

UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

DEVELOPMENT OF THE HISTORY CURRICULUM IN MANITOBA

1870 - 1970

by

PERCIVAL VERNON WILLIAMS

THESIS

Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for The Degree of Master of Education.

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TO

MY

MOTHER

WITH

LOVE

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I wish to express special thanks to Professor K. Osborne, the thesis advisor, for his inestimable suggestions, guidance and continued interest throughout the writing of this thesis.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis traces the development of the History Curriculum in Manitoba during the period 1870 - 1970. In pursuit of this goal, the thesis sought to establish the goals and objectives of history teaching, the types of history and history content taught, and the methods used in teaching the history at the various phases of the curriculum evolution.

To provide the conceptual frame work in which the history curriculum developed, the factors which influenced the establishment of, the mode of operation of and the selection of priorities of the Manitoba Public School System were briefly reviewed. An examination was also made of the various influences which helped to determine the objectives of history teaching, and the types of history content and the methods used to achieve them.

In general, it could be said that the Manitoba Public School System was firmly established by 1928, and that religion, politics and social factors, together with the ethnic composition of the Manitoba population, the closeness of the provincial ties with Ontario and Great Britain, the effects of the Great Depression and the Great Wars influenced both the formation and policies of the Public School System and the evolution of its history curriculum.

Although Ancient, Mediaeval and Modern history always had a place, British and Canadian history dominated the

History Curriculum for nearly ninety years. Only during the last ten years of the period did they become less significant.

At first, the development of good virtues and high morals were the chief aims of history teaching, later citizenship and patriotism were added and finally sympathetic empathy for and Canada's obligation to other nations were included.

By the year 1970, Manitoba had developed a history curriculum which was capable of meeting the needs of all its peoples, while at the same time comparing favourably with that of the other provinces.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION iv

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

CHAPTER I

A Brief Review of the Development
of the Manitoba Public School Sys-
tem 1870 - 1970 1

CHAPTER II

The History Curriculum Under the
Dual Education System 1870 - 1896 . . . 59

CHAPTER III

The History Curriculum During the
Bilingual Period 1897 - 1916 114

CHAPTER IV

Changes in the History Curriculum
1917 - 1928 165

CHAPTER V

The History Curriculum in the Age
of Social Studies and Social Educa-
tion 1928 - 1970 219

CHAPTER VI

Conclusion 308

BIBLIOGRAPHY 314

INTRODUCTION

Foreward

The questions posed and examined in this thesis were answered solely from the writings and views of organisations, groups and individuals who had contributed directly to the development and /or the implementation of the Manitoba Public School Curriculum at one or more phases of its evolution. There was no attempt to include the views of orthodox educational theorists or educational philosophers.

The views and writings of the orthodox educational theorists and educational philosophers were excluded for two reasons. First, the writer had observed that there were wide differences between what the orthodox educational theorists and philosophers felt should take place in the classroom and what did actually happen. A second factor which mitigated against the utilization of theorists and the philosophers' views was the observed differences between the various laymen and teachers' interpretations of educational theories.

Since the implementation of a theory depended first on the implementor's concept of the theory, secondly, on the situation in which the theory would be implemented, and finally on the resources available to implement the theory, a series of alterations to the concepts of the theory would inevitably take place before it was actually implemented. For the above reasons, only people who were directly in

involved with classroom situations, during the period 1870 - 1970 could give a true account of what actually went on in the classroom.

The chief sources consulted were:- the Department of Education Bulletins, Programmes of Studies for the schools of Manitoba, Annual Reports of the Department of Education, authorised commissions' reports and recommendations, special reports on education, previous history examination papers, minutes of the Board of Education 1872 - 1890, minutes of the Advisory Board of Education, minutes of school trustees meetings, annual school inspectors' reports, statutes of Manitoba, the Educational Journals of Western Canada, the Western School Journal, The Manitoba School Journal, The Manitoba Educational Journal and The Manitoba Teacher, together with interviews with pupils and teachers, and questionnaires.

Interest in the Research

In September, 1972 the writer held a grade XI history forum to find out the pupils' views of and their experience with history text-books, course content, goals of history teaching, methods of history teaching and the attitudes of history teachers. The most commonly expressed views and opinions were:-

- that history text-books were in general too difficult to read, unattractive and boring;
- that the history content dealt with, in the classroom, was in general not interesting;

- that history had virtually no utility outside the classroom;
- that the study of history required too much reading and too much rote learning;
- that the expressed purpose of history teaching was not meaningful; and finally
- that most of the pupils, who had participated in the forum, did want to study history.

These revelations led to further investigation of the dissatisfaction with history. That investigation showed that both teachers and pupils were leveling similar accusations against history, as early as 1900.

For instance, MacGregor Hales in an article 'History Examination', complained that pupils' examination answers showed that pupils were unable to judge the relative importance of events or to point out the effect of a particular event on the history of a people. He concluded that the pupils were not given regular practice in the philosophical side of history nor enough time to develop a clear view of history.¹

In 1908, Stanley Dunlop described some history teachers as having 'the unhappy faculty of making each history lesson a bore, and of killing pupils' interest in the

¹ MacGregor Hales B.J., "History Examination", The Educational Journal of Western Canada, Vol. 11, No. 5, Brandon, May, 1900, p. 467.

subject, beyond any hope of resurrection'.²

In 1916, A. White, in his article 'History in the Elementary School', was disturbed by the fact, that after four years of history, grade VIII had failed to get an intelligent grasp of the outstanding events of the history taught.³

Similarly, the editorial, "Beginning of History", blamed the pupils' lack of interest in history on the way the subject had been introduced, on the methods of teaching suggested in the history curriculum, and on some teachers' religious adherence to such methods.⁴

In 1925, an editorial "History Teaching", blamed badly written texts and the teachers' tendency to concentrate on matters that were of no interest to the pupils, for the pupils' lack of interest in history.⁵

Later, in 1927, the article 'Elementary Social Studies' accused the Department of Education of having failed to modernize the history curriculum.⁶

² Dunlop, Stanley, "The Relative Value of the Subject of the Programme of Studies". The Western School Journal, Vol. 111, No. 5, Winnipeg, May 1908, p. 163.

³ White, A., "History in the Elementary School", The Western School Journal, Vol. XI, No. 1, Winnipeg, January, 1916, p. 11.

⁴ An Average Teacher, "Beginning of History", The Western School Journal, Vol. XI, No. 6, Winnipeg, June, 1916, p. 241.

⁵ Editorial, "History Teaching", The Western School Journal Vol. XX, NO. 7, Winnipeg, September, 1925, p. 265.

⁶ "Elementary Social Studies for Grades I, II, and III", The Western School Journal, Vol. XXII, No. 8, Winnipeg, October, 1924, p. 206.

The Halstead History Research Committee, of 1935, reported a widespread teacher disapproval of history textbooks, and a general dissatisfaction with the content of high school history courses.⁷

In spite of the Halstead Committee report, of 1935, the Reeves Committee in 1940 was forced to condemn grade Xll history teaching for spending too much time on foreign policy, while neglecting to pay attention to the forces in the nineteenth century which produced the age in which the pupils lived.

The dissatisfaction noted by the pupils who had attended the previously mentioned Forum, together with those listed above, convinced the writer that there was a need to examine the evolution of the public school history curriculum. The similarities between the dissatisfactions voiced at the forum and those stated in the articles written between 1900 and 1940 indicated that there must have been a common source of the problem. The writer's determination to examine the public school history curriculum stemmed from his conviction that the history curriculum was the source of the problem.

Purpose of the Thesis

This thesis on The Development of the History Curriculum in Manitoba 1870 - 1970 attempts to answer the follow-

⁷ Halstead C.N., "Report of the History Research Committee", The Western Journal, Vol. XXX, No. 4. Winnipeg, April, 1935, p. 206.

ing questions about the Manitoba public school history curriculum during the period 1870 - 1970:-

- a. what were the expressed and inferred purpose or aims, goals or objectives of the public school history curriculum during the period 1870 - 1970?
- b. what were the changes and variations in those aims and objectives during the period, if there were changes, what factors were responsible for them?
- c. what were the types of history taught and what was the specific history content used at each level?
- d. what were the changes and variations in the types of history taught and the course content, and what factors were responsible for those changes and variations?
- e. what evidence is available to show that there was a particular emphasis on any specific type of history at any phase in the development of the Province of Manitoba?
- f. what were the history teaching methods or approaches used and how did those methods or approaches vary over the period of this research?
- g. what were the pressure groups which influenced the type of history that was taught at any specific period?

Steps and Procedure

The study follows the chronological system of development.

It consists of a brief review of the development of the Manitoba Public School System, followed by a study of the development of the history curriculum. The latter study is divided into four periods.

The first period 1870 - 1896 covers the first sixteen years of Manitoba public school education. This period was peculiar in that it represented the only period in the history of Manitoba when public funds were used to support a public system of denominational schools.

The second period 1897 - 1916 was chosen because it represents twenty years of bilingual public schooling. During this period the peculiar demands of bilingualism placed a tremendous strain on both public funds and teacher supply, and a severe test on the British Canadian feelings of nationality and British allegiance.

The third period 1916 - 1928 represented twelve years of rapid educational changes. It was the first period in which the Manitoba Public School System operated as a single unit. It was a testing period and when it was over the Manitoba Public School System was firmly established.

The fourth period 1929 - 1970 represented the introduction of social education and social studies as opposed to history and geography. It was a period in which social

and international consciousness was emphasized.

In each chapter, the evolving purpose or goals of the public school history curriculum are examined. This is followed by a review of the course content and the sources from which the content was taken. Finally an analysis is made of the teaching methods or approaches used. An analysis of the factors which influenced the changes in goals, content sources and methods or approaches is done concurrently as each phase of a chapter is discussed.

CHAPTER 1

A Brief History of the Development of the Manitoba Public School System 1870 - 1970

This chapter reviews specific historical events and legislative enactments which have had direct or indirect influence on the formation and the development of the Manitoba Public School System, and have also accounted for changes in the public history curriculum.

On May 12, 1870 a Bill embodying the rights of a new Canadian province, to be called 'Manitoba', was enacted by the Canadian Parliament.¹ Special provisions of the Bill included a guarantee for the official use of the French and the English language in all provincial activities, land grants to the metis families living in Manitoba at the time of the enactment, and perpetuation of existing education rights enjoyed by the various denominations whether "by law or by practice at the time of the union". The new province would have a Legislative Council and a Legislative Assembly and representation in the Parliament of Canada.²

"On July 15, 1870, the Manitoba Act was proclaimed and the legal existence of Manitoba began". Its newly appointed Lieutenant Governor was Adams C. Archibald.³

¹ Morton, W.L., Manitoba: A History, Toronto: University of Toronto Press; p. 141.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid. p. 143.

Archibald arrived in Manitoba on September 2, 1870, and at once began the work of organizing the new province. He immediately had a census taken.

The first provincial census showed that the province had a population of 11,963 persons. This number consisted of 558 indians, 5,757 metis, 4,083 English half-breeds and 1,565 whites. Of the total population 6,247 were of French descent, and were catholics by religion, and 5,716 were of British descent and protestants by religion.⁴

The new province was, therefore, found to have a balance between the catholic and French speaking settlers. This factor was borne in mind by the Lieutenant Governor in many of his appointments of persons to serve in his government. For example Alfred Boyd, a merchant of English birth, and M.A. Girard a young French Canadian were appointed to the Lieutenant Governor's executive council.⁵ A similar policy was followed in the commissions issued to magistrates and in the recruitment of a small mounted police force.

In the provisions made for the election of the members of the Legislative Assembly the French - English composition of the population was also considered. The province was divided into twelve French and twelve English electoral districts, and in the December, 1870 Legislative

⁴ Canada Sessional Papers, V - 20, 1871, p. 91.

⁵ Morton, W.L., Manitoba: A History, p. 145.

Assembly elections which followed twelve French and twelve English speaking members were elected.⁶ In January 1871, the executive council was enlarged to include Thomas Howard, a moderate Protestant, H.J. Clarke, a Roman Catholic lawyer and James McKay, a famous plains guide and a Roman Catholic.⁷ The principle of the French - English (Catholic - Protestant) balance was also followed, in March 1871, when the members of the Legislative Council were appointed.⁸

Having established his executive council, legislative council, and Legislative Assembly, the Lieutenant Governor called the first meeting of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly. The members began their first sitting on March 15, 1870.⁹ One of the many questions dealt with by this first Legislature was the need for setting up a public education system in accordance with the Federal Government's Manitoba Act of 1870.

One of the clauses of the Manitoba Act of 1870, stipulated that the new province should set up a public education system which, while satisfying the needs of the

⁶ Ibid., p. 146.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

Manitoba people, did not impinge on the rights or the privileges, with respect to Denominational Schools, which any class of persons had 'by law or practice in the province at the union*. This clause together with the clause which authorised the official use of both the English and the French languages had one purpose. This was the perpetuation, in the new province, of the old duality of the Red River settlement and the balance of English and French nationalities on which confederation was based.

To ensure that the Manitoba Public School System was established according to these conditions, the Canadian Parliament retained the pre-rogative to make remedial laws to rectify any provincial Act which was ultravires of the law. The Manitoba Legislative Assembly was cognizant of this fact, when, in a series of laws, it attempted to provide an acceptable public education system for the province.

In 1871, the Manitoba Legislature passed the Act to Establish a System of Public Education. By this Act, the Lieutenant Governor in Council was empowered to appoint a ten or fourteen person Board of Education consisting of an equal number of protestant and catholic members, and to appoint one protestant member of this Board as superintendent of protestant schools and one catholic member of the said Board as superintendent of the catholic schools. These

* Mentioned earlier in this chapter.

superintendents were made joint secretaries of the Board of Education.

The Board of Education had the authority to make such regulations as were necessary for the general organization of the common schools, and to select the books, maps and globes to be used in the schools. The authorized books for protestant schools were to be English and those for catholic schools were to be French.

Each school section was responsible for the control, management and discipline of the schools in its section, for the making of rules and regulations, for examining, grading and licensing of teachers in its section and for prescribing the books to be used for religious and moral instructions.

A specific sum of money appropriated by the Legislature was to be used for paying the Board's expenses, superintendents' service costs and a portion of the cost to support and maintain the common schools of each section.

Both the protestant and the catholic school sections were divided into a number of school districts. On the first Monday in February of each year, the eligible male voters of each school district were to select a three man Board of School Trustees for their school district, and decide on the manner in which money would be raised for the support of the schools in their district. These trustees could employ teachers, but only those who had been examined by the Board of Education.

Children of catholic parents living in a protes-

tant district were to be allowed to send their children to schools in a catholic district, and protestant parents were to be allowed similar privileges. However, school rates or levies were to be paid to the districts in which the children attended school. ¹⁰ Thus the Manitoba School Act, of 1871, provided for the establishment of a Dual School System which recognized the balance in the religious, linguistic and ethnic composition of the province's population.

This balance was upset after 1871, by a huge influx of protestant and English speaking settlers from Ontario. "The Ontario immigration had been almost the only movement into the province from 1871 to 1874, though there had, of course been some settlers from the Eastern Townships of Quebec, from the Maritimes and the British Isles. It had the effect, therefore, of continuing the duality of language and faith with which Manitoba began, but it weighed down the balance in favour of the English tongue and the Protestant faith."¹¹

One direct result of the influx of protestant Ontarians into Manitoba was the Manitoba School Act Amendment of 1873. According to that amendment, parents of catholic children or parents of protestant children attending catholic or protestant schools in or outside the district in which the parents lived should pay the required

¹⁰ Statutes of Manitoba, 1871, Chapter 12.

¹¹ Morton, Manitoba: A History, p. 159.

rates or levies to the schools their children attended. The amendment in effect changed the dual system in operation since 1871 to a separate system.¹² Henceforth, rates were to be paid on a denominational base.

The amendment Act of 1873 nullified the equal division of legislative appropriated funds to catholic and protestant sections ensured in the 1871 Act. After 1873, the division of appropriated funds was in direct proportion to the ratio of school attendance in each section.¹³ Secondly, the amendment limited the raising of additional school funds to assessment on real and personal properties in the school district.¹⁴

The years 1875 and 1876 saw the addition of a new element to the Manitoban French and English core population. Those years marked the beginning of the influx of non-Canadian immigrants into Manitoba. That immigration brought two fundamental changes in Manitoba: the equality of English and Protestant and French and Catholic was upset in favour of the English and Protestant; it also began the change in the province's ethnic mixture.

The first group of non-Canadian immigrants, the Mennonites, arrived in Manitoba in 1874.¹⁵ They were re-

¹² Statutes of Manitoba, 1873, Chapter 22.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Morton: Manitoba: A History, p. 160

inforced by a second group in 1876. In 1875 the second group of non-Canadian immigrants, the Icelanders, settled in Manitoba.¹⁶ The establishment of Mennonite and Icelandic colonies in Manitoba "ended the duality of ethnic composition of Manitoba".¹⁷ Since both groups were protestant their presence increase the protestant majority of the province.¹⁸

The changes indicated above led to further amendments to the 1871 Education Act. In 1875, an Education Amendment Act increased the size of the Board of Education from ten or fourteen to twenty-one members. This act changed the concept of equal French and English representation on the Board of Education. The Lieutenant Governor was empowered to appoint twelve protestants and nine catholics as members of the Board of Education.¹⁹ According to the same amendment, school funds appropriated by the Legislature were to be divided between the protestant and catholic sections of the Board of Education in direct proportion to the number of children between the ages of five and sixteen residing in the several and respective school districts of the Province.²⁰ Furthermore, respective sec-

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 162.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 163.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Statutes of Manitoba, 1875, Chapter 28.

²⁰ Ibid.

tions were authorised to set up school districts in the same area if the need arose.²¹

In 1876, the legislature passed a Bill which compelled persons, who claimed to be neither catholic nor protestant, but who lived in cities or towns where there were two boards of trustees, to pay school levies or rates to the school trustees with the majority of pupils. The trustees with majority were required to pay the school trustees of the minority district a part of the assessment in proportion to the number of children of their denomination within the city or town.²²

The Education Act of 1879 not only embodied the Education Act of 1871 and its subsequent amendments, but further, it authorised the Board of Education to appoint school inspectors,²³ and to withhold appropriation grants from school districts whose trustees did not return annual reports on the number of children in their school district.²⁴

After 1876, a renewed flow of immigrants from the British Isles and Ontario, together with small numbers of French, Mennonite and Icelandic peoples greatly increased the province's population. Consequently, public school enrolment also increased, and so did the demand for more

²¹ Ibid.

²² Statutes of Manitoba, 1876, Chapter 38.

²³ Statutes of Manitoba, 1879, Chapter 80.

²⁴ Ibid.

teachers. To avert the worse effect of this situation, the Manitoba Legislature, 1882, passed the Act to Establish Normal School Departments in connection with Public Schools.²⁵

The Normal Schools were intended to instruct and train student teachers of the public schools in the science of education and the art of teaching.²⁶ "The Protestant and Roman Catholic sections were empowered to establish Normal School Departments in connection with the Protestant public schools of the City of Winnipeg, and with the Roman Catholic schools of St. Boniface".²⁷

At first, Normal School facilities were opened in Winnipeg and St. Boniface, but later, similar facilities were opened in Brandon.²⁸

The economic boom of 1881 - 1883 brought a new floods of immigrants to Manitoba. Even the depression of 1884 - 1887 did not act as a deterrent against the arrival of contingents of Hungarian, Icelandic, Swedes and Norwegian immigrants.

The cost of schooling the children of the new immigrants placed heavy burdens on the rate payers, especially those of the poorer districts.

²⁵ Statutes of Manitoba, 1882, Chapter 8.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Wilson, The Development of Education in Manitoba, (unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Michigan State University, 1967, p. 103.

²⁸ Ibid.

TABLE 1

Number of Children Enrolled in Protestant and Catholic Elementary Schools 1871 - 1897 ²⁹

Year	Number of Protestant Schools	Number of Children Enrolled in Protestant Schools	Number of Catholic Schools	Number of Children Enrolled in Catholic Schools
1871	16	816	17	639
1876	30	1,600	22	1,134
1879	99	3,614	27	1,658
1881	128	4,919	32	3,011
1890	629	18,850	90	4,364

²⁹ Wilson, Development of Education in Manitoba, p.p. 109 - 110