

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

STUDY OF A WINNIPEG CITY ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL (PINKHAM)

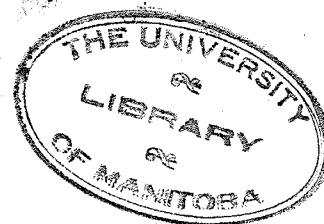
BEING A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE COMMITTEE
ON POST-GRADUATE STUDIES IN PARTIAL
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Purpose and General Procedure

It is the purpose of this thesis to present the history of the Pinkham elementary school, Winnipeg, during the period 1883 to 1951, inclusive, and to examine progress and factors affecting the progress of this school more especially during the past twenty-five years. The study involves a consideration of some major aspects of school progress outlined in the Table of Contents, including such matters as building and equipment, economic and population changes, the progress of pupil population through the grades and the influence of supervision upon school progress. It also includes discussion of social and economic conditions of the community.

The school is specially chosen because the social and economic circumstances which obtain in the area seem to have had a marked influence on the school story and this thesis investigates this assumption.

The study is based upon a detailed examination of all records on file in the Department of Superintendence and such as are to be had in the school pertaining to enrolment, attendance, classification and promotion, elimination of pupils, teaching staff and principals. It should be pointed out that the study must be limited to factual information because of the difficulty of assessing in detail many factors for success such as the sincerity, sympathy and intelligence with which teachers have applied themselves to their task. Some supplementary material and background information were

supplied by persons who have been familiar with the school over a period of years. All in all the writer was able to piece together a reliable general history of the sequence of events and to secure sufficient factual data to be able to estimate progress for at least a quarter of a century.

Location in City of Winnipeg

In Figure 1 is shown the location of the Pinkham school in the City of Winnipeg, having reference to the Red and Assiniboine rivers and some of the more important streets and avenues.

Residential and Industrial Areas

In Figure 2 the residential and industrial areas in the district are indicated. The school district is bounded on the north by the Canadian Pacific Railroad, on the east by Sherbrook Street, on the south by Ross Avenue and on the west by McPhillips Street. Numerous industrial properties occupy a substantial part of the district. In many cases homes are over-shadowed by, or face into, large industrial plants. Since 1950, when the City of Winnipeg Engineering Department finally occupied its property bounded by Tecumseh, Pacific, Arlington and Alexander, no ground has been available in the district for open-field play. Until 1950, the City of Winnipeg Parks Board had provided and operated skating ice on that property; in 1950-1, the only skating ice in the area was a small piece suitable for children up to ten years of age, placed on the west part of the school grounds -- grounds which are only one-fifth of the minimum size recom-

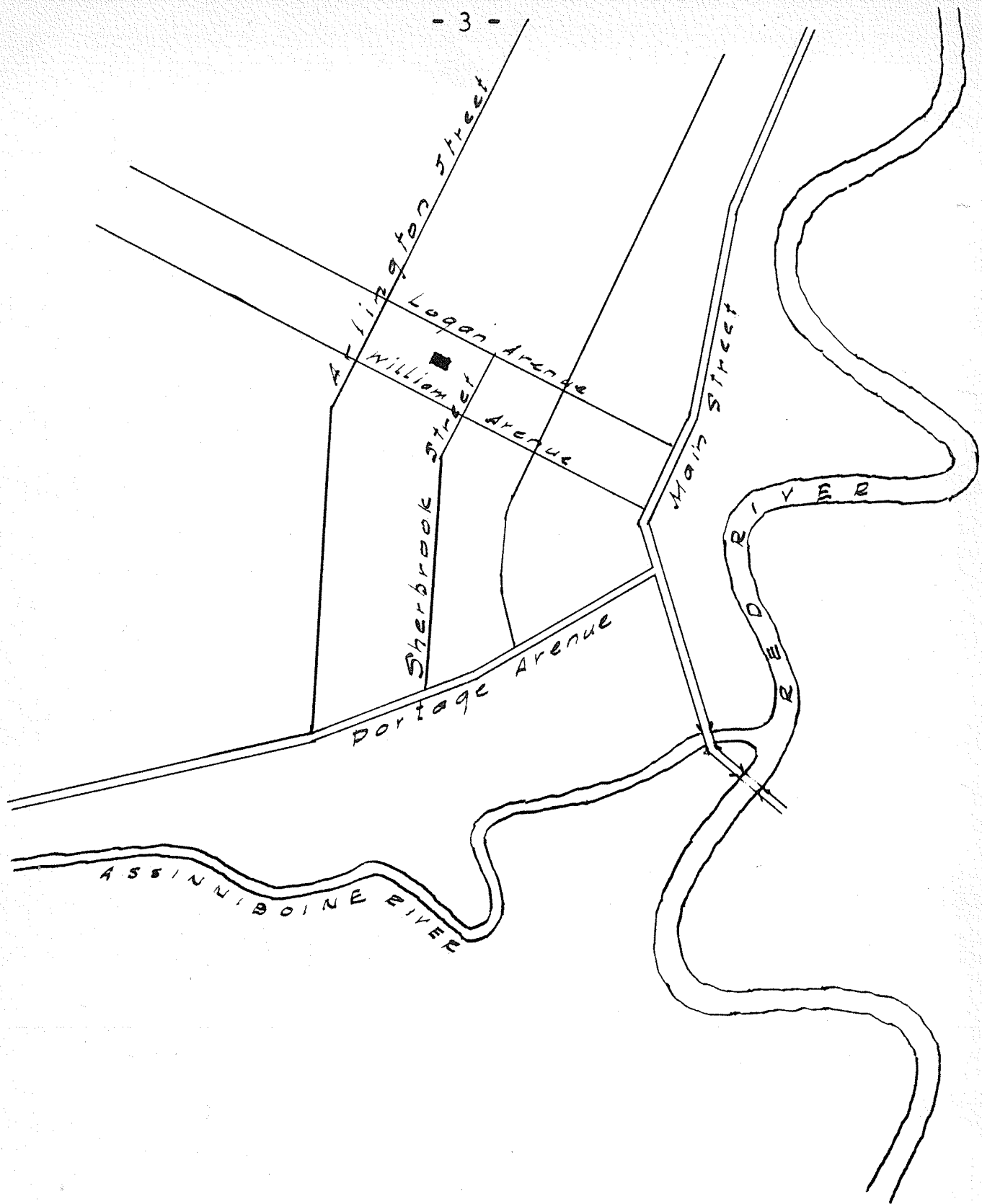


Figure 1. Location of Dinkham School
in the City of Winnipeg.

■ School

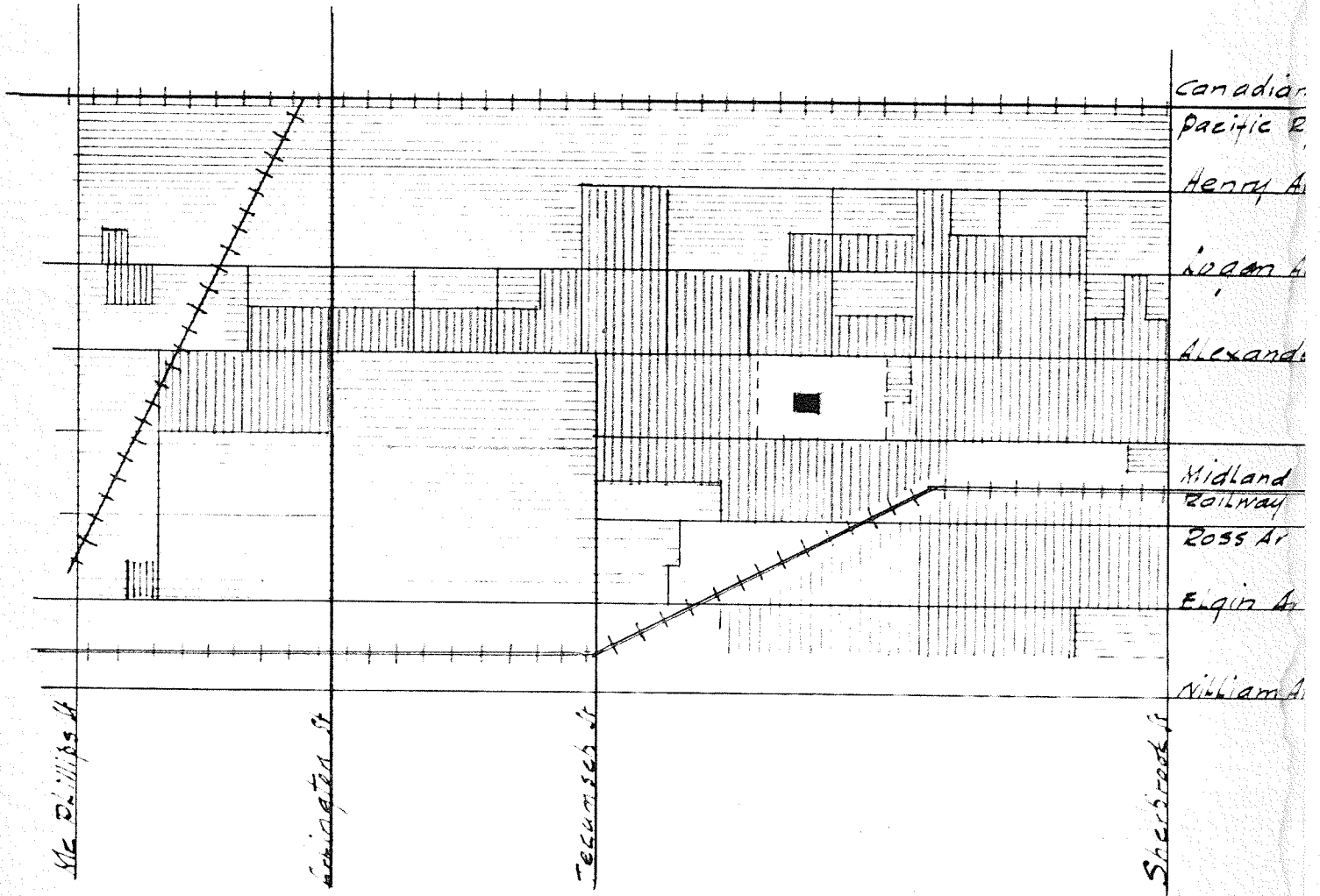
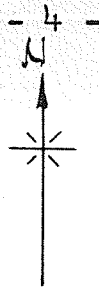

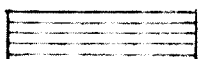



Figure 2.

Key

- Residential Area 
- Industrial Area 
- Pinkham School 

mended for elementary schools in the Reavis Report.¹ During the past five years when home-building in other parts of the city and Canada has been conducted with energy and enthusiasm, only a few very small houses have been built in the area; industrial expansion and construction have proceeded rapidly. There are a few vacant lots but the proximity of industrial plants, low incomes and high prices of materials obviously discourage the erection of homes in the district.

Legal Authorization for a Winnipeg School.

On May 3, 1871, at the first session of the first Legislature of Manitoba, assent was given to a bill which became the School Act, Chapter XII of the Statutes of Manitoba. Under this Act, in Winnipeg, the Protestant School Board was organized on July 3, 1871. From 1871 until 1876, the Reverend W. Cyprian Pinkham² inspected the schools of Winnipeg as Protestant superintendent for the provincial Board of Education. In the latter year, the Reverend George Bryce was appointed as superintendent of Winnipeg Schools by the Winnipeg School Board.

Winnipeg, prior to 1875, was District No. 10 of the Protestant section but in that year the provincial districts were reorganized and Winnipeg became School District No. 1.

The Pinkham school, built in 1883, was conducted for

¹Report of the Directed Self Survey, Winnipeg Public Schools, p. 74.

²See Chapter II, p. 7.

seven years under the jurisdiction of the Winnipeg Protestant School Board. After 1890, when the Provincial Government passed the Public Schools Act¹ providing for a single public school system, the Pinkham school operated under the Winnipeg Public School Board. The following reference to the change is found in the minutes of the Board:

"On the first of May the schools which had up to that date been in operation under the Manitoba School Act came quietly under the provisions of the Public Schools Act passed at the last meeting of the Legislature."²

The foregoing states briefly the circumstances under which any school in Winnipeg, in this case the Pinkham school, could have legal authorization.

In the succeeding chapters of this paper the detailed story of Pinkham school is told.

¹An Act Respecting Public Schools, being Chapter 127 of Revised Statutes of Manitoba, 1892, Vol. II, up to and including those of 1891.

²School Board Minutes, Winnipeg School Board Offices, Dec. 20, 1890.

CHAPTER II
SCHOOL HISTORY

Original Building

The original Pinkham school was a two-roomed, one-storey structure erected on the present site in 1883 and used until 1903 when the currently-used, three-storey building was constructed. The first mention in Winnipeg School Board records, of a new school later to be named the "Pinkham Schoolhouse", was made on June 12, 1883. On that date the Board authorized the Chairman of the Building Committee "to advertise for tenders for a school site not less than 100 feet square between Logan Street and McWilliam Street and from three to six blocks west from Dufferin Park, and to report to the Board at its next meeting."¹ In the margin, the secretary wrote the words, "Another School Site in View Pinkham likely." In the Board minutes, dated September 11, 1883, appears this motion, "that the new schoolhouse about to be erected in ward No. 5 be called the 'Pinkham Schoolhouse'".² The motion was carried but no explanation for the choice of name was recorded in the minutes: however, in a newspaper clipping, dated October 23, 1922, there appears this reference: "On the corner of Pacific, Alexander and Rietta streets stands the Pinkham school, which was erected in 1883 and named for the Right Rev. Cyprian Pinkham, Lord Bishop of Saskatchewan and Calgary. From 1871 to 1882 he held

¹Minute Book, 1881-1890, Protestant Board of School Trustees, Winnipeg School District, No. 1, p. 124.

²Ibid, p. 156.

the position of superintendent of education for Protestant schools in Manitoba."¹

At the time of the next Board meeting, July 10, 1883, no action had been taken concerning advertisements for tenders for the proposed school site and one of the Board members, a Mr. Monkman, "urged the immediate necessity for increased school accommodation in that (Pinkham) district."² Immediate steps were taken to secure a site, and prepare plans and specifications for the building. It is interesting to note that the plans called for "a new schoolhouse of two rooms and such that is might in future be added to."³ The school, which was constructed, remained until demolished in 1903 without any additions although in January, 1894, as many as 173 pupils were enrolled in its two rooms.

By August 21, 1883, the present site had been fixed upon and the Chairman of the Building Committee, Mr. Paterson, was authorized to advertise for tenders for the erection of the new school building in ward number five. On August 31, 1883, the following motion was carried: "...that the building com~~ee~~ be and are hereby authorized to ask for tenders for the erection of a solid brick school building in Ward No. 5 according to the Barber plans and to enter into a contract without further reference to this Board either with the

¹Newspaper Cuts of Winnipeg Public Schools, p. 53.

²Minute Book, 1881-1890, Protestant Board of School Trustees, p. 127.

³Ibid, p. 127.

tenderers for the solid brick building or those already received for a brick veneer building, as in their judgment may seem best the whole cost in either case not to exceed the sum of five thousand five hundred dollars."¹ The repetition of authorization was occasioned by acceptance of one tender which, on careful examination, was found to be quite unsuitable. The Building Committee proceeded according to instructions and the contract for a two-roomed, solid brick building was let to a Mr. H. A. Crotty for the sum of \$5500.00. Construction of the new building was begun immediately.

But all was not smooth sailing for the contractor. On October 2, 1883, "A deputation of workmen employed by a subcontractor named Barber in the erection of the 'Pinkham' schoolhouse addressed the Board in regard to non-payment of wages by their employer."² The Board notified Mr. Crotty that further payments on the building would be withheld till the workmen were paid. Evidently this did not end the Board's difficulties in the erection of the new school. On November 13, the Chairman of the Building Committee reported to the Board that his committee had instructed the architect and himself to hire labor and purchase the necessary material for the completion of the building. In the margin, the secretary wrote, "H. A. Crotty having assigned the Pinkham School was completed by day labor."³ It would appear, too, that some

¹Ibid, p. 153.

²Ibid, p. 161.

³Ibid, p. 175.

of the work was not too well done, for five years later this entry is recorded, " ... the leaky roofs of ... Pinkham, ... were repaired":¹ nor was the school really completed in 1883, because dated July 6, 1894, we find the Building Committee recommending, "That ceilings be placed in two rooms in the Pinkham School, estimated cost \$90.00."² Apparently no fence had been built about the school in the first few years; in 1896, at a cost of \$178.00, one was erected, and, at a cost of \$59.00, it was painted. Heating of the school was provided directly from a syndicate stove in each classroom.

So much for the facts concerning the original building. An interesting comment on the school and its area was reported in the press in 1922.³

¹Annual Reports, 1882-98, School District of Winnipeg, Annual Report of Building Committee, 1888, p. 25.

²Minute Book, 1890-1896, p. 421.

³Newspaper Cuts of Winnipeg Schools, School Board Office, October 23, 1922, p. 53.

"Concerning this original school and the vicinity surrounding it the first principal F. H. Schofield says:

When the Pinkham school was opened in the early part of 1884, the district it served had no sewers or paved streets, and the few narrow sidewalks were often suggestive of the dotted lines which indicated proposed railways on our maps. The resemblance to railways went further, for both sidewalks and railways were often under several feet of snow after a winter blizzard and under several inches of water after a spring thaw. Over the larger part of the district the houses were small and scattered, but just opposite the new school was a block on which stood some twenty odd cottages, all built on the same plan and all vacant except one. The anticipated wealth of the speculator who built them had vanished with the passing of Winnipeg's first "boom" in 1883.

Most of the men who lived in the district were employed in the shops or on the trains of the Canadian Pacific railway,