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The Voice of UNB

FOUNDERS' DAY

The 182 anniversary of the University of New Brunswick will be marked Thursday, March 2.

Known as Founders' Day, it celebrates those men and women who established this University in 1785.

A debate in which members of the faculty and student body will take part, an address by Dr. Gerald S. Graham, professor of Imperial History at London University along with special visitors from government and business, an art and library exhibition along with special traditional ceremonies will pay tribute to the University's founders.

The action of formally paying tribute to the university's founders is not an old one. For those who enjoy splitting hairs, the ceremony is not old enough to be called a tradition. It was Dr. Colin B. Mackay who, when editor of the *Brunswickan* in the 1940's urged university officials to set a day aside each year to honor the founders of the university. The idea sparked officials' interest and then action. Founders' Day has been celebrated ever since.

Coupled with the formal gestures of respect to the founders is a ceremony of rent payment to the reigning monarch through his or her representative. Payment of the Quit Rent evolves from the requirement of the first land grant to the College of New Brunswick on July 18, 1800. The payment is in acknowledgement of the grant of 5,900 acres of land made to the college at that date. The

sum of one farthing for every one hundred acres of land granted was established as the Quit Rent "payable in each year on the Feast of Saint Michael to his Majesty King George the Third, his heirs and successors forever".

Lieutenant-Governor John B. McNair of New Brunswick is expected to receive the Quit Rent from Dr. Mackay at an evening ceremony.

The decision to hold Founders' Day sometime in March was an arbitrary one. Dr. Mackay, in his Founders' Day address in 1960, said: "The story of our university is one of a slow but determined attempt to achieve provision for higher education in the Province of New Brunswick. From the beginning it had stout-hearted supporters but their ideas met with such public and even open hostility that it led to no less than three successive reorganizations of the institution. It is because of

our chequered and often turbulent career that we have found it quite impossible to designate any one specific day as that most suitable to commemorate our foundation."

It was the year 1785 when seven leading Loyalists presented a memorial to Governor Thomas Carleton for the creation of an academy of liberal arts and sciences. Because the memorial clearly infers the establishment of an institution of higher learning, UNB traces its beginning back to that date.

Students and members of the public are cordially invited to attend both the debate being held at 4 p.m. in Memorial Hall, and the Founders' Day ceremony beginning at 8 p.m. in the same hall. The guest speaker in the evening will be the Canadian-born British historian Dr. Gerald S. Graham. His address is entitled: "In Defence of the Ivory Tower."