

## Lieutenant Henry Blackadder (1882-1968)



Henry was born in Dundee, Scotland and entered the architectural profession in 1899 by joining the office of T.M. Cappon in Dundee. After completing a four-year apprenticeship, he worked as an assistant at George & Yeates completing several large commissions, one of which was the design for the British Pavilion at the World's Fair of 1904.

In 1911, Blackadder moved to British Columbia first working as a draftsman with Dalton & Eveleigh. In the same year he secured his first independent commission for a residence in Vancouver. The next year he entered into partnership with Alexander S W MacKay, their practice thriving in the booming prewar economy. This partnership was Blackadder's longest lasting fifteen years. Together, Blackadder & MacKay furnished North Vancouver with numerous residences in both the Tudor Revival and Craftsman Bungalow styles.

Blackadder spent his early years in North Vancouver living in a house he designed on Carisbrooke Road. He and his wife Maud were well known within the predominantly English and Scottish community of Lonsdale. It was here Blackadder cultivated fruit trees, vegetables and flowers on his property and became a self-taught pianist.

During the first years of the First World War he supervised the construction of the North Vancouver Drill Hall. It was during this time he joined the reserve company of the 6<sup>th</sup> where he served for 18 months before transferring to 6 Fd Coy CE where he spent another 4 months before going east in mid 1917 as a Lieutenant

After 6 months in St Jean Quebec he finally arrived in England in January 1918 but didn't make it to France until July where on the 6<sup>th</sup> of August 1918 he reported into the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion Canadian Engineers. Two days later the Canadians broke through the German lines at Amiens in what has been called "The blackest day in the history of the German Army". He served as an engineer officer with the 4<sup>th</sup> at Amiens, Scarpe, Droucant-Queant, Canal du Nord, Cambrai and during the Pursuit to Mons. After the Armistice he stood on a bridge over the Rhine and photographed the withdrawing Germans troops. He then served with the Allied occupying forces in Germany arriving back in Canada in June 1919 when he returned to Blackadder and MacKay.

Like most architectural firms they did both commercial and residential buildings. These included the Cenotaph in Victoria Park, the Dundarave Block on Lonsdale and the Lynn Valley Elementary School. In 1927 MacKay moved to Auckland, New Zealand, ending their collaboration. For the next ten years Henry worked independently and did small additions, structural repairs and designed several warehouses on Granville Island. Like others the Depression slowed his practice. From 1937-41, he formed a partnership with Joseph F. Watson their buildings conforming to the current modernist aesthetic.

In 1941 Blackadder entered the drafting rooms of the Burrard Dry Docks in North Vancouver where he served for the rest of the war. After the war he continued to work completing an apartment building in 1954 on Lonsdale at the age of seventy-one.

Blackadder's dedication to the architectural profession extended well beyond his practice. In 1929 Henry became a member of the RAIC, and was elected Vice-President, 1940, and President, 1941-43, of the AIBC. Before he died the AIBC declared him an Honorary Member in recognition of his contribution to architecture in B.C