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The research project for which I was awarded the Fred and Betty Price Award, entitled *Industrial Iconography: Construction site photography in Montreal*, was conducted between June and October of 2013. I was primarily interested in the construction site photography of Deakin & Stewart and Anglin & Norcross in the Notman Photographic Archives. I contended that early photographs of Montreal construction sites such as these could potentially shed light on the evolution of concrete construction in Montreal, especially during the early 20th century. Internationally, the circulation of photographs of construction sites and finished buildings—such as those made famous by the Hennebique archives in France—played a major role in establishing the bona fides of concrete during the early years of the 1900s, when it was still regarded as a largely experimental medium, and eventually contributed to an “industrial iconography” which laid the foundations for the modernist movement decades later.

The holdings of the Deakin & Stewart (D&S) and Anglin & Norcross (A&N) fonds depict projects that range from 1917 to 1955; in general, this documentation confirmed my hypothesis that the use and acceptance of reinforced concrete in construction in Montreal had an uneven and fragmented history. While most large-scale buildings used a fairly standard structural steel frame construction reinforced by concrete, they nonetheless clung to historicist forms such as brick and limestone cladding, and other ornamentation, in order to disguise the appearance of the concrete. It was not until much later, during the 1950s and 1960s, that the exposed concrete emblematic of modernism, and later Brutalism, became more popular in local construction.

More than anything, what the photographs in the D&S and A&N fonds demonstrate is the massive shift in scale in the built environment that the city underwent in the early decades of the 1900s. While modernization in Quebec is often traced to Quiet Revolution of the 1960s, these photographs make clear a tendency towards urbanization predating that by at least forty years. Partially enabled by new materials such as reinforced concrete, buildings of unprecedented scale suddenly became possible. As buildings heights in the city were limited to ten storeys (or 40 metres) until 1927, the scale of buildings such as the Chateau Apartments—which was right at the limit in terms of size—would have constituted a drastic reorientation of the cityscape for Montrealers.