

GLENDON HALL

A Brief History



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INTRODUCTION

Glendon Hall is the historic core of York University's Glendon Campus. The land was inhabited by Yorkshire pioneers as early as 1816 until 1920, when it was purchased by one of Toronto's leading financiers Edward Roger Wood.¹ Wood commissioned the construction of the Hall we see today which was built between 1920-24.² The exterior of the edifice is Italianate in style while the interiors are stylistically eclectic featuring Elizabethan, Classical, Art and Crafts, and Mid-Century influences. However, Glendon Hall's masterpiece was its gardens which were used as an elegant backdrop by the Woods for prestigious garden parties and philanthropy. Lieutenant-Generals were frequent guests and the gardens were often opened to fee-paying visitors to benefit charities.

Upon E. R. Wood's death in 1941, ownership transferred to his wife Agnes Euphemia Wood. Upon her death in 1950, Mrs. Wood bequeathed the Hall to the University of Toronto with the stipulation that the estate be used for botanical studies. By 1960, much of the estate including Glendon Hall was not used to its full capacity. Thus, the estate, was ceded to the newly established York University in 1961 which subsequently commissioned the buildings and residences to create today's Glendon Campus, apart from 2 acres which was to be used by the University of Toronto for continued botanical studies.



Figure 1.0 - Photograph of the wrought iron porte-cochère in front of the principal entrance to Glendon Hall. (Jan Szulc, 2023)



Figure 1.1 - 1950 aerial photograph of the Glendon Estate with Bayview avenue to the left and Glendon Hall and gardens on the right. (City of Toronto Archives)

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Glendon Hall is situated on Tkaronto, now known as Toronto, which in Mohawk means 'where there are trees standing in the water'. Today, Tkaronto is covered under Treaty #13 and the Williams Treaties.

It is the traditional territories of many First Peoples, including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnaabe, the Haudenosaunee, and the Wendat peoples. As we share the history of how the Glendon manor came to exist, we must acknowledge that these nations continue to experience colonization and displacement- where land acknowledgements are offered in place of land itself.³



Figure 1.2 - This map shows the original area covered by the Toronto Purchase (September 23, 1787) (Toronto Public Library)

The Mississaugas and the colonial government viewed land very differently. The Mississaugas saw themselves as stewards of the land, while settlers and the colonial government saw land and its resources as proprietary; something to be permanently signed away.⁴

As students, educators, and community members of Glendon Campus, we have all been invited into this treaty in the spirit of peace, friendship, and respect. We are also mindful of broken treaties that persist across Turtle Island today and recognize our responsibilities as Treaty people to engage in a meaningful, continuous process of truth and reconciliation with all our relations. We encourage you to learn about the Indigenous Nations that care for the land you are on, and where you might come from, visit native-land.ca to learn more.⁵

The 'Toronto Purchase' Overview

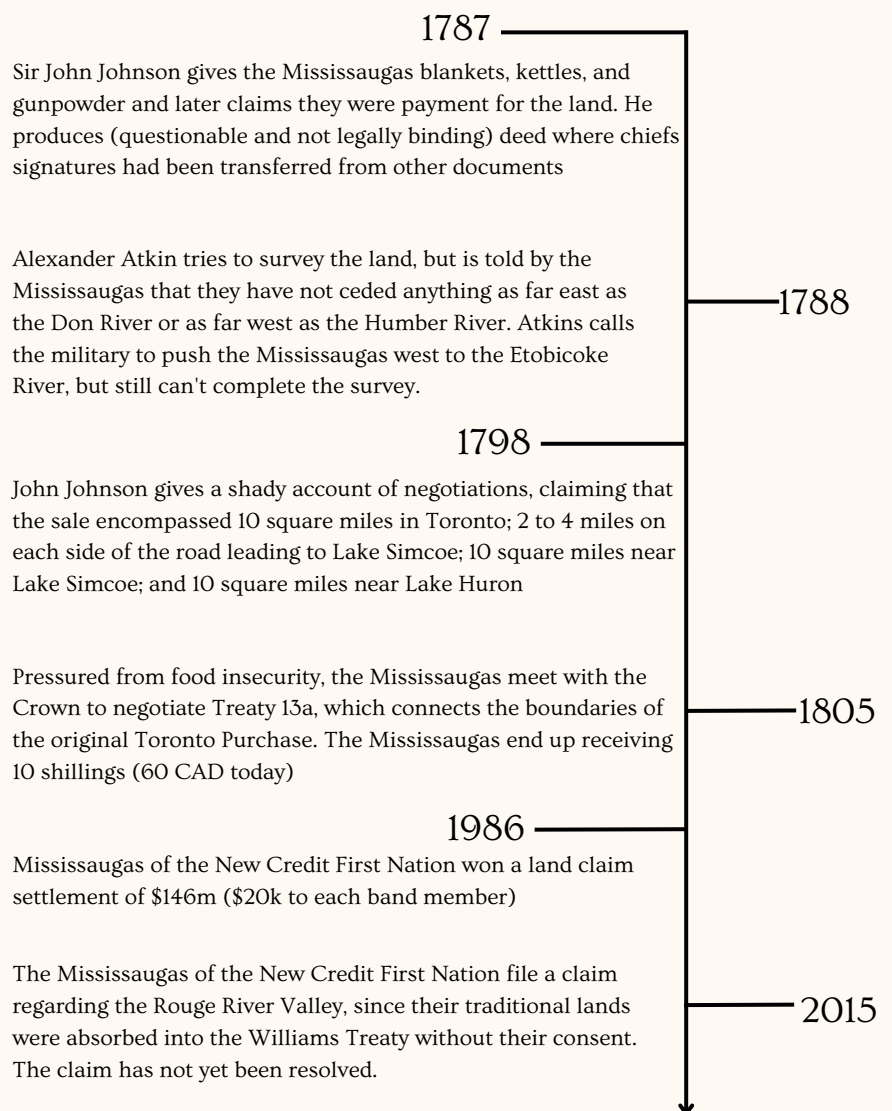


Figure 1.3 - This timeline shows a timeline of the 'Toronto Purchase' using Toronto Land Acknowledgement by Shannon Winterstein/Centennial College (2019) (Nera-Lei Vasilko, 2023)

PIONEER SETTLEMENT

1816-1920

The land which now comprises the Glendon estate was settled on as early as 1816 by the Blewett family, pioneers of Yorkshire descent.⁶ From 1819, the land was inhabited by the Wheelock and Burke families before it came to the hands of John Russell in 1861.⁷ In 1884, the County of York Land Registry Office defined the tenure of this land, Concession 2 Lot 5, as belonging to David and John Russell.⁸ On September 7, 1920, E.R. Wood purchased the lot from the Russell family.⁹

This transaction ended the century of farming in favour of suburban living. The type of farming during the pioneer era was varied yet conventional, and included market gardening, cattle, and orchards.¹⁰ When the Wood family purchased the estate, it came with an apple orchard that the Wood family largely preserved and maintained.¹¹



Figure 1.4 - Depiction of the Russell Family's farmhouse and surroundings c. 1917 based on archival sources by artist Jill Oman. (John Court)



Figure 1.5 - Forks of the Don, 1871, by Henri Perré (1828-1890). Depicts the Don Valley landscape during the pioneer era. (Canadian Illustrated News)

THE WOOD FAMILY

Edward Roger Wood was born in Peterborough on May 14, 1866. He left school at 11 and began working as a telegraph messenger for The Central Canada Loan and Saving Company.¹² In 1884, this financial firm moved to Toronto and Edward moved with it. The firm became known as Dominion Securities Corporation Limited, and Edward became its first president. He was known to be a modest, hard-working, and brilliant financier.¹³ Throughout his working life, Edward would also hold many prominent positions in countless other organizations. The 1913 'Grain Growers Guide' identified Canada's top 50 "plutocrats", with Edward Wood coming in third with 24 directorships, and for a time he was known as one of Canada's wealthiest men.¹⁴ Fortunately, he was also a generous benefactor with many donations to various church parishes, the YMCA, the Victoria Collegiate Endowment Fund, and was one of the founders of the Art Gallery of Ontario.¹⁵

Edward married Agnes Euphemia Smart in 1891, who was known to be beautiful with a keen interest in botany and gardens.¹⁶ The couple had two children; William and Mildred, though tragically William died in infancy.¹⁷ The couple's first major residence Wymilwood was built on Queen's Park in the Tudor-revival style. Wymilwood was gifted to the University of Toronto's Victoria College in 1925, and the family moved into their newly built residence Glendon Hall that same year.¹⁸

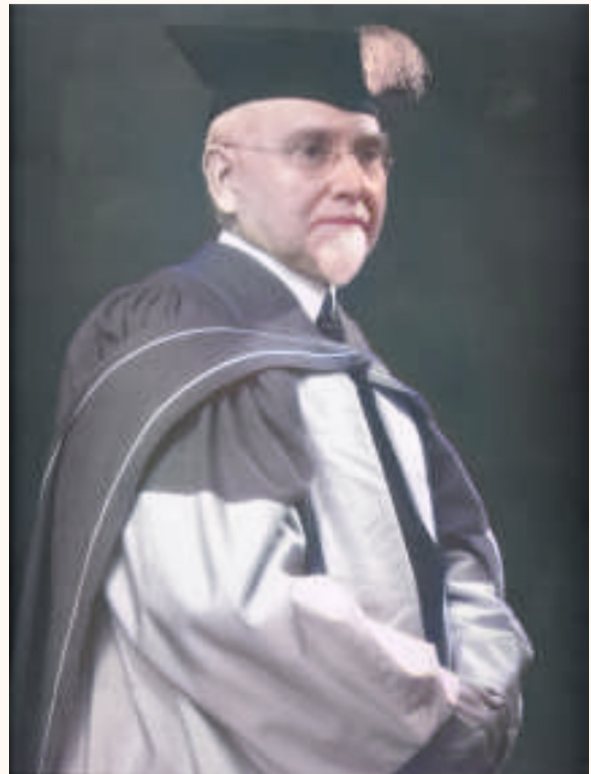


Figure 1.6 - Photograph of Mr. Wood. (AI-Colourized, John Court)



Figure 1.7 - Photograph of Mrs. Wood. (AI-Colourized, John Court)

The couple's daughter Mildred was considered a renegade at the time since she eloped at age 18 against her father's wishes. Eventually, Mildred separated from her first husband and married a man her father deemed more agreeable named Murray P. Fleming. Mr. Wood was so pleased with their marriage that in 1928 he commissioned Cheddington, a Tudor-revival mansion on the north-western corner of the Glendon Estate.¹⁹ This house suffered a devastating fire in 2009 and was demolished in 2013.



Figure 1.8 - Photograph of Mr. E. R. Wood, to the right wearing a top hat, with his daughter Mildred, centre, and Mildred's second husband Mr. Murray P. Fleming, to the left wearing a bowler hat. (AI-Colourized, City of Toronto Archives)

Edward and Agnes lived at Glendon Hall until their deaths. Edward died in 1941 at the age of 75, and was survived by his wife Agnes who passed away in 1950. Glendon Hall's furnishings were auctioned off the year of her death, with many of the fine paintings from the family's collection, including works by Peter Lely and George Romney, were donated to the Art Gallery of Ontario.²⁰

ESTATE'S EXPANSION

The name Glendon is derived from the word glen, meaning narrow valley, and don, which refers to the Don river—specifically the West Don over which Glendon Hall presides.²¹ The history of the lot on which Glendon Hall was built is convoluted and unusual. Wood maintained a good relationship with local politicians, particularly through the financing of local works on behalf of the County of York's council. This included personally financing the paving of Bayview Avenue up to his estate's gates in 1921.²² This made Wood's desire of enlarging Glendon Hall's plot, Concession 2, Lot 5, politically feasible.

Lawrence Park, the neighbourhood adjacent to Glendon Hall, was contemporaneously described in *The Globe* as the new Rosedale.²³ Mr. Wood purchased 52 undeveloped lots in this new neighbourhood (figure 2.1) and donated them to the County of York in exchange for Bayview Avenue's now westward bend (figure 2.2).²⁴ Mr. Wood and his neighbour, and brother, Frank Wood both donated generously towards the construction of a new bridge over the West Don Valley to "sweeten the deal".²⁵ Bayview Bridge (figure 1.9) was built in 1929 which at the time cost \$240,000, though eventually it was replaced with today's bridge in 1960-61.²⁶ After Bayview Avenue's rerouting, the road Westbourne Avenue in the eastern part of the Lawrence Park was renamed Wood Avenue in the Wood family's honour. The entire western section of the Glendon estate also had to be re-fenced. This meant the creation of a new main gate (figure 2.0) designed by Molesworth, Secord & West in the Beaux-Arts style.²⁷



Figure 1.9 - 1958 north-facing photograph of the original 1929 Bayview Bridge. (AI-Colourized, City of Toronto)



Figure 2.0 - 1930 lantern slide of the new Beaux-Arts style gate on Bayview Avenue. (City of Toronto Archives)

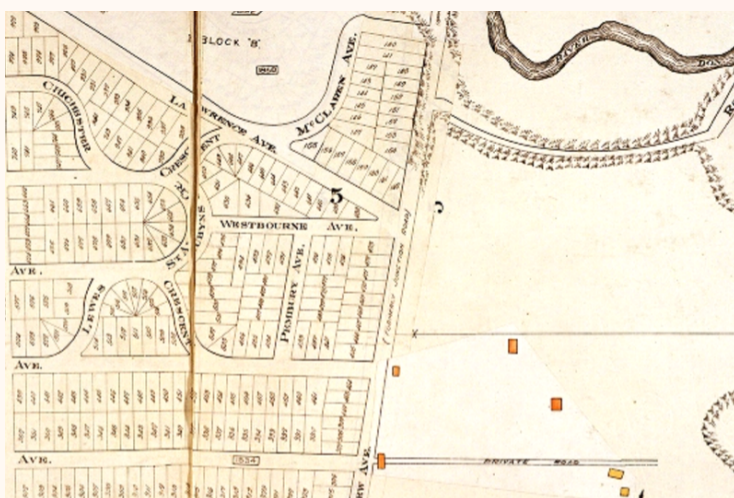


Figure 2.1 - The 1924 Fire Insurance Plan showing the former Westbourne Avenue and all of the properties acquired by Wood in exchange for Bayview Avenue's modification as seen in figure 2.2. (City of Toronto Archives)

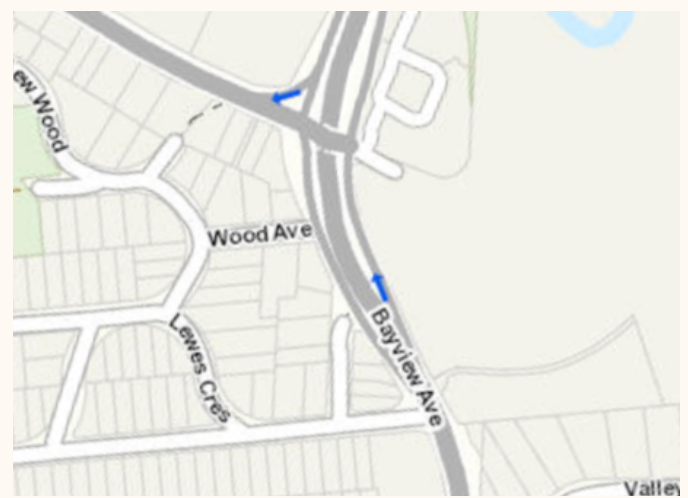


Figure 2.2 - 2023 map showing Bayview Avenue's conspicuous westward bend, which also shows Wood Avenue, formerly Westbourne Avenue as seen in figure 2.1. (Toronto Maps)

GLENDON HALL AND ITS INTERIORS

Glendon Hall was designed by architectural firm Molesworth, West & Secord, and built between 1922-24 in the Italianate-style. The home took two years to plan (1920-22), and two years to construct (1922-24).²⁸ The Wood family's "housewarming party" on October 10, 1925 suggests 1925 to be the year the family moved in.²⁹

The house features a principal block with a magnificent wrought iron porte-cochère for the family (figure 1.0), and a southwest-facing servants' wing. This southwest-facing wing would have maximized privacy for the family enabling them to enjoy the north-facing terraces and east-facing gardens. The stucco-fronted house is aesthetically simple, yet large and dignified with generously sized windows framed with black lead-painted shutters. Further Italianate influences feature in the two north-facing terraces overlooking the glen and a loggia which led onto the upper of the two terraces. The loggia was replaced in 1956 with today's 'ballroom' which, being double the width of the former loggia, envelops most of the upper terrace.³⁰

The following pages will provide insight into some of Glendon Hall's rooms and how they would have looked during the Wood family era between 1925-50.



Figure 2.3 - 1927 east-facing photograph of Glendon Hall's south facade. (AI-Colourized, Canadian Homes and Gardens)

THE GROUND FLOOR

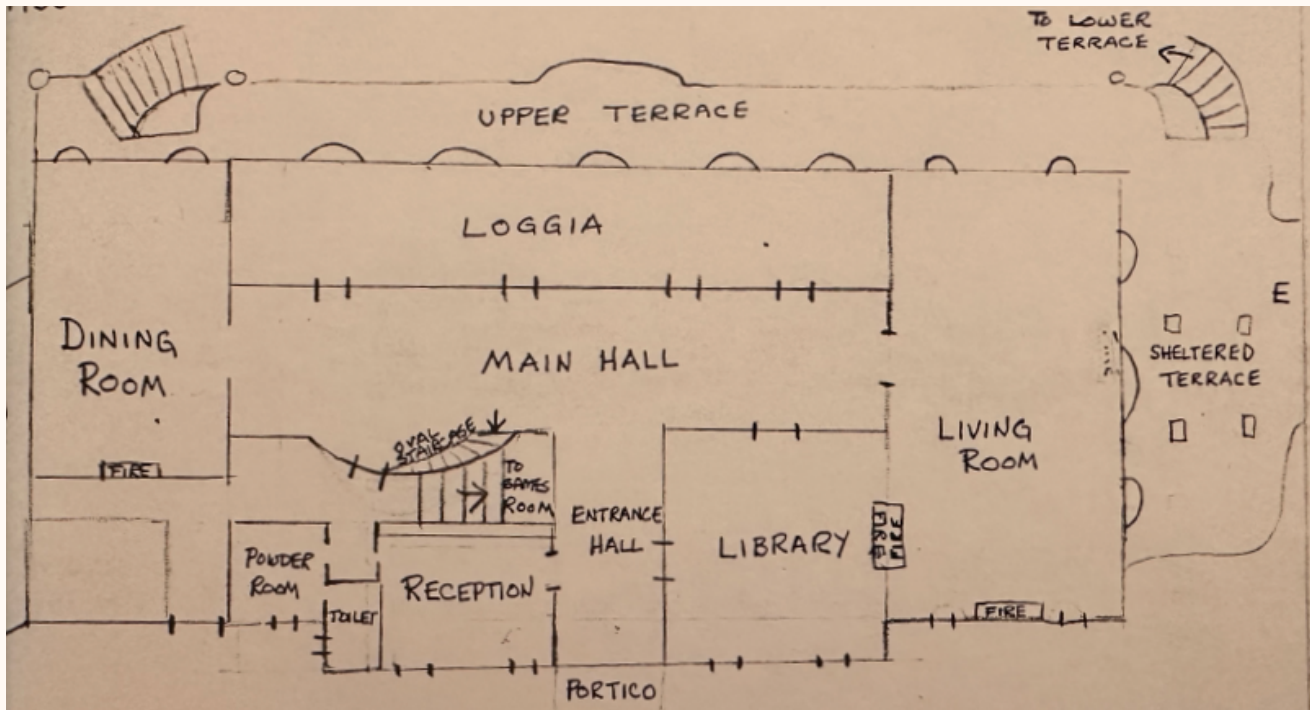


Figure 2.4 - Floor plan roughly showing how the ground floor would have looked c. 1930. (Glendon Hall 1920-1950)

Entrance Hall

The home's entrance hall is an essay in neoclassicism with its marble floor, barrel vaulted ceiling, textured plaster walls (currently covered with fabric), and classical-style plaster decoration that can be seen in the segmental pediments above the north and south doorways. The hall culminates in a fine wrought iron gate, possibly made by metalworker Emile Wenger.³¹ The entrance hall was originally furnished with ornate wrought iron furnishings as seen in figure 2.5.³² East from the entrance hall was E.R. Wood's library, now an office, and to the west would have been a reception room, now modified into an office and hallway. The reception room would have led into a small ante-hall leading to a powder room and toilet room (see figure 2.4).



Figure 2.5 - 1950 photograph of the interior of the Entrance Hall facing northward towards the main hall. (AI-Colourized, Leslie Frost Library Archives)



Figure 2.6 - Photograph of the Entrance hall from the same vantage point as in figure 2.7. (Jan Szulc, 2023)

The Library

The library was E.R. Wood's den and was made suitably cosy. The walls are clad in black walnut panelling and the ceiling is composed of hand-pat plaster in the Bankart style, with a single band of plaster in low relief travelling the ceiling's perimeter.³³ The eastern wall features a fireplace faced with gold and black marble.³⁴ The room's four recessed bookshelves would have originally featured rare books.³⁵

Figure 2.7 - 1950 photograph of the library facing northwest. (AI-Colourized, Leslie Frost Library Archives)



Figure 2.8 - 1950 photograph of the library facing southeast. (AI-Colourized, Leslie Frost Library Archives)

The Main Hall

Beyond the entrance hall is the main hall, the principal artery of the house. This room connects with the dining room, the grand staircase, the loggia, the library, the living room, and the ante-hall. This room would have been filled with paintings, including a 1926 portrait of E.R. Wood's daughter Mildred by Joshua Smith RBA (figure 2.9), furnishings, rugs, and the walls would have been upholstered with milk-coloured silk damask.³⁶ The hall was originally lit with wall-mounted girandoles rather than today's post-1950 chandeliers, but the ceiling maintains its original Elizabethan-revival plaster work, possibly done by the plasterer firm of W.J. Hynes Ltd.³⁷

Figure 2.9 - 1950 photograph of the main hall facing west towards the dining room. Portrait of Mildred to the right above the sofa. (AI-Colourized, Leslie Frost Library Archives)



Figure 3.0 - 1950 photograph of the main hall facing east towards the living room. (AI-Colourized, Leslie Frost Library Archives)

The Staircase

The sweeping Arts-and-Crafts style oval staircase is made of walnut with intricately carved balusters alternating between twisted and fluted styles. The staircase is lit with a ceiling light, and would have been artificially lit at night to produce "daytime effects".³⁸ The ceiling glass above the staircase has since been replaced with a different, non-glass cover.



Figure 3.1 - 1927 photograph showing the entrance hall and oval staircase. (AI-Colourized, Canadian Homes and Gardens)



Figure 3.2 - 1950 photograph showing the oval staircase. (AI-Colourized, Leslie Frost Library Archives)

The Living Room

Originally featuring windows on three walls, sometime between 1927 and 1950 the living room's two east-facing French-style windows were removed (see figure 6.1). Within the same period, a second fireplace identical to the first was added to the north wall. Ornamental plasterwork on the walls and ceiling were also added within this period, possibly by W.J. Hynes.³⁹



Figure 3.3 - 1927 south-facing photograph of the living room. Between the two windows hangs a portrait of Mrs. Wood by Joshua Smith RBA. (AI-Colourized, Canadian Homes and Gardens)



Figure 3.4 - 1950 south-facing photograph. Shows new plaster decoration on the ceiling and walls. (AI-Colourized, Leslie Frost Library Archives)

The Loggia

The Loggia was a long and even narrower space than the main hall to which it was parallel. The room provided valuable natural light to an otherwise dark inner hall. It was likely an outdoor space during summer months, as the loggia's five north-facing doors could be opened. The north terrace was paved with brick in a herringbone pattern (figure 3.5) and hosted spectacular northward views onto the glen (figure 7.0), though the views have since been obstructed by unmanaged plant growth. Furthermore, most of the north terrace was covered when the loggia was re-configured into today's ballroom in 1956 (figure 3.7).⁴⁰



Figure 3.5 - 1926 photograph showing the home's north-facade including the loggia and its 5 French-style windows. (AI-Colourized, Canadian Homes and Gardens)



Figure 3.6 - Photograph of the Loggia facing west. (AI-Colourized, Leslie Frost Library Archives)



Figure 3.7 - Photograph showing the interior of the ballroom from the same west-facing perspective as in figure 3.6. (Jan Szulc, 2023)

The Dining Room

To the west-end of the main hall is the dining room. It has classical Georgian proportions with two north-facing windows which open onto the north terrace. Though the original colour scheme of green and antique gold is lost, the room maintains much of its original panelling and plaster decoration.⁴¹ The upper half of the west wall was mirrored (figure 3.8) and the south wall had a fireplace faced with black and gold marble (figure 3.9) which has since been covered up. The door in the room's south-west corner connects it to a serving room.



Figure 3.8 - 1950 northwest-facing photograph of the dining room. The mirrors on the west wall no longer exist. (AI-Colourized, Leslie Frost Library Archives)



Figure 3.9 - 1927 southwest-facing photograph of the dining room. The photograph shows a painting by Sir Peter Lely above the fireplace. (AI-Colourized, Canadian Homes and Gardens)

The Powder Room

Off the ante-hall was once one of the more unusual spaces in the house, the powder room. This room no longer exists due to post-1950 structural modifications. The decor was in the Chinoiserie style with Chinoiserie wallpaper, light fixtures, door frames, even furnishings. The mirrored wall is appropriate for a lady's powder room which also maximizes light and gives the illusion of greater space.



Figure 4.0 - 1950 photograph of the now non-existing powder room. (AI-Colourized, Leslie Frost Library Archives)

THE BASEMENT

The Terrace Room



Figure 4.1 - Photograph of the terrace room, now the Lunik Café. (Jan Szulc, 2023)

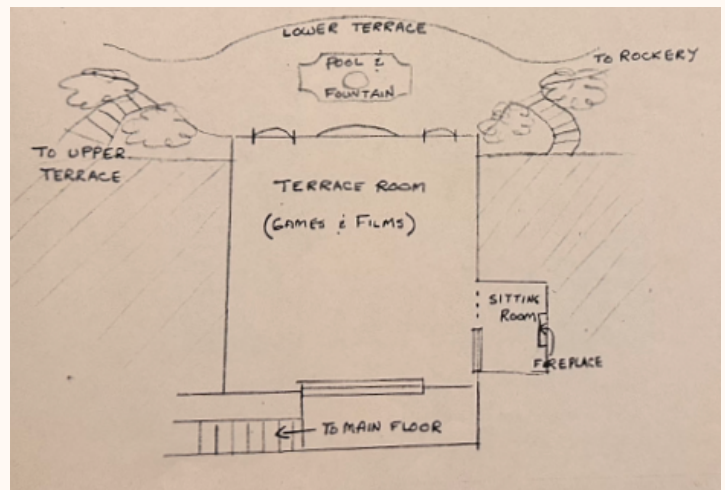


Figure 4.2 - Floor Plan depicting how the lower ground floor would have looked c. 1930. (Glendon Hall 1920-1950)

There are no photographs which show how the terrace room, or any room in the basement, would have looked like during the Wood family era. This is the largest single room in the house and is right off the central oval staircase. It has a large north-facing, stylized Palladian window with two doors to each side which lead onto the lower terrace. The terrace still hosts spectacular views, albeit slightly obstructed by unmitigated plant-growth. Today, the terrace room is used by a co-op café called Lunik.

THE SECOND FLOOR

Referred to as a retirement home by Mr. Wood's granddaughter Gaby, it is unsurprising that the house has few family bedrooms.⁴² In addition to two sitting rooms, this floor contains two suites for Mr. and Mrs. Wood in the east, and two guest suites in the west which border the servants' wing.

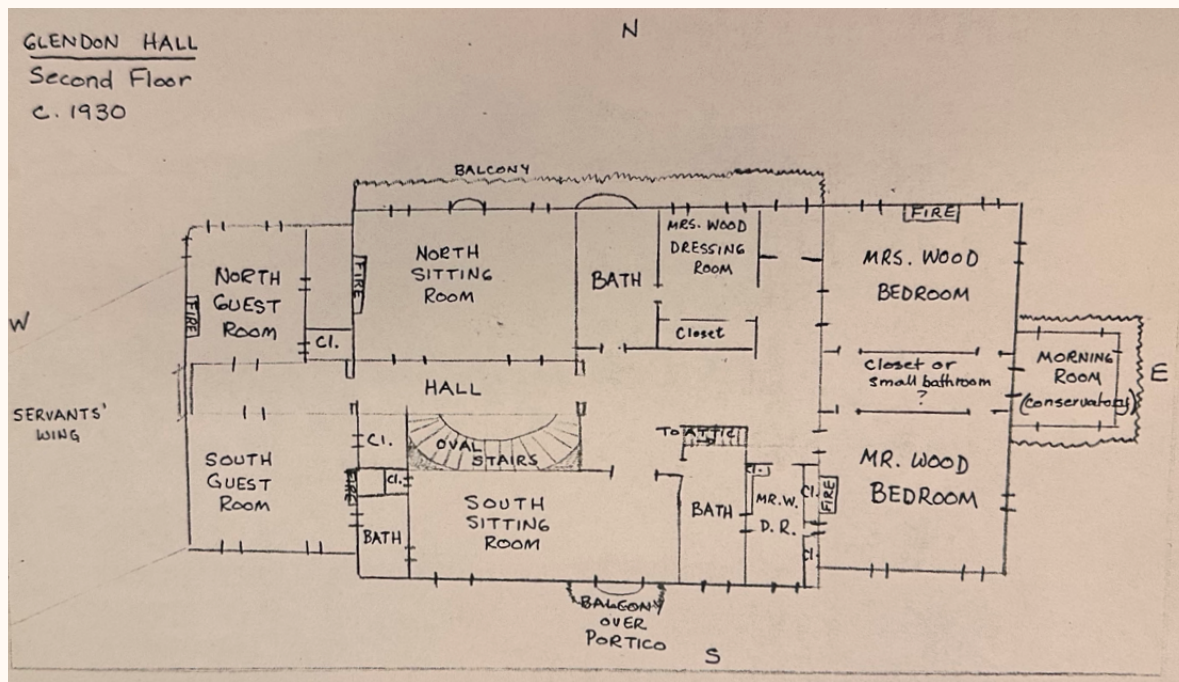


Figure 4.3 - Floor plan showing how the second floor looked like in c. 1930. (Glendon Hall 1920-1950)

Mr. Wood's Suite

Mr. Wood's suite was connected to Mrs. Wood's suite via a small room with an adjoining conservatory (figure 4.9) and originally consisted of a bathroom, a dressing room (figure 4.4), and a bedroom (figure 4.5). Much of the space has been modified since Mr. Wood's death, including Mr. Wood's bedroom which has been split into two rooms. The modifications are of a quality that suggest that they may have been altered before 1950, as in the case of other rooms like the living room. Mr. Wood's former bathroom has also been reconfigured into a kitchen post-1950.



Figure 4.4 - 1950 southwest-facing photograph of Mr. Wood's dressing room. The bathroom is through the door. (AI-Colourized, Leslie Frost Library Archives)



Figure 4.5- 1950 northwest-facing photograph of Mr. Wood's bedroom. (AI-Colourized, Leslie Frost Library Archives)

Mrs. Wood's Suite

Mrs. Wood's suite remains more intact than her husband's. The suite is adjoined to Mr. Wood's suite by the aforementioned small room, and shares a conservatory. The conservatory (figure 4.9) features windows on three sides which flood the room with natural light. The windows were made larger sometime between 1926 and 1950. Mrs. Wood's suite consists of a bedroom, dressing room, bathroom, and small ante-room, which led onto a still-intact, narrow north-facing balcony above the loggia (figure 3.5) overlooking the glen.



Figure 4.6 - 1950 photograph of Mrs. Wood's bedroom. A painting of Mrs. Wood's granddaughter Beverly Fleming (figure 7.6) painted by Joshua Smith RBA is above the bed. (AI-Colourized, Leslie Frost Library Archives)



Figure 4.7 - 1950 photograph of Mrs. Wood's bedroom facing northeast. (AI-Colourized, Leslie Frost Library Archives)



Figure 4.8 - 1950 photograph of Mrs. Wood's dressing room. On the right is a mirror, and on the left is the doorway to her ensuite bathroom. (AI-Colourized, Leslie Frost Library Archives)



Figure 4.9 - 1987 east-facing photograph of the conservatory. This shared room is located between Mr. and Mrs. Wood's suites. (AI-Colourized, Leslie Frost Library Archives)

The Guest Suites

The two guest suites in the western portion of the main house also remain largely intact. One suite faces north and the other south. Each guest suite was composed of a double-window bedroom, closet, and ensuite bathroom, although certain doorways have been either blocked or created since 1950.



Figure 5.0 - 1950 photograph of the north guest suite. (AI-Colourized, Leslie Frost Library Archives)



Figure 5.1 - 1950 photograph of the south guest suite. (AI-Colourized, Leslie Frost Library Archives)

The Sitting Rooms

The four bedrooms on the second floor were served by two sitting rooms of similar size, one facing north and the other south. The north sitting room is right off the landing from the oval staircase and features two windows and a doorway onto the small north-facing balcony which also connects with Mrs. Wood's suite. The south sitting room overlooked the driveway and lawn and had a Juliet balcony over the porte-cochère. It is possible that this room could have been used as a temporary bedroom as it had a closet and access to the bathroom of the south guest suite.



Figure 5.2 - 1950 photograph of the north sitting room. (AI-Colourized, Leslie Frost Library Archives)



Figure 5.3 - 1950 photograph of the south sitting room. The left door opens onto a Juliet balcony above the porte-cochère. (AI-Colourized, Leslie Frost Library Archives)

THE SERVANTS' WING

Maintaining this large residence required domestic help. It is unclear exactly how much staff the Wood family would have employed, but certainly several people were employed to maintain cleanliness, prepare and serve meals, and maintain the estate's grounds, amongst other tasks. The servants' wing's exterior is in the same style as the home's principal block, but is unusual because it emerges from the main house on a diagonal, which can be attributed to Baronial architectural influence.⁴⁵ The servants' wing is also on an equal level to the main house rather than being below ground, as was common in many upper-class homes at the time, particularly in England. This sense of egalitarianism is heightened by the servants' wing having its own south entrance door and a prominent entrance porch on the west end of the wing (figure 5.5).

Figure 5.4 - Photograph of the servants' wing's south facade showing the servants' entrance down a small staircase. (Jan Szulc, 2023)



Figure 5.5 - Photograph of the servants' wing's west porched entrance. (Jan Szulc, 2023)



The servants' wing, like the main family wing, consists of four floors with a servants' staircase serving all four floors. The wing consists of bedrooms and ancillary rooms such as a servery next to the dining room. Unlike in the family portion of the house, no photographs were taken to document how these spaces would have looked during the Wood family era. Like in the rest of the house, most of the servants' rooms have been converted to suit collegiate requirements, particularly into offices.

Figure 5.6 - Photograph of the servants' staircase. (Jan Szulc, 2023)



Figure 5.7 - Photograph of the 'baroque underground' which connects all the basement rooms in the servants' wing. (Jan Szulc, 2023)



THE ESTATE'S ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES

Structural Remnants

Few vestiges remain from the 104 year early settler presence on the Glendon estate's contemporary layout. What remains structurally from the 1816-1920 period are The Old Bayview Bridge (also known as Watson's Bridge) built by York Township in 1891, and the middle footbridge beyond Proctor Fieldhouse that was also made in the 19th century.⁴⁴ In terms of what has survived in the landscape; the upper fields on the West Valley floor that were originally used for pasture and livestock, and the former Lawrence Avenue that is still a winding hillside road.



Figure 5.9 - Photograph Watson's Bridge, 1915, where original Bayview crosses the West Don (John Court, 2012)

The Don Valley River

Two Aboriginal names were recorded for the Don, Algonquian words written by early surveyors as 'Nechenquakekonk' and 'Wonscotonach' which may refer to the peninsula near the mouth of the Don (later the Toronto Islands).⁴⁵ Little is known about Aboriginal use and occupation of the Don watershed in the years before European settlement, but use of the valley in the contact period seemed sporadic and seasonal.⁴⁶ Anecdotal evidence from early Europeans suggest that both the Seneca and the Algonquian Mississauga hunted and fished in the valley but established no permanent village sites along the river.⁴⁷



Figure 5.8 - Photograph Boys' swimming hole located upriver from the pre-Glendon farm, 1895 (W.W. Judd, TRL)

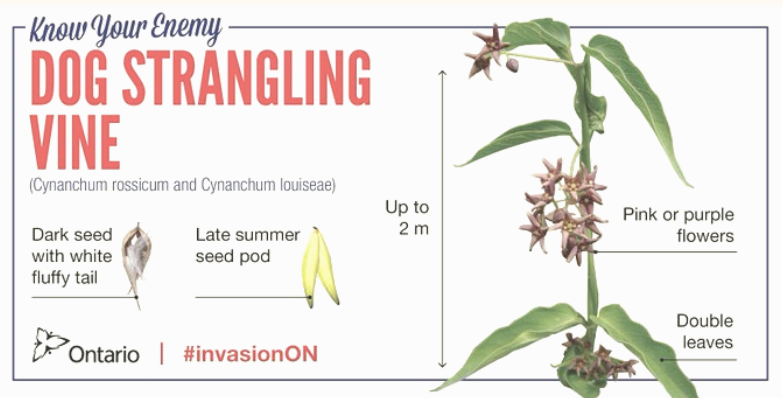


Figure 6.0 - Infographic. Invading Species Awareness Program. Ontario Invading Species Awareness Program (2021)

Issues Facing the Don Today

Stormwater Runoff

- The high water flows associated with excessive stormwater leads to streambank erosion and increased flooding during storms
- Stormwater also leads to poor water quality since it carries sediments and contaminants like chloride directly into the river

Invasive Species

- Invasive plants like dog-strangling vine, phragmites, and emerald ash borer continue to spread
- Round Goby, an invasive fish, is currently found near the mouth of the Don River⁴⁸

THE GARDENS:

Formal and Informal

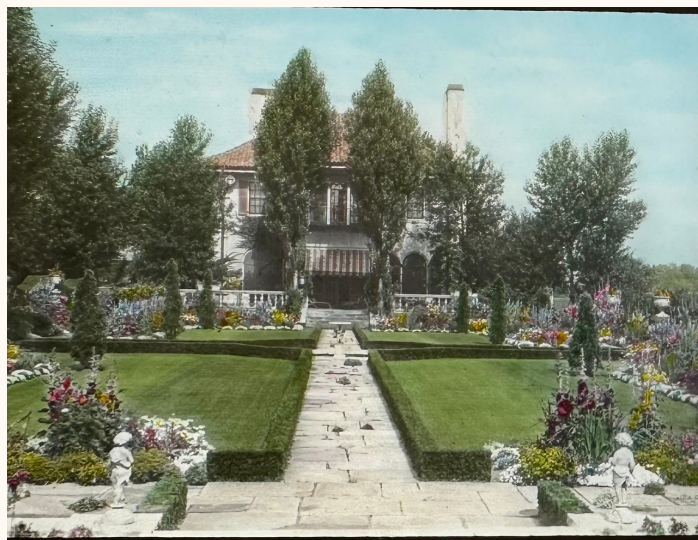


Figure 6.1 - Lantern slide of the Formal/ Rose Garden from the mid-1920s, by William M. Crisp (City of Toronto Archives).

The Formal Gardens of Glendon Hall have always been known for their beauty within a developing city, but they also reflect the changes that occurred over time. There are a total of three recognized formal gardens within the site; the Formal/Rose Garden (east), the Terrace Garden (rear), and the Front Garden (entrance). There have also been a number of informal gardens such as a cutting garden and a hillside rock garden.



Figure 6.2 - 1950 photograph of the lower Terrace. (AI-Colourized, Leslie Frost Library Archives).

The Front Garden, set at the front of the Manor, contains an oval-shaped sunken garden in the centre of the driving circle, where various flowers are planted every year. Transplanted trees such as two Canadian Redbuds, which bloom a bright purple-pink colour in the early spring (often in March-April) are also featured.⁴⁹ During the Wood family era, flowers like zinnias, geraniums, pink and white Lupin, and Long Spurred Columbine, as well as other perennials and shrubs were planted in the residence's front garden.⁵⁰

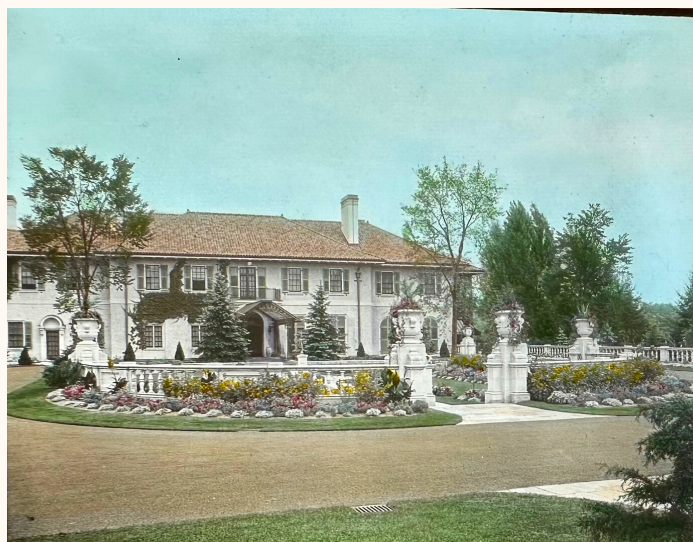


Figure 6.3 - Lantern slide of the Front Garden from the mid-1920s, by William M. Crisp (City of Toronto Archives).

The informal Rock Garden, set at the back of the Manor, spread across 3-acres of hillside, going down the slopes and towards the path to the valley floor. It was not considered a formal garden and was completely lost after Hurricane Hazel hit in October 1954.⁵¹ However, during the Wood family era, the upper edge of the Rock Garden was decorated with Sweet Briar Roses (above the stone stairs) that highlighted the path down the hillside.⁵² The hillside itself was filled with many mature trees that were transplanted, including the sole Elm tree which is no longer standing, as well as other flowers and foliage.

According to a 1926 Canadian Homes and Gardens, some of the flowers planted included mauve-coloured Phlox Subulata, Forget-Me-Nots, Ranunculus/Buttercups, Fluffy-Ruffle Petunias, Shirley Poppies, white Arabis, Peonies, Breeder and Cerise Tulips, and Dianthus Deltoides (Maiden Pink).⁵³

As we can see in Figure 6.5, the flowers planted here were incredibly bright and colourful.



Figure 6.4 - Image of Dr. Murray Ross (founding president of YorkU) in front of Glendon Hall dated September 15 1961. Note the now non-existent "Winged Mercury" statue and fountain in the Front Garden (York University Psychology Department).

The Formal/ Rose Garden

The remaining and most likely recognizable garden is the Formal/ Rose Garden. The rose garden has had many names; The Formal Garden during the Woods' residence, the Old Rose Garden during and after its use by the University of Toronto's Botany Department, The Rose Garden during York University's early years, and The Bruce Bryden Rose Garden as it is currently named. The garden's most recent change of name occurred in 1992 in dedication and memorialization of Bruce Bryden. He was a respected Glendon alumni who was part of York's first class of students graduating in 1964, Chair of York University's Board of Governors, and a valued community member.⁵⁴ A restoration and series of replantings occurred during this time.



Figure 6.5 - Lantern slide of the Terrace Garden from the mid-1920s, by William M. Crisp (City of Toronto Archives).

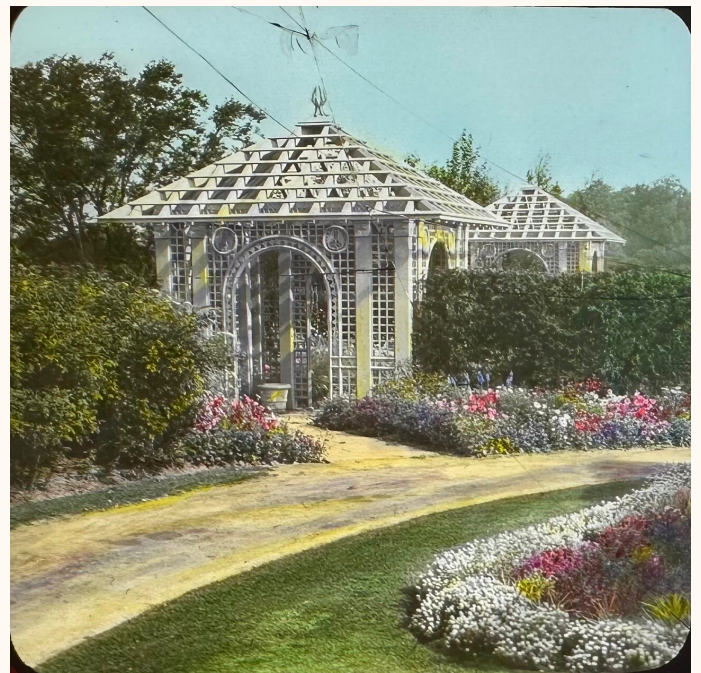


Figure 6.6 - Lantern slide of the two teahouses in the Formal Garden from the mid-1920s, by William M. Crisp (City of Toronto Archives).



Figure 6.7 - Lantern slide of the Formal/ Rose Garden, from the mid-1920s, by William M. Crisp (City of Toronto Archives). Note the workers and fountain on the centre-left side, as well as the stonework and brick wall.

The Formal Garden was a rectangular-shaped sunken garden, with flower beds filled with numerous annuals and perennials planted in a style heavily influenced by British horticulturist Gertrude Jekyll.⁵⁵ Peonies lined the brick walls which held stone urns filled with greenery (see Figure 6.7).⁵⁶ The two white teahouses and the south brick wall with the surmounted planter urns are the only surviving pieces of the Formal Garden as it was from 1924-1930.⁵⁷ The rose-covered arbour shown in Figure 6.9 was removed and no longer exists.



Figure 6.8 - Photograph of Rose Garden and Leslie Frost Library from 2016. Note the still-existing brick walls and urns (Glendon Campus Vision Draft, 2016).

Landscape gardener William M. Crisp is known to have assisted in the creation of the 1924 Edwardian style Formal Garden, with precise and specific input and landscape decisions made by Mr. and Mrs. Wood.⁵⁸ In the early 1930s the Woods commissioned a redesign of the Formal Garden by landscape architecture firm H.B. & L.A. Dunington-Grubb and Stensson, where terraces and stone walls were added down the valley to the roadway.⁵⁹ Also added during this time and still intact, is the central reflecting pool and architectural stone work.

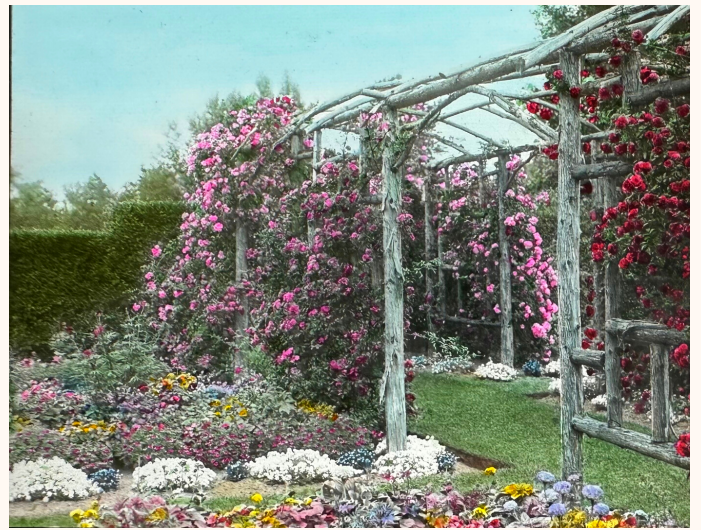


Figure 6.9 - Lantern slide of the rose-covered arbour in the Formal Garden from the mid-1920s, by William M. Crisp (City of Toronto Archives).

Key Figures in Glendon Hall's Landscape Designing and Care (Wood Family Era)

Landscape Gardeners: William M. Crisp (1924) and his son, Granville Crisp.

Groundskeepers: Bill Thomas Jr. and family (also including Bill's father, his brother, and uncle from 1924-1951).

Landscape Architecture Firm: H.B. & L.A. Dunington-Grubb and Stensson.

Architecture Firm: George N. Molesworth of Molesworth, West and Secord. Credited in creating the principal residence and other structures, such as the twin teahouses in the Rose Garden.

Head Gardener: "Mac" Mackintosh (1956).

The Formal Garden and Dunington-Grubb Influence

The Dunington-Grubbs' influence on the landscape design is clear in many ways. Having worked on Wymilwood, the Woods' previous home, it is understood that they were involved in early landscape design discussions and planning.⁶⁰ We also see the Dunington-Grubbs stylistic influence in the numerous sculptures and lily ponds found in the three formal gardens. This includes, "Winged Mercury" in the Front Garden (figure 6.4), the Cherub Fountain and lily pond/ reflecting pool in the Terrace Garden (figure 7.0), and the "Frog-and-Turtle" fountain and lily pond in the Formal/ Rose Garden, attributed to Toronto sculptors Frances Loring and Florence Wyle (figure 7.3).⁶¹



Figure 7.0 - AI colourized image of the "Cherub" Fountain and Reflecting Pool in the Terrace Garden (retrieved from Court, 2012).



Figure 7.1 - Photograph of the Antique Sundial's stone base (Amena Mirza, 2023).



Figure 7.2 - Photograph of the Antique Sundial's faceplate created in 1721 (Amena Mirza, 2023).



Figure 7.3 - Photograph of the "Frog and Tortoise" Fountain in the Formal/ Rose Garden taken in the 1970s, by David McQueen (Leslie Frost Library Archives).

Surprisingly, the Rose Garden was not actually full of roses during the Wood's residence. Historic varieties of shrub roses were only added from 1958-1961 by the Rose Society of Ontario with the help of the University of Toronto's Botany Department.⁶² Some of the roses planted were gifted by The Canadian Rose Society in the late-1950s, and were said to have included old Shrub-like Hybrids, Floribundas, Hybrid Teas, Hybrid Perpetuals, and Climbers.⁶³ Iris varieties like the Bearded-Irises were said to have been from German botanical gardens.⁶⁴ According to various records, these roses did not remain within the site. Instead, they were transferred in 1961 by the Royal Botanical Garden with future plans of re-propagation when news of York University's construction plans came about.⁶⁵ This was done because the Rose Society feared the historic roses would be destroyed during the construction process.⁶⁶

The Antique Sundial, with its 18th-century faceplate and the 20th-century limestone base designed by Howard Dunington-Grubb during his early years in Canada, and is located in the Bruce Bryden Rose Garden. It was donated by Mrs. Janina Stensson, Fellow of the Society of Landscape Architects, in 1993 (see Figure 7.1 and 7.2).⁶⁷

USES OF GLENDON HALL DURING WOOD FAMILY ERA (1920-1950)

Glendon Hall was used as the family's home beginning in 1925. Similar to many homes of that era, entertaining was key to the Wood family's social life. Their beautiful gardens allowed ample space to entertain friends and family over the years. One of the first events held at the Manor was in 1925, and was a housewarming party where Mrs. Wood's birthday was also celebrated.⁶⁸

Numerous garden parties and Sunday evening dinner parties were held in the 1930's, in line with the social-scene trends of the time. One of these garden parties had distinguished guests and key figures like the Lieutenant-Governors of Ontario and Lady Herbert A. Bruce, and were said to be reminiscent of the garden parties held in Scotland and England.⁶⁹

The Woods' generous philanthropic characteristics were also reflected in their entertaining choices, where they held a number of charity events in 1936. Examples included garden tours to aid the Blind and a "National Garden Scheme" where admissions to their gardens were charged and then given to various charitable organizations.⁷⁰

Engagements, weddings, and other parties and celebrations were held at Glendon Hall in the 1940s, a trend that continues to this day.



PRINCIPALS IN GABY-FLEMING NUPTIALS
A lovely bride of Saturday was Miss Beverly Fleming, daughter of Mrs. Norman Gilchrist, and granddaughter of Mr. and Mrs. E. R. Wood. She is pictured here with the bridegroom, Frederick MacBeth Gaby, cutting the cake at the reception held in "Glendon Hall," the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Wood. The marriage ceremony took place in Timothy

Figure 7.4 - Image of a newly-wed couple (Mr. and Mrs. Woods granddaughter on the right) at their reception held at Glendon Hall (Social Highlights section, Toronto Star Daily, June 2nd 1941).

GLENDON HALL'S USES SINCE 1950

University of Toronto Faculty of Law and Botany Department (1950 - 1961)

The Woods' had initially made plans to develop the estate into a botanical garden in the 1950s. Instead, after the death of Mrs. Wood, the University of Toronto's Faculty of Law used Glendon Hall for academic purposes, and the Botany Department. From roughly 1950 to 1960, the University of Toronto's Botany Department and Faculty of Forestry planted both native and exotic shrubs around the site, following the wishes of Mrs. Wood.⁷¹ It was soon clear much of the estate was not being used for botanical purposes.⁷² Instead, the site's ownership transferred to York University, which then began the transformation of the site into a residential university. The transition took place over 5 years, and York University's first campus opened its doors in 1961.



Figure 7.5 - Campus Masterplan model created in 1961 (retrieved from Court, 2012).

York University's First Campus (1961 - present)

Glendon Campus began as a liberal arts and sciences university. However, in 1966 York University purchased the land that is now known as the Keele Campus, as they needed more space to expand their campus for their growing student population. It was during this time Glendon developed further, and became a uniquely English-French bilingual liberal arts and sciences residential university.

In the early years of Glendon, Glendon Hall itself was used for some classes. It was also used for hosting garden parties and other events, like alumni parties and graduation ceremonies. The Hall had a number of uses, including a health centre, a counselling centre, and a student pub.⁷³ Students often studied there, or walked through the gardens to get to the student residence buildings. Separate from the Manor, the Wood Residence was built in 1965, and was the first student residence of Glendon and York University. It was named in honour of the Wood family. From 1992-1995 the gatehouse, existing since the Wood family era, was also used as a women's shelter and food bank.⁷⁴

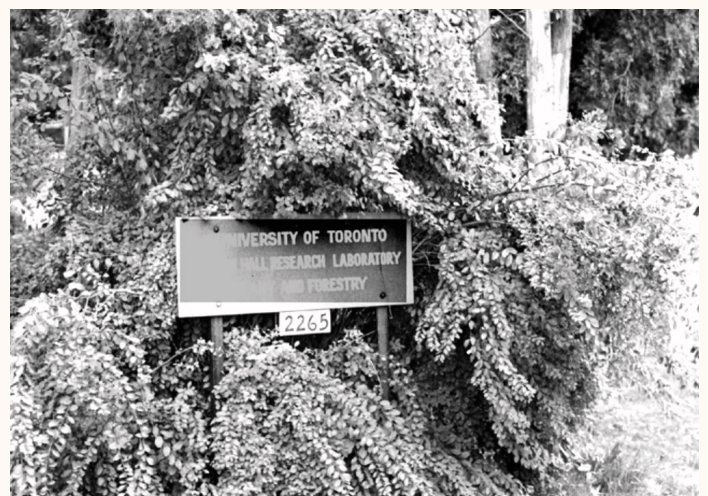


Figure 7.6 - UofT Campus sign of the Botany and Forestry Department's "Glendon Hall Research Laboratory" from the 1960s (retrieved from Court, 2012).

RECENT HISTORY

Glendon Campus at York University - Uses at Present

UNIVERSITY CAMPUS

Glendon Hall remains the home of York University's Glendon Campus and offers French-English bilingual liberal arts programs. This includes certificate, undergraduate, and graduate programs. Glendon is used now as a location for courses, seminars, and classes held in the dining room and living room.⁷⁵ It is also where Glendon Gallery is located, home to the Canadian Language Museum. The second floor and west wing hold administration and liaison offices, as well as Student Service offices.



Figure 7.7 - A class on the first floor of Glendon Hall being used by students to catch up on some work (Amena Mirza, 2023).



Figure 7.8 - Photograph of Bastille Day celebrations at Glendon Hall (Consulate General of France in Toronto, 2009).

EVENTS

The gardens are open to the public and are often used for events hosted by the university such as Bastille Day celebrations, academic ceremonies, and Alumni and Faculty events. As it has been in the past, Glendon Hall is also used as a wedding venue today, and is often used by photographers as a picturesque location.

STUDENT RECREATION

Downstairs and towards the rear of the Glendon Hall is Lunik Co-Op, a student-run café and favourite place of many to study or grab a quick coffee. Lunik supports all students by offering a pay-what-you-can model for food and other goods.⁷⁶ Art supplies are often found in the centre-table for people to use. The still-existing Teahouses in the Bruce Bryden Rose Garden also offer a place for students to hangout, relax, or study on a warm day.



Figure 7.9 - Photograph of Lunik Co-Op (Amena Mirza, 2023).

OUR TEAM

This brochure was created as part of two capstone courses in Public History, AP/HIST 4840 and GL/HIST 4310. Thank you to professors Dr. Jennifer L. Bonnell and Dr. Gilberto Fernandes, as well as our placement supervisor Dr. Elaine Gold, director of the Canadian Language Museum, for their valued support and encouragement.

AMENA MIRZA

I am a student at York University in the History B.A. Honours program along with completing a Certificate in Public History. I am also pursuing a Bachelor of Education in hopes of becoming a teacher.

For this project I focused my research on the changing history of Glendon Hall over time, its uses, as well as the gardens, both formal and informal, and Glendon Hall's more recent history.

JAN SZULC

I am a student enrolled in the B.A. Honours History program at York University. I am also pursuing York University's Certificate in Public History.

My focus for this brochure centred around the history of pioneer settlement, the Wood family, the expansion of their estate during the 1920s, and the home's interiors.

NERA-LEI VASILKO

I am a third year Political Science student in the Bachelor of Arts program at Glendon College where my studies focus on Canadian Studies, Latin American history and International Law.

My focus for this brochure was on the physical landscape and the Indigenous history of the estate.

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