By Margot Tankin

Decades is a new series intended to present the history of MIT through the eyes of historians, photographers and alumni. This is the second segment of a two-part article dealing with the Institute's early days in Boston. At the end of Part I, General Francis A. Walker had become MIT President in 1881, the year before William Barton Rogers died while speaking at commencement.

During Walker's administration, he characterized MIT as "a place for men to work and not for boys to play." But, what is more important, he expanded the curriculum in economics, political and industrial history, public and business law, English and modern languages. He initiated courses in electrical, chemical and sanitary engineering, geology and naval architecture. In the first ten years of his administration, enrollment rose from 302 to 311, necessitating new buildings, including one at the corner of Boylston and Clarendon Streets.

In Oct. 1911, MacLaurin announced construction of a new building for the following spring. This was the first building, of the future Charles Eliot Norton Laboratories. Forty-six acres of Cambridge sites for the "New Technology." MacLaurin discussed this idea, and continued to investigate the possibilities of purchasing land along Commonwealth Ave., west of the present-day BU bridge. When MacLaurin discussed this with T. Coleman DuPont, a founder of the DuPont Corporation, the latter thought this was not enought land. "Technology will occupy a great position in the future and must have room to grow," he responded, and pledged $500,000. The second option was an offer by Springfield alumni of thirty free acres. At this point, the city of Cambridge passed a resolution urging MIT to move to Cambridge.

In Oct. 1911, MacLaurin announced construction of a new building for the following spring. Forty-six acres of Cambridge and sold for $75,000. Gifts and bequests, including the one from Du Pont, and one from Robert's widow, covered this. Still, there were no funds for the construction. Then, in early 1912, George Eastman, president of Eastman Kodak Co. offered $2.5 million enabling the plans for the "New Technology" to take shape.

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