

JAN. 27/02

(1)
CHRONOLOGICAL EVOLUTION OF THE
'GUGULA / SMEDLEY / MEZZOMO, ARCHITECTS' OFFICE

THE EARLIEST YEARS OF THE PRACTICE IS INEXTRICABLY TIED IN WITH FRED ROUNTHWAITE, A NATIVE OF THE SAULT, WHOSE FAMILY HISTORY DATES BACK TO THE 18'S WHEN HIS GRANDFATHER CAME FROM ENGLAND. FRED OBTAINED HIS EDUCATION IN THE SAULT AND AT COLLEGIATE HE WAS TAUGHT ^{MATH} BY JESSIE IRVING. HE FINISHED HIS ARCHITECTURAL TRAINING AT THE U OF T ENGINEERING SCHOOL JUST BEFORE THE WAR. HE SERVED IN THE ROYAL CANADIAN ENGINEERS AND AFTER THE WAR HE JOINED TOGETHER WITH THREE PARTNERS TO FORM "ROUNTHWAITE, FAIRFIELD CAMERON & MURRAY", IN TORONTO.

P. IN THE POST-WAR PERIOD, THERE WERE NO ARCHITECTURAL OFFICES IN SAULT STE MARIE, SO ANY WORKS OF ANY SIZE WERE DONE BY OFFICES FROM SUDBURY, TORONTO OR HAMILTON. AN ENGINEER DESIGNED THE MEMORIAL GARDENS, OF TORONTO, PACE & STEELE, DID MOST OF THE NEW PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND PETER O'GORMAN, OF SUDBURY, DID THE SEPARATE SCHOOLS. MARANI MORRIS & ALLAN

(2) OF TORONTO DESIGNED THE ARMOURIES ON PINE ST.

P. ROUNTHWAITE'S SAULT CONNECTION ALLOWED HIS FIRM TO OBTAIN THE COMMISSION TO DESIGN THE FIFTH FLOOR ADDITION TO THE PLUMMER HOSPITAL IN 1948. PREVIOUSLY THEY HAD DESIGNED THE ORIGINAL ADDITION TO THE "HOUSE OF REFUGE" ON NORTHERN ROAD, LATER CALLED THE F.V. DIVEY HOME FOR THE AGED. IT WAS AT THE OFFICIAL OPENING THAT I FIRST MET FRED ROUNTHWAITE. JESSIE IRVING KNEW OF MY INTEREST IN ARCHITECTURE AND ARRANGED A MEETING WITH FRED. HE BASICALLY DISCOURAGED ME FROM ENTERING A TOUGH FIELD WITH FLUCTUATING FORTUNES YEAR TO YEAR.

ANYWAY, I ENTERED U OF T IN 1947 AND GRADUATED IN 19⁵2. I TRIED MANY OFFICES FOR WORK BUT HAD NO LUCK UNTIL I WENT TO ROUNTHWAITE'S OFFICE WHERE I HAD WORKED THE SUMMER BEFORE MY LAST YEAR AT SCHOOL.

I WAS TOLD THAT I COULD GET ^A JOB WITH THEM PROVIDED I WAS PREPARED TO RETURN TO THE SAULT WHERE THE MAJOR ADDITION TO

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THE PLUMMER HOSPITAL WAS TO BEGIN ^{IN} THE FALL OF 1952. I WORKED THE SUMMER IN THEIR TORONTO OFFICE - THE FIRM WAS THEN DOWN TO TWO PARTNERS: ROUNTWAITE & FAIRFIELD.

THE PLUMMER ADDITION WAS TENDERED IN THE SUMMER AND A PORT ARTHUR (THUNDER BAY) COMPANY WAS LOW BIDDER: CLAYDON CO. LTD. - AN UNKNOWN ENTITY IN THE Sault. THEY PASSED THE TEST FOR FINANCIAL STABILITY WHEN OLIVER CLAYDON PRESENTED THE BOARD WITH A LETTER OF CREDIT THAT WAS 10 TIMES THE VALUE OF THE CONTRACT, ^R WHICH WAS JUST OVER ONE MILLION.

THE CONTRACTOR WAS TO PROVIDE A ^{SITE} OFFICE FOR THE ARCHITECT AND THAT WAS THE ROUNTWAITE & FAIRFIELD OFFICE FOR MY NEXT TWO YEARS.

AS THE HOSPITAL WAS NEARING COMPLETION, WE HAD A FEW ^{OTHER} SMALL PROJECTS AND RENTED A MODEST SPACE OVER THE ROYAL BANK AND WITH HOME-MADE FURNITURE WERE IN BUSINESS AS A ONE-MAN BRANCH OFFICE WITH MY SISTER WANDA AS PART-TIME SECRETARY.

(3) B AROUND 1954, THE ST. LUKE'S PRO-CATHEDRAL HAD A MAJOR FIRE WHICH LEFT ONLY THE SOUTH WALL & TOWER STANDING. ROUNTHWAITE'S FAMILY CONNECTIONS TO THAT CHURCH MEANT THAT HE HAD THE JOB FOR ^{DESIGN OF THE} RECONSTRUCTION INTERESTINGLY, HIS GRANDFATHER HAD HELP BUILT THE ORIGINAL MODEST CHURCH IN THE 1880'S. LATER ADDITION OF THE BELL-TOWER INVOLVED HIS FATHER WHO WAS AN ENGINEER WORKING IN THE PAPER MILL FOR FRANCIS H. CLEGG. IN ANY CASE THE CHURCH WAS GOING TO BE ELEVATED TO CATHEDRAL STATUS WHICH CALLED FOR A MORE THAN DOUBLING OF THE ORIGINAL. IT WAS DECIDED TO SALVAGE THE SOUTH WALL, TOWER AND PORTICO FACING ALBERT ST. THE NORTH WALL WAS LOCATED SO THE WIDTH OF THE CATHEDRAL WAS DOUBLED. A CHAPEL WING WAS INCLUDED WHICH ^{INCORPORATED} INCLUDED THE ORIGINAL OAK SCREEN AND ALTER FURNITURE WHICH HAD BEEN SAVED FROM THE FIRE EXCEPT FOR SMOKE COATING. THE ORGAN WAS REBUILT AND ^{IN} THE FINAL DESIGN THE WEST STAINED GLASS WINDOW WAS DONATED BY THE PARISHIONERS AND THE EAST WINDOW BY SIR JAMES DUNN.

P.S. STONE FOR THE EXTERIOR CAME FROM THE SITE DURING EXCAVATION FOR THE FOUNDATIONS.

(4) (AS AN ASIDE, ROUNTHWAITÉ HAD DESIGNED THE ORIGINAL HOME FOR THE PRESIDENT & CEO OF ALGOMA STEEL ON SUMMIT AVE. ^{IN THE LATE 40'S.} FIRST OCCUPANT WAS SIR JAMES DUNN FOLLOWED BY DAVE HOLBROOK.)

ANOTHER PROJECT OF SIZEABLE PROPORTIONS WAS THE NEW PLUMMER HOSPITAL NURSES TRAINING SCHOOL & RESIDENCE. WORK ON THE DESIGN STARTED IN 1954-5 BUT CONSTRUCTION WAS DELAYED BECAUSE TENDERS CAME IN TOO HIGH. ANOTHER INTERESTING PROJECT WAS THE OFFICE & LAB FOR DOMINION TAR & CHEMICAL ON BASE LINE (NOW DEMOLISHED). ALSO, FRANK DAVES KEPT COMING UP WITH NEW ADDITIONS IN THE 1950'S ~~HOWEVER,~~ IN TO THE DAVES HOME INCLUDING A THREE-STORY BED-CARE ADDITION, CHAPEL, GARAGE FOR FARM IMPLEMENTS, ^{ETC.} THE OLD HO^USE OF REFUGE WAS RENOVATED AND JOINED TO THE NEW ADDITION OF 1948.

HOWEVER, AROUND 1958, JOBS WERE SCARCE & WE WERE ENTERTAINING THOUGHTS OF CLOSING THE OFFICE. JUST IN TIME, THE NEW ADDITION TO THE PLUMMER HOSPITAL CAME ALONG.

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THE MASTER PLAN DICTATED THAT THE ADDITION TO THE ORIGINAL 1927 "A"-WING BE ERECTED TO THE ~~EAST~~^{WEST}, (WHERE THE DOCTOR'S BUILDING NOW STANDS).

THE PROBLEM WAS THE LAND WAS OCCUPIED BY SEVERAL RESIDENCES ON QUEEN & FRONT STREETS.

FORTUNATELY FOR THE PLUMMER BOARD (BUT UNFORTUNATELY FOR THE BETTER T-SHAPED PLAN)

ALGDMA STEEL, THROUGH DAVE HOLBROOK DONATED

A SIZEABLE CHUNK OF LAND TO THE EAST OF

THE ORIGINAL PLUMMER RESIDENCE WHICH HAD

BECOME THE FIRST HOSPITAL BEFORE THE 1927

WING WAS BUILT. SO HERE WE WERE WITH

A "FREE" CHUNK OF LAND THAT DID NOT FIT

OUR PLANS AND WERE TOLD TO USE IT.

THE FINAL PLANS INCLUDED A CONNECTING LINK

OF OFFICES, ENTRANCES, LINKED TO NEW

LABS, EMERGENCY, RADIOLOGY, ETC. THE

BIGGEST PROBLEM WAS THE LONG DISTANCES

FOR KITCHEN, LAUNDRY AND SUPPLIES BEING

WHEELED THRO' THE LOBBY, ETC. TO THE SECOND

FLOOR BEDROOMS AND IN THE FUTURE, THE WING

(6) ADDITIONAL 3 FLOORS FOR → WHICH EAST WING WAS DESIGNED TO TAKE. A SOLUTION WAS SUGGESTED BY A BOARD MEMBER, DR ALEX. SINCLAIR JR: ADD A CONNECTING CORRIDOR LINK ON THE SECOND FLOOR OVER THE ADMIN. LINK BELOW. THIS SOLVED THE PROBLEM OF MIXED TRAFFIC BUT THE PROBLEM OF LONG CORRIDOR ROUTES REMAINS.

IT MAY ALSO BE OF INTEREST AND TO RECORD WHY THE PLUMMER & GENERAL HOSPITAL WENT THEIR SEPARATE WAYS AS REGARDS THEIR ORIGINAL HOSPITAL UNITS: THE PLUMMER "A"-WING (1927'S - 4 FLOORS + 1948 5TH FLOOR ADDITION) WAS BUILT OF SOLID MASONRY AND CONCRETE FLOORS, WHEREAS GENERAL (BUILT EARLIER 1900'S) WAS BRICK VENEER, WOOD FRAME WALLS AND WOOD JOIST FLOORS. IN THEIR 1952 MASTER PLAN THEY ALREADY CONSIDERED THAT THE ORIGINAL WOULD BE DEMOLISHED AT A FUTURE DATE. THEIR 1952 ADDITION (Y-WING?) WAS BUILT TO TAKE THIS INTO ACCOUNT (J. B. SUTTON WAS THE ARCHITECT FROM SUDBURY / LATER SUCCEEDED BY TOWNEND, STEFURA ET AL). THE 1960 GENERAL HOSP. ADDITION WAS BUILT BEHIND THE ORIGINAL WHICH

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WAS DEMOLISHED AFTER THE ADDITION WAS READY FOR USE. (CHAPEL WING WAS ~~ADDT~~ BUILT AFTER DEMOLITION). THE PLUMMER WAS STUCK WITH KEEPING "A"-WING BECAUSE IT WAS TOO SOLID AND OF FIREPROOF MATERIALS. SORRY FOR THIS DIVERSION, BUT I FEEL THAT IN VIEW OF THE IMPENDING MAJOR DEMOLITIONS AND ADDITIONS IN THE FUTURE, IT WOULD BE OF INTEREST.

IN THE MID-1950'S, ^{OR LATER?} BOB FAIRFIELD & FRED ROUNTHWAITE SPLIT UP. I BECAME A PARTNER ALONG WITH CLAUSS BINDHART IN FORMED - IN "ROUNTHWAITE & ASSOCIATES."

THE SAULT OFFICE HIRED JOHN LUNNINGHAM IN EARLY 1960'S AND ^{AT A} LATER DATE GORDON SMOLEY TO

HELP HANDLE THE WORK. I CANT QUITE RECALL ANY MAJOR WORKS AFTER 1962 ^{TO 1964} WHEN PLUMMER WAS FINISHED.

ASK GORDON S.

WE DID QUITE A FEW SEPARATE & PUBLIC SCHOOL ADDITIONS, THEN THE ALEXANDER HENRY / THE CNT GOVT. BLDG. @ ALBERT & BROCK. IN 1964±

ROUNTHWAITE ALLIED HIMSELF WITH MARANI, MORRIS & ALLAN TO FORM MARANI ROUNTHWAITE & DICK.

I REMAINED AS PARTNER IN CHARGE OF SAULT

⑧ OFFICE, AT THAT TIME WE HAD 3 MAJOR COMMISSIONS:

CENTENNIAL LIBRARY, DOCTORS BUILDING AND THE THESSALON HOME FOR THE AGED (ALGOMA MANOR) PLUS SMALLER JOBS LIKE NEW VERD I HALL AND OTHER WORKS THAT GORDON S.

MAY REMEMBER; QUEENSTOWN PHASE 1, JOHN ST CHURCH ADDITION

P.S: THE ST. ANDREW BOROJA CHURCH & ORIGINAL JOHN WESLEY

CHURCHES WERE DONE IN EARLY 1960'S. THE DAVEY HOME

CHAPEL ADDITION AND ST MATTHEW'S ANGLICAN CAME

LATER. WE ALSO DID THE DON LAWSON RESID. ON SUMMIT

& DEIREK HOLDER RESIDENCES - FIRST IN 1960'S AND

2ND ONE IN 1970'S. ALSO IN LATE 60'S, WE DID THE

ORIGINAL AIR TERMINAL WITHOUT THE CONTROL TOWER.

EARLY IN 70'S WE DID SITE ALTERNATIVE STUDIES FOR THE

UPCOMING NEW CITY HALL WHICH WE WERE COMMISSIONED

FOR ABOUT 1972-3. IT WAS COMPLETED ^{IN} 1977. BILL BURGOUN

COMPLAINED A LOT ABOUT ALL THE WORK WE WERE DOING, SO

DON EVANS GAVE HIM THE INTERIORS WORK AND I WENT

"BALLISTIC". DON CALLED ME IN TO MAKE PEACE SO

I CALMED DOWN BUT NEVER LIVED IT DOWN. WE HAD

PREVIOUSLY DONE THE CITY WORKS CENTRE ON SACKVILLE

WE WERE ALSO INVOLVED WITH THE SRS BUILDING & DROP.

⑨ - IN CENTRE AT BAY & BROCK, IN 1975.

(OUR)
THE OFFICE HAD MOVED TO 123 ^{MARCH} ~~EAST~~ ST. AND LATER TO THE
SAULT STAR ON ELGIN & QUEEN. WE COMPLETED THE
WORKING DRAWINGS FOR A NEW PRINTING PLANT ADDITION
FOR SAULT STAR WHICH NEVER WENT AHEAD. DURING OUR
TENURE THERE A BIG ROCK CAME THROUGH OUR WINDOW
WHEN THEY WERE BLASTING NEXT DOOR FOR THE ~~WOOD~~
WOOLCO GARAGE NEXT DOOR. I THINK WE MOVED
BACK TO MARCH ST. BRIEFLY IN EARLY 1970. RENO
BARBAN JOINED US THEN AND WE STARTED LOOKING
FOR A PLACE OF OUR OWN: BOUGHT 123 ~~EAST~~ IN 1972
HAD TO REBUILD BECAUSE THE ^{STRUCTURE} ROOF WAS ROTTEN. DESIGN-
ED ^{NEW} ROOF TO TAKE 2ND FLOOR IN FUTURE, WHICH
WAS DONE IN 1977. WE ALSO STARTED NEGOTIATIONS
WITH MR. D TO BECOME INDEPENDENT WHICH WAS
ACCOMPLISHED BY 1975 - WE WERE "GSR" ASSOCIATES
AT COMPLETION OF THE CIVIC CENTRE PROJECT.
GORD M. JOINED OUR FIRM IN 1970'S. OUR FIRST BIG
JOB ON OUR OWN WAS THE DAVEY HOME ADDITION
OF THE LATE 70'S. OTHER MISCELLANEOUS WORK
FOLLOWED, THEN CAME THE GROUP 4 FIASCO.

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IN THIS BRIEF SUMMARY I HAVE TRIED TO RECALL
AS BEST I CAN THE PERIOD OF THE 50'S / 60'S & 70'S.
MY DATES MAY BE OUT BY A YEAR OR TWO. SOME ARE
FIRM SUCH AS 1952 START OF PLUMMER / LIBRARY WAS
COMPLETED IN 1966 & DEDICATED IN 1967 AS A CENTENNIAL
PROJECT. IT RECEIVED ~~SOME~~ SOME KIND OF DESIGN AWARD
AS DID THE CORE RESIDENCE WHICH GORDON S. SHOULD
KNOW MORE ABOUT.

IF YOU REQUIRE ANY MORE ELABORATION, I'LL TRY
TO RECALL SOME ^{MORE} DETAILS. FROM THE 1980'S ON,
BOTH OF YOU CAN FILL IN FROM MEMORIES & EXISTING
RECORDS.

