Erindale College opened in 1967 as a College of the University of Toronto although located on a separate campus 20 miles from the main centre in downtown Toronto.

Erindale College takes its name from the closest village which was founded soon after the American revolutionary war as a half-way point on the military road which was constructed between Hamilton and Toronto. This road for security reasons was built about five miles from the lake. Springfield Village, as it was at first called, had a couple of Inns and was situated at the crossing of the Credit River, one of the larger streams flowing into the north side of Lake Ontario. The region had not been settled before.

A church was built there in 1820 by the Rev. William Magrath who came from Ireland and the church is not only old for this part of Canada, but also was the proto-type of the church in Mazo de la Roch's books. It is situated at the edge of the campus.

The College property of about 300 acres is situated on high ground along the west bank of the Credit. Indeed that river and a tributary form the boundary of the campus on three sides. The Credit River and the Mississauga Road which forms the College's other boundary are all within the new Town of Mississauga. It is a large suburban area formed by amalgamating many smaller places. The name Mississauga derives from the original Indians who lived in large numbers along the banks of the Credit River which was in early days a great salmon river. Traders settled and in the course of business gave credit to the Indians, whence the name of the river. Because of the salmon fishery the college property and other land beside the river remained Indian territory later than adjacent settlements.

The river is a striking feature of the campus and the main buildings are high above it, although set some way back. They rather resemble a modern castle. There are two groups of buildings, a low preliminary building of no great significance and the main buildings which look like a castle and which will soon be extended.
About 100 years ago when the salmon ceased to run and the Indians dispersed, the land came into the possession of the McGill and Schreiber families; McGill being a farmer and Schreiber a wealthy man who established a country estate. As you are aware the Schreibers are related to the Howards. As his second wife he married Charlotte Mount, a strong minded woman, an artist and a founder of the Royal Canadian Academy. She had the name of the village changed from Springfield to Erindale in honour of the Rev. William Magrath but the district has little other connection with Ireland as this is not a particularly Irish settlement. One of Charlotte Schreiber's proteges was Ernest Thompson Seton and the story of the Springfield Fox in his book "Wild Animals I have Known" commemorates the original name.

The Schreibers built 3 fine houses above the river about 1872, but sold out to a bachelor merchant called Reginald Watkins about 1920. He seems to have used the stone from the 2 smaller houses to enlarge the main residence in which I now live. It is a fine home set in an old and handsome park in the English fashion.

In spite of proximity to the city, the campus is still relatively wild. Deer, many small animals and many birds are seen regularly. Many come up from the river valley. Above the campus this broadens into a broad, swampy, conservation area.

Mazo de la Roch lived a few miles away from the college and used the country around about as settings for her many books, but died before the college was founded.

The students in the first year had to design sweaters, colours and crests for themselves for athletic teams. They chose green, black and white as their colours, partly because of the Irish name but partly, I believe, because these happened to be the colours of the school attended by the leading student of the time. The choice I think is unfortunate as black, white and green are not very exciting and approximate very closely to the white, green and dark blue of Innis College also in the University of Toronto. I enclose a cloth crest used by college teams. They frequently called themselves 'Windigos' from the Indian spirit.

I believe that the most striking features of the college are either the Indian connection or the appearance of the main buildings which look like a castle above a winding river. This aspect can be seen not only from the grounds, but also by looking across the river from the main road which now follows the original military highway through Erindale. No fighting took place near here during the American invasion of 1812-1815.

From a letter to Dr. Conrad Swan, York Herald of Arms from Dr. J. Tuzo Wilson, former Principal, dated March 30, 1971.