

## MEMORIAL TABLET TO LORD RUTHERFORD AT MCGILL UNIVERSITY

THE Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada recently presented to McGill University a memorial tablet in honour of Lord Rutherford and the work he did while in Montreal. This tablet is now placed on the outside wall of the Macdonald Physics Laboratory, McGill University. As many of the plaques and tablets prepared by the Monuments Board commemorate historic events such as battles, it is gratifying that there should be national recognition of scientific activities which, although they transcend in importance historical incidents of conflict, are so often neglected in the public recognition of important persons and events.

A short unveiling ceremony was held in the Physics Laboratory at McGill on October 6, immediately preceding the Autumn Convocation for the granting of degrees. About a hundred persons attended the ceremony, including many old pupils and colleagues of Lord Rutherford. Sir Edward Beatty, chancellor of McGill University, presided, and a number of visitors from other universities and institutions were present. For the unveiling ceremony, the tablet was placed in the large lecture theatre of the laboratory, and surrounded by an exhibition of the apparatus used by Lord Rutherford during his nine years at McGill University, when he elucidated the phenomenon of radioactivity, and laid the foundations of much of his subsequent work. This apparatus has been admirably catalogued and described by Dr. F. R. Terroux (*Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, 32, Sec. III 9-16; 1938), who acts as custodian of the collection.

The ceremony was opened by Sir Edward Beatty with a tribute to Lord Rutherford, and a statement about the tablet and its formal acceptance with the gratitude of the University for this recognition. Prof. A. Norman Shaw, director of the Laboratory, referred to "the depth of feeling and the warm

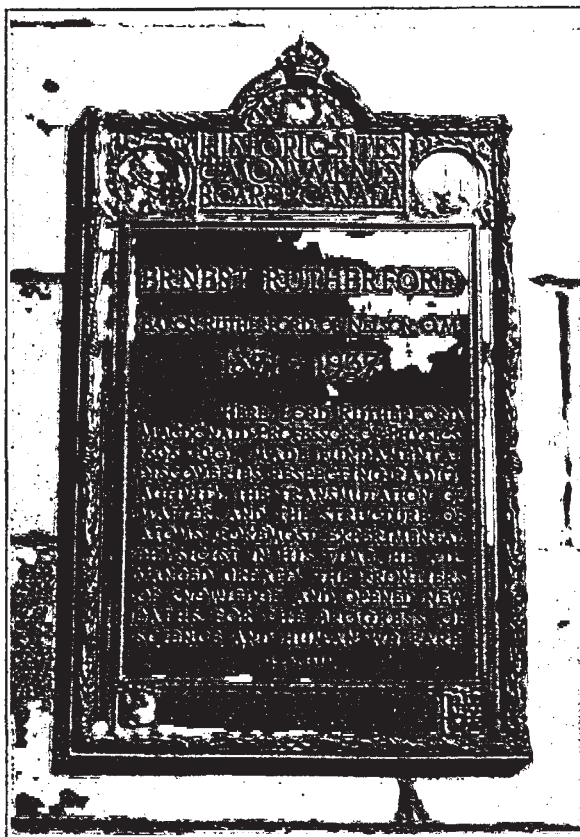
affection with which Rutherford is regarded in this Laboratory . . . our scientific ideals, our long and continued output of research, and the irrepressible urge to better our own limited efforts, are derived in

large measure—and will continue to be derived—from the undying influence of Rutherford within these walls. It was in this very room he first announced some of the greatest of his discoveries and revealed his uncanny instinct for the next best step. Here are some of his famous pieces of apparatus which reveal the ingenuity and simple directness of much of his early work".

The Honourable Justice E. Fabre Survevay, who is professor of civil law in McGill University, performed the unveiling ceremony, acting on behalf of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada. He said: "The Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada received with enthusiasm the suggestion made to it by a citizen of Montreal, Mr. Arthur J. Livinson, to commemorate by a tablet the important services rendered to science by the late Lord Rutherford. The members of the Board only divided on two questions: the site of the tablet and the date of its inauguration. Some were of opinion

that the most suitable place was the house Lord Rutherford lived in while in Montreal, which, by the way, is for sale, and should, in my opinion, be secured by a friend of the University and turned into rooms for students or bachelor professors. Some also thought it advisable to postpone the inauguration so as not to affect too seriously our budget for 1939-40. Neither of these suggestions appealed to me." Eventually it was decided to place the tablet in the wall of the laboratory where Rutherford worked.

At the conclusion of the ceremony the guests remained for an informal inspection of Rutherford's apparatus, some of the essential features of which were explained by Dr. F. R. Terroux to the audience.



TABLET IN COMMEMORATION OF LORD RUTHERFORD, RECENTLY PRESENTED TO MCGILL UNIVERSITY BY THE HISTORIC SITES AND MONUMENTS BOARD OF CANADA.