A. and M.A. are perilously like the M.A. of Cambridge', at least in colour. The Bachelor of Science had a 'border of golden yellow silk edged with white silk' and gold was traditionally identified with Science. The three earned degrees of the Faculty of Theology included a BA

69 Acadia University Archives, APC 841. One of those attending the Acadia Reunion in 1961 was Mrs H. E. Rowley (Josephine Bostwick). She was described as 'also a graduate of Columbia University, for many years a teacher of English in the United States, is making her home at 8 Briar Lane, Newtonville, Mass.' ('Jubilee Classes in 1961', *Acadia Bulletin*, 47 (April 1961), p. 3). Pictures of her 1901 classmates reveal that the hood was worn, or draped, in a variety of ways, to the point that it is at times difficult to determine if a hood or a sash was employed. However, the Bostwick picture clearly shows that it is a hood.

70 Smith, *Academic Dress*, Vol. 1, p. 142.

71 Senate Minutes, 24 May 1912, p. 185.

72 Acadia University, Class of 1922, Golden Anniversary, 1922-72, Class Picture, n.p.

73 Senate Minutes, 14 Feb. 1923, n.p.; Board of Governors, Minutes, 1908-49, 16 Feb. 1926, p. 211; Senate Minutes, 31 March 1923, n.p.; Board of Governors, Minutes, 1908-49, 10 April 1923, p. 212. Senate Minutes, 22 May 1923, n.p.

74 The current identification of a bright red (at least brighter than garnet) with Acadia is a more modern (i.e. half a century) tradition, which at least some of the purists lament.



Dan Callis/Courtesy of the Office of Advancement

FIG. 4 Convocation Procession, Acadia University.

(Theology)—garnet silk border, edged with white silk; MA (Theology)—garnet silk lining; and, a BD—‘Black silk with garnet silk lining and white silk border’. The silk shell of the BD hood would appear to be an anomaly but, as Baty explained in 1934, Acadia ‘gives the B. D. as a post-graduate degree, so that the B. D. is, as at Oxford and Cambridge, superior to the M. A.’ By 1973/74, however, the BDiv had become an MDiv, which adopted the BDiv hood.⁷⁵

The actual adoption of the 1923/24 schedule of hoods was gradual. In 1925 the University’s 87th Convocation was held in the new University Hall. The graduating class ‘marched slowly to seats reserved for them ...’ The *Athenaeum* reported that the ‘ceremony of conferring degrees was most impressive, the candidates kneeling in turn before Pres-

⁷⁵ T. Baty, *Academic Colours* (Tokyo: Kenkyusha Press, 1934), pp. 29–30. A recent discussion of Cambridge’s academic dress is: Nicholas Groves, assisted by Paul Coxon and John Horton, ‘The Academic Robes of Graduates of the University of Cambridge from the End of the Eighteenth Century to the Present Day’, *TBS*, 13 (2013), pp. 74–100. Bruce Christianson, ‘Lined with Gold: London University and the Colour of Science’, *TBS*, 5 (2005), pp. 80–89. These were also the colours chosen by the creators of the Intercollegiate Code in the United States, who borrowed liberally from the traditions of the older British institutions, to represent Arts and Science (*Acadia University Calendar*, 1973/74, p. 34). The distinction was maintained when the Master of Theology hood was created by a vote of the Senate in 1970. It was to ‘be of black material, be trimmed in red velveteen and be lined with Copenhagen blue with a blue insert’ (Senate Minutes, 13 April 1970, p. 207). This was the first record that I have found in the Senate Minutes of the details of a specific hood that was created by motion.

ident Patterson.⁷⁶ In the senior class picture of 1925 all of the graduates wore the traditional ermine-edged hoods but the following year (1926) the entire class donned the new fabric-edged hoods, presumably according to the 1923/24 schedule. However, in 1927, the graduating class reverted to the ermine hoods. In 1928, as portrayed in the first Acadia University student yearbook, the graduates of the Faculty of Arts wore the traditional ermined hoods while those of the Faculty of Science sported the new style hoods as did the Music graduates by 1929. The historic hoods were gradually replaced as by the 1940s some Arts students, either by choice or by chance, wore the old hoods and some the new. In 1946 only one student wore an ermined hood and by 1947 all the old hoods had been retired.⁷⁷

While Acadia had granted honorary MA degrees as well as doctoral honours for generations, the 1923/24 schedule also described four honorary doctoral hoods.⁷⁸ In the Faculty of Arts, the LLD hood was of 'Black silk with white corded silk lining and border of garnet velvet' while the DLitt hood was described as being of 'Black silk with white corded silk lining and border of blue velvet'. The hood of the DSc in the Faculty of Science was 'Black silk lined with white corded silk, with border of golden-yellow velvet' and that of the DD of the Faculty of Theology was 'Black silk with garnet silk lining and blue velvet border'.⁷⁹ By 1936/37, several new degrees had been added, including the 1935 Bachelor of Education (the first in Nova Scotia) with a hood of 'Black goods with border of dark green silk'; an MS with a hood of 'Black goods, lined with golden yellow silk, and edged with white silk'; and both bachelor's (border of royal blue silk edged with white silk) and master's (white silk border lined with royal blue silk) degrees in the new Faculty of Music. The Faculty of Music also granted an honorary DMus with a hood of 'Black silk with white silk lining and border of blue silk'.⁸⁰

By the early 1980s, the University listed eleven bachelor's degrees, seven master's, and five honorary doctorates. The Doctor of Divinity's hood, as described by Harcourts, is cut to 'Pattern #54, Distinctive Simple' shape with a black silk shell and garnet taffeta lining. It has a 2½-inch philosophy blue velvet border on the inside and outside of the

76 *Acadia Athenaeum*, 52.7 (June 1925), p. 106. Board of Governors, Minutes, 1908–49, 11 Sept. 1923, p. 212. At that meeting the Governors 'Resolved that the Board approve of conferring degrees upon the graduates hereafter individually ...'. Frederic W. Patterson was president from 1923 to 1948.

77 Acadia University, APC, No. 356: Senior Class 1925; No. 357: Senior Class 1926; No. 358: Senior Class 1927; Acadia University Year Book, 1928–51.

78 In 1888 the Senate discussed the 'question of conferring honorary degrees upon women' but deferred the consideration until they obtained 'further information respecting the customs of other educational institutions in relation to this matter' (Senate Minutes, 1882–1914, 6 June 1888, p. 63). The Senate apparently deliberated at length, or at least slowly, but eventually, in 1911, granted honorary MA degrees to Grace Dean McLeod Rogers and Margaret Marshall Saunders. It was 1923 before Evelyn Keirstead Farris received the first honorary doctorate conferred on a woman. See Margaret Conrad, Elizabeth Rice, and Patricia Townsend, *Catalogue Notes, Women at Acadia University: The First Fifty Years, 1884–1934—An Exhibition of Photographs from Acadia University Archives* (Wolfville: Acadia University, n.d.).

79 The LLD had been first conferred in 1888. It was granted on the occasion of the institution's fiftieth anniversary to the Revd Artemas Wyman Sawyer, DD, the President of Acadia, 1869–96. As a mark of great respect, it was the only honorary degree granted at this notable event (*Jubilee of Acadia College and Memorial Exercises* (Halifax: Holloway, 1889), p. 84; *Acadia University Calendar, 1923/24*, p. 35).

80 *Acadia University Calendar, 1936/37*, p. 72.



Courtesy of the Office of Advancement and John McNally



Dan Callis/Courtesy of Advancement Office, ADC

FIG. 5 (Above) Dr Harry G. Gardner, President, Acadia Divinity College (in academic dress) and, right, John Keith, DD (Hon), in 2014.

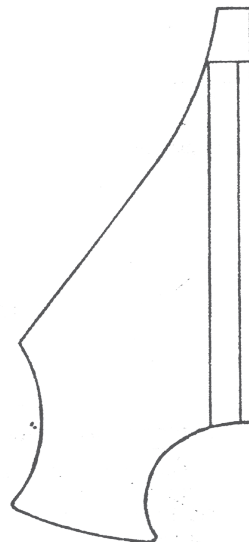
FIG. 6 John McNally, DMin, Acadia Divinity College, in 2011.

anterior edge. The loop is of black soutache and its keeper is black braided soutache with two black buttons. The accompanying cap is a mortar-board of black stuff with a garnet cord and tassel. The Doctor of Civil Laws hood is of black silk with a white taffeta lining. The border is 2½ inches of garnet velvet, on both the inside and the outside of the anterior edge. The loop is black soutache but the keeper is white braided soutache with two white buttons. The cap is of black stuff with a black cord and tassel. The Doctor of Letters hood is likewise of black silk and white taffeta but distinguished by a 2½-inch philosophy blue velvet border. The cap is the mortar-board of black stuff and sports a black cord and tassel. The Doctor of Science hood is also of black silk and white taffeta, but is differentiated by its border of golden yellow velvet. Its cap is the black stuff mortar-board with a golden yellow cord and tassel. The hood of the Doctor of Music (Hon.) follows the system except that its 2½ -inch border is of royal blue taffeta rather than velvet. The cap is the mortar-board of black stuff, decorated with a cord and tassel of royal blue. In 2011, the list of honorary doctorates contained the two additional categories of Humanities and Literature.

The hood of the Doctor of Ministry of the Acadia Divinity College is the shape of the Code's doctoral hood. It breaks with the Code in that its shell is navy blue rather than black. Its lining is white satin which turns over to trim one exterior edge of the hood. The 5-inch velvet trim of the hood is maroon, in keeping with the blue, red, and white official colours of the Acadia Divinity College. In addition, by 'Bill #76 of the Nova Scotia Legislature 1968, the Senate of the Divinity College is authorized to present nominees for honorary degrees for the consideration of the Senate of Acadia University.' Since 2011, this has meant that Acadia's honorary Doctor of Divinity degree has been granted at the request of the Divinity



Dan Callis/Courtesy of the Office of Advancement



Smith, *Academic Dress*, Vol. I, Plate 38

FIG. 8 The shape of the hood, based on the 1923/24 schedule of hoods, for all earned degrees granted by Acadia, showing position of bindings.

FIG. 7 (Left) From left to right: the Rev. Terry LeBlanc, DD (Hon.), Chancellor Libby Burnham ('60), Ron James, DH (Hon.), President Ray Ivany.

College. The 2014 honorary DD was bedecked in a red gown in the Code style with the College's insignia on the facings and a doctoral bonnet and a hood.⁸¹

In 1970 Smith stated that 'No official costume is prescribed for the OFFICERS of Acadia University.'⁸² However, in the first year of its existence, the Senate created a committee 'to consider and report on the *insignia* or *robes of office* to be worn by different members of the Senate.' The committee reported on 4 June 1884 and the Senate determined that its members should be 'clothed in Academic Costume' at its meetings. The rule, however, was not strictly enforced as on several occasions 'on motion, Academic Costume was suspended for the present session.'⁸³ While the modern Senate has shed academic costume, other

81 *Acadia University Calendar*, 1983–84, pp. 165–66; e-mail from James Patterson, sales manager, Gaspard & Sons, to the author, 7 Jan. 2015; e-mail from Eveline DeSchiffart, executive assistant to the president, Acadia Divinity College, to the author, 12 Jan. 2015; Acadia University, Awards Committee for Honorary Degrees and Emeriti Distinction: Honorary Doctorate Guidelines Approved by the Senate, 12 Sept. 2011: see Selection Process, No. 2 and No. 6.

82 Smith, *Academic Dress*, Vol. I, p. 142.

83 Senate Minutes, 6 June 1883, p. 14; 4 June 1884, p. 22; 2 June 1885, p. 31; 4 and 5 Nov. 1885, p. 36.

officials of the University have acquired robes of office. In 1969, Acadia created ‘... a new titular head of the university—the office of Chancellor’ and appointed Henry P. MacKeen (1892–1971), a former Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia (1963–68), to the position.⁸⁴ To enhance the dignity of the office, the University acquired suitable robes for the public duties of the chancellor. Currently, the chancellor wears a closed-front black corded poly/silk Geneva gown with an inner cuff (see Fig. 7). The front facing is ‘Old Gold Velvet American Doctor’ and its sleeves are marked with ‘Three Chevrons of Old Gold Velvet’ which are actually bars, or stripes. The chancellor’s cap is a bonnet of black velvet with a gold metallic cord and tassel. In keeping with modern tradition, ceremonial robes were also acquired for the holder of the joint office of president and vice-chancellor. While in the recent past the president wore academics, today the president/vice-chancellor wears a closed front navy blue Geneva gown with inner cuff (see Fig. 7). The front facings are ‘Flag Red Velvet American Doctor’ and the sleeves bear ‘three chevrons of red flag velvet’. The president’s cap is also a doctor’s bonnet but in flag red velvet with a gold cord and tassel.⁸⁵

While the use of academic costume at Acadia University has followed that of other institutions, Acadia has increased the ceremonial occasions at which academic dress is worn. First-year students, as part of their introduction to the life of the University, and perhaps to remind them that the principal part of that life is academic, are inducted by a matriculation ceremony where they wear the academic gowns. In a link to Acadia’s ceremonial history, the gowns that are used are those from the pre-1970s period. The long-standing tradition of the ‘College costume’, while today limited to the ceremonial, nonetheless continues at Acadia University.

84 H. P. MacKeen, CD, QC, BA, BCL., LL.D., DCL, was born in Glace Bay and educated at Dalhousie University in Law. He was called to the Bar in 1921 and practised in Halifax. The son of a Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia, he served in both World Wars and achieved the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel in WW II. He served as Lt.-Gov. of Nova Scotia from 1963 to 1968. In 1969, he was made an Officer of the Order of Canada and became the first Chancellor of Acadia University. On 15 Sept. 1969, MacKeen was welcomed at a meeting of the University Senate. Despite MacKeen’s short tenure in office, he was remembered at Acadia when an auditorium/ballroom in the student centre was named in his honour. See Moody, *Give us an A*, p. 102; Government of Nova Scotia website <<http://lt.gov.ns.ca>> on Lieutenants-Governor; Senate Minutes, 15 Sept. 1969; Sheppard, *Acadia*, p. 151.

85 E-mail from Brian Weese, vice-president, Harcourts, to the author, 4 Dec. 2014, with attachments on the gowns, etc., of Acadia University’s Honorary Doctorates, Chancellor’s and President’s Robes and caps.