

Playing the Game: The Education of Girls in Private Schools on Vancouver Island

by

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Bachelor of Arts, University of Calgary, 1967  
McGill Diploma in Education, McGill University, 1969

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in the Department of History

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University of Victoria

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## **Supervisory Committee**

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## Abstract

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By the mid-nineteenth century academics began to replace the accomplishments in schooling for middle and upper class girls in Britain. Immigrants brought both models to Vancouver Island. Angela College, a religious school clinging to the past, represents the old; Norfolk House, an urban largely day school, and Queen Margaret's, a country boarding school with some day students, illustrate the two types of the new, reformed schools. This study draws on personal accounts, archival records, and contemporary newspapers to show that parents chose private schools for reasons of ethnic preservation, upward social mobility, and dissatisfaction with local public schools. A comparison of the founding, governance, finance, buildings and grounds, curriculum, headmistresses and teachers, students, parents, and succession plans revealed similarities and striking differences. Parental preference for strong leadership, scholarship, and character-development enabled Norfolk House and Queen Margaret's to survive; the lack thereof combined with poor management doomed Angela College to failure.

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## **Acknowledgments**

I want to thank Dr. Patricia Roy for all her advice and patience, Drs. Lynne Marks and Patrick Dunae for their timely suggestions, and Dr. Sylvia Van Kirk for her insightful reading.

Special thanks to Mary Barton at the Anglican Diocesan Archives and Keith Walker at the Glenlyon-Norfolk Archives for all their help and advice.

To my husband, Mark, for his support and endurance through this long process; to John and Dani for their unwavering belief that Mother could do it; to Christian for his encouragement, listening, and thoughtful suggestions when topics became unmanageable.

## CHAPTER I *Introduction*

Families with sufficient financial means have always sought the schooling, or absence of schooling, which they felt would best prepare their daughters to achieve their values and aspirations. From the time of the Ancient Greeks the primary aim of some parents was for daughters to catch rich husbands, men of property, but this was not always the only objective. By the mid-nineteenth century, some schools in Britain were offering girls opportunities for a 'modern' education, exercising their brains, and not just training their bodies to be drawing room ornaments. The girls' private school system which flourished on Vancouver Island from colonial times through the Second World War combined British traditions of female education with the need to respond to conditions in the settler society and its public schools. Middle class parents of British background expected the education of their daughters to include not only ethnic preservation, the backbone of the British boys' private schools in British Columbia that Jean Barman studied,<sup>1</sup> but also to fulfill a need for security in a land far away from the support of traditional home and family. The enduring private schools on Vancouver Island recognized and worked hard to satisfy these needs.

Although independent schools for girls founded by institutions and supervised by male-dominated governing bodies, as ancillary to their principal duties, did not survive, those founded and conducted by strong-minded, strong-willed women of exceptional stamina and endurance who had a clear vision for their schools did. The women,

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<sup>1</sup> Jean Barman, *Growing Up British in British Columbia*, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1984).

dependent upon their schools for their careers and financial survival, knew how the ‘game’ of a private school should be played and devoted their lives to winning that game. The men, and the powerless women they hired to be their principals, did not perceive the school to be their life’s work nor their primary source of income. Parents, much more prepared to accept a vision supported by dedication than a hollow edifice with uncertain leadership, supported such schools with their purse strings. Those school leaders who understood and played the game to attract and retain parents and students, survived, and the ill-conceived, ill-governed failed. This thesis examines Angela College, a religious school founded by the Anglican Church, which failed, and two private venture schools, Norfolk House, an urban school, and Queen Margaret’s, a rural school, which succeeded. I chose Angela College and not St. Ann’s as an example of a religious school because its history had received so little attention, Norfolk House rather than St. Margaret’s as the urban school, and Queen Margaret’s over Strathcona Lodge School as the country school, because of my familiarity with them, their British traditions, and the availability of research materials.<sup>2</sup>

Theories for girls’ education stretch back to the times of the ancient Greeks. Much has been written, though not always practical, on what is proper in female education. This history, with emphasis on the reforms that evolved in mid-nineteenth century England, is outlined in Chapter II. These nineteenth century ideas spread not only throughout Britain

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<sup>2</sup> The recently published: Deidre Simmons, *Servite in Caritate: The First 100 Years of St. Margaret’s School 1908 – 2008*, (Victoria: Morriss Printing, 2007) provides considerable material about St. Margaret’s School, Victoria BC. The founders were three strong-minded English ladies, similar to those at Queen Margaret’s and Norfolk House. Unfortunately, the Misses Edith and Isabel Fenwick were drowned in the sinking of *SS Iroquois* in April 1911 off Salt Spring Island, Miss Margaret Barton survived and continued as headmistress until 1928 and again from 1936-1939. The schools differed in that Miss Barton hired a number of Canadian-trained teachers, whereas the headmistresses of the other schools relied almost exclusively on the graduates of British girls’ schools and universities.

but also to the far corners of the British Empire including Vancouver Island. Two anthologies of writings on education, *Classics in the Education of Girls and Women* edited by Shirley Nelson Kersey<sup>3</sup> and the more recent *Public or Private Education? Lessons from History* edited by Richard Aldrich,<sup>4</sup> were particularly useful for identifying predominant trends and non-conformist views for each major era. As the excerpts are all primary sources, although some are in translation, they helped to identify writers who warranted closer study. One of these was Erasmus Darwin who, in his 1797 plan for a new school in Ashborne, Derbyshire, was a forerunner of the reformists who came forward more than half a century later. Many of his practical suggestions and assertions reappear in the day-to-day conduct and management of girls' schools on Vancouver Island. A relevant secondary source is Barry Turner, *Equality for Some: The story of girls' education*,<sup>5</sup> whose commentary ties trends in female education to social history in Britain and thus provides historical context for letters, speeches, and assorted other writings in each time period. Similarly, schools on Vancouver Island needed to accommodate the variances of their time and place to be successful.

Whereas the educational reformers of the latter half of the nineteenth century provided the antecedents for the independent girls' schools on Vancouver Island, this was not true for girls' private schools in Central and Eastern Canada. Their roots were in an earlier era. *Steiger's Educational Directory for 1878*,<sup>6</sup> essentially a venue for school advertising, provides insight into which aspects participating schools considered their most enticing features. Whereas almost all of the schools for boys promoted their

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<sup>3</sup> Shirley Nelson Kersey, ed., *Classics in the Education of Girls and Women*, (Metuchen, New Jersey: Scarecrow Press, 1981).

<sup>4</sup> Richard Aldrich, *Public or Private Education? Lessons from History*, (London: Woburn Press, 2004).

<sup>5</sup> Barry Turner, *Equality for Some: The story of girls' education*, (London: Word Lock Educational, 1974).

<sup>6</sup> Ernst Steiger, *Steiger's Educational Directory for 1878*, (New York: E. Steiger, 1878).

academic programmes leading to university entrance, most of those for girls still emphasized the accomplishments rather than scholastic endeavour. The same holds true for a number of school prospectuses from the latter part of the nineteenth century. Carolyn Gossage in her *A Question of Privilege*<sup>7</sup> reveals a shift towards academics during the first half of the twentieth century. Her work is often cited as the authority on Canadian private schools in the twentieth century, but this is only because there is no other as comprehensive. It is essentially a catalogue, not an analysis or comparison of schools. Mrs. Gossage's sometimes superficial research leads to discrepancies and avoidable errors.

Knowledge of the available schooling on Vancouver Island during the colonial period and after provincial status for British Columbia is essential to understanding the success of private schools for girls based on the British models. Donald MacLaurin's 1936 thesis on the early years of settlement is frequently cited as a comprehensive summary of conditions up to his time of writing.<sup>8</sup> Later historians have drawn on its facts and figures for education in the colonial era. As MacLaurin did not write about any of the three schools studied, his thesis was useful only as background.

More recent theses offered varying degrees of relevance. Several were public school specific and contributed little to private school issues. Elsie Ina Watts in "Attitudes of Parents toward the Development of Public Schooling in Victoria, B.C. During the Colonial Period" presented contrasts between parental attitudes toward public education in city and rural areas which helped to explain the profusion of private schools in

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<sup>7</sup> Carolyn Gossage, *A Question of Privilege*, (Toronto: Peter Martin, 1977).

<sup>8</sup> Donald Leslie MacLaurin, "The History of Education in the Crown Colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia and in the Province of British Columbia", PhD thesis, University of Washington, 1936.

Victoria.<sup>9</sup> Her arguments on class, religion, and affordability were well documented. Alison Elizabeth MacRae-Miller's "Discourse and Agency at St. Margaret's School in Victoria, British Columbia, Between 1930 and 1950" turned out to be less useful than expected.<sup>10</sup> It discussed specific issues in a narrow timeframe and only in the context of St. Margaret's School. As these characteristics differed from those I selected, comparisons were not relevant.

Fortunately, there are many primary sources. Patrick Dunae's *The School Record*, a guide to archival records, is comprehensive and useful tool for navigating the Provincial Archives collections of material on education.<sup>11</sup> *The Homeroom* website, his organic endeavour of some years, provides links to many sites about both public and private schools.<sup>12</sup> Although none of the schools studied is featured on the site at present, topics there assisted in determining the areas of discussion for this paper. In addition to the sources in the British Columbia Archives, the Anglican diocesan archives and the Glenlyon-Norfolk Archives were important sources. The Victoria newspaper *The Colonist* provides an accessible, though largely untapped, source of information with articles, announcements, letters to the editor, and advertisements for education, both public and private, in Victoria and to a lesser extent other locations on Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands. Many of these items reveal prevailing attitudes of their day. In

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<sup>9</sup> Elsie Ina Watts, "Attitudes of Parents toward the Development of Public Schools in Victoria, B.C. during the Colonial Period", M.A. Thesis, Simon Fraser University, August 1986.

<sup>10</sup> Alison Elizabeth MacRae-Miller, "Discourse and Agency at St. Margaret's School in Victoria, British Columbia, Between 1930 and 1950", M.A. Thesis, University of Victoria, 2003.

<sup>11</sup> Patrick A. Dunae, *The School Record :A Guide to Government Archives Relating to Public Education in British Columbia, 1852-1946*, (Victoria: British Columbia Archives and Records Service, 1992).

<sup>12</sup> *The Homeroom*, <http://records.viu.ca/homeroom/>.

addition, Vancouver Island censuses, directories, tax rolls, and survey maps provide not only background information but also personal and family data.<sup>13</sup>

Except for works published by the institutions themselves, literature on the girls' schools on Vancouver Island is scant at best, and for Angela College is virtually non-existent. Diocesan archives contain bits and pieces favourable to the school and anguished sections in synod and committee minutes as the governors attempted to resolve problems they had allowed to grow out of their control. Valerie Green's brief piece of social history in the *Islander* magazine<sup>14</sup> and a few paragraphs in books about life in Victoria in colonial times are among the few mentions of the Anglican school. In contrast, *The Colonist* contained a bonanza of information, not only about school social events and church disputes but also details of the management of the school. Analysis of advertisements from 1860 to 1908 revealed the difficult passage from enthusiastic beginnings to the final sale of the buildings and auctioning off of contents. Some data for individuals connected with the college is available in microfilm collections of specific family papers, such as the Crease Papers, at the Provincial Archives but most of that available is very difficult to read. This is partly due to low-quality scanning of deteriorating materials, but also to the habit of some of the writers of cross-writing to save paper or postage. Indexing is rudimentary at best, necessitating much searching to locate a few hidden nuggets of information about the school.

The other two schools studied developed their own collections. Norfolk House was fortunate to have a dedicated, thorough, careful archivist in the person of Keith Walker.

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<sup>13</sup> Much of this data is available on-line at:

[http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~canbc/1901vic\\_cen/divh3/divh3p01.htm](http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~canbc/1901vic_cen/divh3/divh3p01.htm).,  
<http://www.vpl.ca/bccd/index.php>, and <http://vihistory.uvic.ca/index.php>.

<sup>14</sup> Valerie Green, "From refinement to retirement: The Story of the Angela, *The Islander*, March 1983, 10.

As he knew ‘everybody’, he was able to gather materials from over 90 years of history to stock the archives at the school. Letters, newspaper clippings, report cards, examination papers, house standings, photographs were made available to me. Careful filing in innumerable labeled boxes, cases, and albums, cross-referenced on a dedicated computer, facilitated research. In addition, he co-authored the school history, based on the archives and personal communications. Archival materials for Queen Margaret’s were gathered, or saved, by one person. Norah Denny threw nothing away during her forty-plus years running the school, and after her retirement, bequeathed the collection to the Provincial Archives. This is a valuable resource but not as easy to navigate as the on-site Glenlyon-Norfolk collection. This is partially due to her extreme economy in the use of paper, especially during the War Years, which led to her using the same piece of paper for several purposes. Her speeches for school occasions (referenced by Jean Barman) were first recorded in school exercise books, and when these were filled, on ever-smaller scraps tucked inside the covers. For the school commemorative volume, *Beyond All Dreams*, she assisted the historical committee in organizing personal accounts from herself, teachers, and former students into an accessible format.<sup>15</sup> As she kept everything, from farm production to tradesman’s bills, the Queen Margaret’s collection, quite apart from the school itself, is a valuable resource for social history of the Cowichan Valley.

Notable amongst writers about private education in British Columbia is historian Jean Barman. Her account of boys’ private schooling, *Growing up British in British Columbia*, and her article, “Oh, No! It Would Not Be Proper to Discuss That with You”: Reflections on Gender and the Experience of Childhood”, inspired my research of this

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<sup>15</sup> Norah Denny and Others, *Beyond All Dreams: A History of Queen Margaret’s School, Duncan, British Columbia*, (Duncan B.C.: New Rapier Press, 1975).

topic.<sup>16</sup> She stated that she limited her research to boys' schools because private school Old Girls politely refused to speak to her about their school experiences. That presented a challenge. She explains the refusal in terms of context and culture. Perhaps of even greater significance was the women's perception of her as an outsider. She was American born from somewhere 'back East', the product of a different school system, thought and spoke differently, and held different attitudes, so the barriers of reserve quickly rose. In the article she speaks of "admonitions" of standards of behaviour, and "implicitly demanding its justification", "its defense or re-evaluation" referring to their schooling. These women lived by standards of behaviour, thoroughly ingrained during their home and school years, and possessed a self-confidence that felt no need to justify, defend, or re-evaluate, and thus they politely refused to talk to her.

In contrast, I, as an Old Girl of Norfolk House, found that women of this culture were interested in my research and quite prepared to chat. Nor did I have any difficulty obtaining the materials I needed. Glenlyon-Norfolk archives were made completely open to me by the now retired archivist, the final headmaster of Glenlyon, who trusted me not to use any of the contents for unseemly purposes. The Anglican diocesan archivist was also a Norfolk Old Girl, which eased my entry there for material about Angela College. The bounteous Queen Margaret's archives are housed at the Provincial Archives, but navigation was made easier by personal knowledge of the school. Two of my older brothers attended as small boys, my sister from age eight onwards, and my father was a life-long personal friend of the Denny family. To put myself further in context, my father

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<sup>16</sup> Barman, *Growing Up British*, and Jean Barman, "Oh No! It Would Not Be Proper to Discuss That With You: Reflections on Gender and the Experience of Childhood", *Curriculum Inquiry*, 24, no. 1 (1994), 53-67.

graduated in 1908 from King's College School, in Surrey, England and my mother from Norwich High School in Norfolk, England, one of the Girls' Public Day School Company schools, and, in 1920, proceeded on to Cambridge University. My third brother is an Old Boy of University School (now St. Michael's University School). As a family we are part of the wave of early twentieth century British immigrants, with parents reaching adulthood in England and children all born on Vancouver Island, who attempted to transplant the culture, habits, and institutions of 'home' into the Far West. This background gave me access as an insider. But, in balance, I taught in public sector high schools first in Quebec and then in Ontario for thirty years, so I am more than familiar with 'the other side'. My two children, like the offspring of many public school teachers, were educated entirely in the private system, one graduating in Ontario (Pickering College) and the other in British Columbia (Brentwood College). Hence I have considerable understanding of both sides of the public or private schooling controversy.

Most of the useful materials for the study of the three schools have come from primary sources. From these, I have grouped findings into founding, building and grounds, finance, governance, curriculum and school structure, athletics, headmistresses, teachers, students, and parents for each school and attempted to explain why the institution succeeded or failed. The timeframe from colonial days to the end of the Second World War was chosen to show growth in the education of girls from a settler society to the end of an era not only in world affairs but also in rural-based schooling for most children in British Columbia.

## CHAPTER II *The Education of Girls through the Centuries*

The path of female education for middle and upper class girls, from ancient times to the twentieth century, is of historical significance as it follows the changing expectations of society and of parents for their daughters' futures. In classical Greece there was little consensus from city state to city state. Sparta expected women to participate actively in family and community life and so offered girls a broad education ranging from physical fitness to politics.<sup>1</sup> Historians think Athenian women received less education and lived in more seclusion, but disagree on the degree of solitude.<sup>2</sup> Even the major Greek philosophers differed on the place of women in society. Aristotle subordinated them whereas the more liberal Plato believed that women were equal to men, both morally and intellectually, and deserved the same educational and political opportunities.<sup>3</sup> Plato's advanced views probably did not receive wide acceptance by parents or society at the time. St Jerome (circa 400AD) was the next renowned authority on female education. After establishing his own school in Bethlehem he wrote a series of letters emphasizing protectionism. To him, a girl needed to be constantly in the care of her mother or a devoutly religious female teacher. His curriculum emphasized the Scriptures, Latin, Greek, and spinning, with interludes of prayer and psalm and hymn singing every three

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<sup>1</sup> Barry Turner, *Equality for Some: The Story of Girls' Education*, (London: Word Lock Educational, 1974), 18.

<sup>2</sup> Shirley Nelson Kersey, "Introduction", *Classics in the Education of Girls and Women*, ed. Shirley Nelson Kersey, (Metuchen, New Jersey: Scarecrow Press, 1981), 1 and Turner, *Equality for Some*, 18.

<sup>3</sup> In Book VII of *Politics* Aristotle wrote that "male rules over female". Kersey, *Classics in the Education*, ed. Kersey, 8-9.

hours, day and night. Even though little of his academic study was worldly, his views were widely accepted for centuries to come.<sup>4</sup>

Although medieval records are sparse, the Roman Catholic convents in Western Europe probably followed St. Jerome's curriculum in their teaching of religion, Latin, Greek, and 'intricate needlework'.<sup>5</sup> In Britain, most parents expected little beyond the basic literacy, domestic skills, and pious behaviour taught by the Anglo-Saxon monastic nuns. After the Norman Conquest, the Church's teachings on female subservience found their way into Common Law and reduced opportunities for independent feminine thought. The convent tradition continued in Britain until the Reformation and the dissolution of the monasteries. Whereas most of the grammar schools for boys continued during the Reformation, none of the convents for girls survived.<sup>6</sup>

During the early Renaissance learning surged as schools at the royal courts of England and Western Europe augmented those of the Church. Three writers, Leonardo Bruni in Italy (1370-1444), Desiderius Erasmus in England (1466-1536), and Juan Luis Vives in Spain and England (1492-1540), emerged as advocates of education for women. Bruni favoured the study of Latin, religious works, history, and poetry.<sup>7</sup> Erasmus wrote about the scholarly household of his friend, Sir Thomas More,<sup>8</sup> comparing it to Plato's Academy. Vives believed women should spend much of their time in prayer, caring for the sick, and cooking, working hard while enjoying a diet of cold water and vegetables.

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<sup>4</sup> St. Jerome, "Letters CVII and CXXVIII", *Classics in the Education*, ed. Kersey, 12-18.

<sup>5</sup> Kersey, *Classics in the Education*, ed. Kersey, 19.

<sup>6</sup> Turner, *Equality for Some*, 13-17.

<sup>7</sup> Leonardo Bruni, "Leonardo D'Arezzo, Concerning the Study of Literature", *Classics in the Education*, ed. Kersey, 23-24.

<sup>8</sup> Sir Thomas More, Lord Chancellor of England under Henry VIII, author, and Catholic martyr, lived with his family in Chelsea, London, England.

He advocated a classical education combined with science (to improve cooking and nursing skills), convinced that a girl with her mind filled with the wisdom of the past would have no time for naughtiness, only goodness and serious thought.<sup>9</sup> Catherine of Aragon, not King Henry VIII, chose Vives as tutor for their daughter, Mary. Despite his grandmother, Margaret Tudor, having been a serious scholar who had founded the Lady Margaret professorships of divinity at Oxford and Cambridge, Henry had little interest in female education or rights. Mary's education, from Vives' "Plan of Studies" with its heavy concentration on classical and religious literature and Latin, was too restricted to enable her to cope with the political powers and factions of her day. Yet his Plan remained the recognized work on the education of girls for the rest of the century.<sup>10</sup>

Although the first Master of Merchant Taylors' School,<sup>11</sup> Richard Mulcaster, believed that the reason for educating girls was "their aptness to learn, which God would never have bestowed on them to remain idle or to be used to small purpose", this concept did not remain in favour for long. Attitudes changed abruptly when James I succeeded Elizabeth. Thoroughly imbued with the teachings of John Knox<sup>12</sup>, he believed that "to make women learned and foxes tame had the same effect – to make them cunning".<sup>13</sup> Yet, despite a lack of scholarship, the ideal woman of the early seventeenth century was

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<sup>9</sup> Juan Luis Vives, "The Instruction of a Christian Woman", *Classics in the Education*, ed. Kersey, 41.

<sup>10</sup> Turner, *Equality for Some*, 19- 20.

<sup>11</sup> The Merchant Taylor's Company founded its first British public school (independent of government support) in 1561.

<sup>12</sup> John Knox, a sixteenth century follower of Calvin's Protestantism, was instrumental in establishing the Church of Scotland.

<sup>13</sup> Turner, *Equality for Some*, 22-23.

skilled in domestic arts and household management. Gervase Markham's preface to *The English Housewife*<sup>14</sup> extolled her abilities:

in Physic, Surgery, Cookery, Extraction of Oils, Banqueting Stuff, Order of Great Feasts, Preserving of all sorts of Wines, Conceited Secrets, Distillations, Perfumes, ordering of Wool, Hemp, Flax, Making Cloth and Dyeing, the knowledge of Dairies, Office of Malting, of Oats, their excellent uses in a Family of Brewing, Baking, and all other things belonging to an Household.

Although this was not an academic or cultural education, it did include considerable substance.

By the eighteenth century as middle class parents grew richer with increasing commerce and industrialization, they wanted a veneer of gentility and upward social mobility for their children. With domestic skills and household management receding in importance many selected one of the newly established residential schools for their daughters. Unlike the 'great' public schools for boys<sup>15</sup> which enrolled from fifty to several hundred students, female boarding-schools tended to have fewer than twenty girls of differing ages, abilities, and levels of preparation grouped together in one private house.<sup>16</sup> As the same lessons were often taught to all regardless of how unsuitable, "few things were learnt thoroughly, but many follies contracted".<sup>17</sup> Despite their inadequacies, these schools laid the foundations of the future girls' schools with their patterns of

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<sup>14</sup> Gervase Markham, (1568-1637), *The English Housewife* was originally published in 1615, latest publication (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003).

<sup>15</sup> The term 'public school' in Britain refers to a school governed and financed by a group of individuals (the public) rather than by governmental authority. Such schools are akin to the 'independent schools', formerly known as 'private schools', in Canada. In recent times, in some regions in both countries, some government financial support may be available, but this does not alter their special status. Present-day public schools in Canada are the equivalent of the state-run schools in Britain, and are wholly financed by various levels of government.

<sup>16</sup> Michele Cohen, "Gender and the Public/Private Debate on Education in the Long Eighteenth Century", *Private or Public Education? Lessons from History*, ed. Richard Aldrich, (London: Woburn Press, 2004), 20.

<sup>17</sup> Mary Wollstonecraft, "Thoughts on the Education of Daughters", *Classics in the Education*, ed. Kersey, 168.

ownership/governance, finance, curriculum, faculty, facilities, and standards (or lack thereof).

Governance and finance of these schools differed from the public boys' schools and the endowed grammar schools as, except for a few religious schools such as those of the Quakers, the girls' schools were private commercial enterprises in towns and villages throughout the country. The necessity of earning a living was often the prime motivation of the proprietors. Teachers did not need to have any training or level of education. Buildings and grounds were residential properties already owned, bought or leased for the enterprise which offered a comfortingly homey atmosphere, but were rarely suitable for educational purposes.

The Seminary of Female Education opened by Mrs. M. Scriven in Tottenham, Middlesex, in 1788 and the school established by the Byerley sisters in Warwickshire in 1810 were typical of the better boarding schools. At Mrs. Scriven's girls received room and board, laundry, and instruction in "the French, English, and Italian languages; the belle-lettres; the use of the globes; history, music, dancing, singing, drawing, and painting; every useful and fashionable kind of needlework; books, threads, tapes, needles, and every other necessity" for £50 a year.<sup>18</sup> How one teacher could accomplish this with the anticipated clientele was not mentioned in the account. The Byerleys' school, which supported several unmarried sisters, their mother, and a wayward brother, was one of the most successful. With thirty boarders by the 1830s, it was larger than most, charged high fees, and was almost always full. The curriculum deviated little from the eighteenth

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<sup>18</sup> Clara Reeve, "The Plan of a Seminary of Female Education", *Classics in the Education*, ed. Kersey, 181-183.

century standard, with English reading, composition, spelling, and grammar, Geography, and Ancient and Modern History included in the basic tuition, and French, Music, Dancing, Drawing, Writing, and Arithmetic as extras for additional fees. Teaching was of a higher standard at the Byerleys' than in most schools because Mr. Byerley had sent his daughters to the best schools he could find even when family finances necessitated the strictest economy in all other matters. After his death, the older sisters viewed the education of the younger ones, especially in the 'accomplishments', as a good investment for the family business.<sup>19</sup> Perhaps more important to their success was their willingness to accept daughters of affluent non-conformist families (non-Church of England) who were often refused places in well-known schools. Although the Byerley establishment offered better qualified teachers and a wider degree of acceptance than most schools, it still emphasized ornamentation rather than scholarly pursuits. The academic 'traditional British school' for girls, offering Latin, Greek, Mathematics, and Sciences akin to the boys' public school curriculum in preparation for university, was yet to come.

From the late seventeenth to the mid-nineteenth century, writers proposed alternatives to the frothy education in vogue. As early as 1693 John Locke, the English philosopher, had suggested a broad curriculum, taught with approval for learning rather than punishment for lack of success, for girls as well as boys.<sup>20</sup> Mary Astell (1666-1731), an English feminist, proposed establishing a scholastic institution conducted on monastic lines to teach 'solid and useful' knowledge. Although financial support was forthcoming with even Queen Anne considering endowing the project, the Church of England

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<sup>19</sup> Phyllis D. Hicks, *A Quest of Ladies: The Story of a Warwickshire School*, (Birmingham, Frank Juckes, 1949), 88, 14, 7, 23.

<sup>20</sup> Turner, *Equality for Some*, 24-25.

hierarchy squashed the idea as being too like a Catholic convent education. The Quakers acted upon their belief that girls and boys had the same right to quality education by operating fifteen single sex and co-educational boarding schools by the early 1700s and continued to open more.<sup>21</sup>

By the late eighteenth century, Erasmus Darwin<sup>22</sup> realized that women of wealth had become bereft of any practical knowledge for supervising home and family or for managing their domestic economy, areas which were supposed to constitute their life's work. To assist the Misses S. and M. Parker in opening their school at Ashborne in Derbyshire, he wrote a detailed instruction manual with advice on a wide range of issues from the selection of beds, ventilation, diet, care of the body, health, remedies for afflictions, dress, amusements, punishments, rewards, to curricula for quality education. Practical learning encompassed writing for a variety of purposes, arithmetic, mineralogy and chemistry for a knowledge of soils and rudimentary agriculture, botany (from books only), history, geography, and modern languages with French and Italian being popular. As he considered broad reading essential he included a catalogue of suitable books. He advocated that women should continue their education throughout their lives by attending lectures given by visiting experts whenever possible.<sup>23</sup> Education, he believed, should equip women to lead fulfilling, useful lives and not condemn them to a sentence of meaningless triviality. This was advanced thinking for his day but Darwin was not alone in wanting to improve education. Mary Wollstonecraft writing a decade earlier voiced that girls' schools, by parental insistence, devoted far too much effort to the development

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<sup>21</sup> Turner, *Equality for Some*, 41.

<sup>22</sup> Erasmus Darwin (1731-1802), grandfather of Charles Darwin, was a noted physician, poet, philosopher, and scientist. The Misses Parker may have been his illegitimate daughters.

<sup>23</sup> Erasmus Darwin, *A Plan for the Conduct of Female Education in Boarding Schools*, reprint of the 1797 edition, (East Ardsley, England: S.R. Publishers; Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1968), 17-42, 81-114.

of pretty manners and not nearly enough to character-formation and serious learning. An “immoderate fondness for dress” was all that was learned by many girls.<sup>24</sup> This was certainly condemnation for the system in vogue.

To these writers, values education, or the hidden curriculum, was a vital part of learning. Darwin developed a code of morality for the school at Ashborne, which was a fore-runner of those embraced by private schools of the British model in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Giving advice about developing a girl’s character, he divided his not so hidden curriculum into five departments:<sup>25</sup>

1. A sympathy with the pains and pleasures of others, or compassion
2. A strict regard to veracity
3. Prudence, justice, chastity
4. Fortitude
5. Temperance

Absent was any reference to academic learning, or tradition, but his plan was the foundation for a new school. In comparison, a twenty-first century example of a vision statement from a school with over ninety years of tradition, reads:

. . . is a place of learning,  
 Defined by its history, people, and purpose,  
 That challenges the growth of the whole person  
 In a community that embraces the values of courage, responsibility, and truth,  
 In an atmosphere of caring and respect,  
 To create a lifelong student and world citizen.<sup>26</sup>

Truth, compassion/caring and respect for others, justice/responsibility/temperance (in the sense of moderation and restraint, responsibility for self, not the later meaning of

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<sup>24</sup> Mary Wollstonecraft, “Thoughts on the Education of Daughters (1787)”, *Classics in the Education*, ed. Kersey, 168.

<sup>25</sup> Darwin, *A Plan for the Conduct*, 46.

<sup>26</sup> Simon Bruce-Lockhart, Glenlyon-Norfolk School, Handout, February 16, 2005.

teetotalism) are present in both statements; <sup>27</sup> fortitude for a woman in the eighteenth century was akin to courage today. Little has altered in the ideals in over two centuries; the moral base of the private school remained although the outward form and scholastic scope of the institution changed.

People began to question the attitude of “too much knowledge was thought presumptuous”, where drawing room behaviours, including dressing in the latest fashion, playing the piano, singing, dancing, and modest ability at card playing were essential. Not everyone was willing to accept a life-sentence of idleness for women. Was learning incompatible with domestic and social duties? As the Rev. Sydney Smith <sup>28</sup> pointed out, no matter how caring a young woman might be, it was impossible for her “to be compassionate from eight o’clock in the morning until twelve at night” <sup>29</sup> hence the need for intellectual stimulation. Her work in the upper middle class household was not needed as servants could be hired cheaply to do it more efficiently. Smith realized the advantages to society of having educated mothers, quite apart from the dividends to the women themselves. Darwin, always interested in practicality, was concerned about the futures of those who did not marry, as well as the considerable number who through a husband’s death, incapacity, or ineptitude were forced to support themselves and often children. Too many of these women, no matter how ill-suited, were forced to take up teaching what little they knew, perpetuating the inadequacies in education. To Wollstonecraft and other writers on female education, women needed to be both intellectual companions and good

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<sup>27</sup> Darwin meant temperance in the sense of moderation and self-restraint, not its later meaning in reference to alcohol, and thus can be equated to responsibility.

<sup>28</sup> The Reverend Sydney Smith (1771-1845) was a great wit and humanitarian, who became Dean of St. Paul’s Cathedral, London.

<sup>29</sup> Sydney Smith, “Female Education”, *Classics in the Education*, ed. Kersey, 224.

household managers, able to read Greek and put a good dinner on the table.<sup>30</sup> Girls' education was about to leave its medieval roots behind and adjust to modern reality.

The midpoint of the nineteenth century marked the beginning of new educational opportunities for girls and women. The fashionable boarding schools did not close, but alternatives opened. Frances Power Cobbe, an educational reformer, described her finishing school as "if the object had been to produce the minimum of result at the maximum of cost, nothing could have been better designed for the purpose . . . everything was taught in the inverse ratio of importance. At the bottom of the scale were morals and religion, and at the top music and dancing".<sup>31</sup> For this education her parents paid £1000 a year.<sup>32</sup> Such schools faced more vocal criticism and competition as women increasingly refused to accept that their minds were weaker than those of men and questioned being excluded from politics, business, and even legal rights.<sup>33</sup>

The academic, or 'reformed', schools which developed after 1850 became the models for girls' private schools in Britain and throughout the Empire well into the twentieth century. Foremost was the improvement in teachers' qualifications. Day and evening classes at the newly founded Queen's College and Bedford College for Women prepared teachers and governesses to write London University examinations and gain recognized qualifications. Lecturers often came from King's and University Colleges

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<sup>30</sup> Wollstonecraft, "Thoughts on the Education", *Classics in the Education*, ed. Kersey, 168.

<sup>31</sup> Josephine Kamm, *How Different from Us*, (London: The Bodley Head, 1958), 11-12.

<sup>32</sup> For comparison, in the 1860s annual earnings: agricultural labourer - £36; male teacher -£93.76; clergyman - £272.20; surgeon - £645.40; barrister - £1600. A country gentleman with an income of £1000 a year could afford to employ a cook, upper housemaid, nursemaid, under housemaid, and a man servant to look after his family. <http://privatewww.essex.ac.uk/~alan/family/N-Money.html>

<sup>33</sup> Turner, *Equality for Some*, 88.

even though these institutions did not admit women as students.<sup>34</sup> In addition, such organizations as The Home and Colonial School Society offered short training courses for teachers. Although in 1850 most teachers and governesses were still untrained, change was coming.

Churches established schools in competition with the small private ventures. The Quakers operated the best of the available religious institutions. Girls pursued a rigorous programme of academic studies for seven hours a day, supplemented by quiet time for reading and writing and a Bible talk before bedtime. As ‘non-conformists’ whose children were denied entry to the ‘great public schools’, the Quakers put more thought and effort into their schools than other denominations. If the Quaker schools were among the best, some church schools sank to be ranked amongst the worst. The Church of England, concerned that its well-educated clergy in country parishes rarely had funds for schooling for their daughters, established an institution in Cowan Bridge to provide these impoverished girls with “a sound secular education, on true Christian principles, at the smallest cost”.<sup>35</sup> Smallest cost seemed to be the over-riding principle. This school attended by Patrick Bronte’s daughters later became notorious as Lowood in Charlotte’s *Jane Eyre*. Later it moved to Casterton where Dorothea Beale was headmistress before she assumed the leadership of Cheltenham Ladies’ College. Like the Brontes earlier, she found life at the school demeaning for everyone. When she tried to make life healthier and pleasanter by changing the system of control, which revolved about reprimand and punishment, a member of the governing committee informed her that while there was

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<sup>34</sup> Geoffrey Walford, “Girls’ Private Schooling: Past and Present,” *The Private Schooling of Girls*, ed. Geoffrey Walford, (London: Woburn Press, 1993), 19.

<sup>35</sup> Kamm, *How Different*, 30.

evidence that angels had been punished, there was none to indicate that they had ever been rewarded. Her experiences during her short time at Casterton equipped her to remove crushing restrictions from the lives of pupils at Cheltenham. Thus the Clergy Daughters' School, in a negative sense, profoundly affected the development of the model of British girls' private school.

Two categories of academic schools, day and boarding, developed and endured with strong supporters of each. North London Collegiate School for Girls, founded by Frances Mary Buss, became the most notable of the large day schools and the model for high schools in many parts of the British Isles. Its counterpart as the boarding-school model was the Cheltenham Ladies College under the long-term headship of Dorothea Beale after her departure from Casterton. Emily Davies<sup>36</sup> suggested a third alternative, an associated school. In her plan, where there were several schools in one area, each school would specialize in a particular age or achievement level.<sup>37</sup> Maria Grey<sup>38</sup> promoted this organizational plan, which certainly presented many advantages for the reform and survival of small schools, but she could not make it popular.<sup>39</sup> Two years later she and her sister formed the successful Girls' Public Day School Company. In contrast, Elizabeth Wolstenholme-Elmy, who grew up resenting the educational opportunities available to her brother and not her, advocated establishing a high school with low fees in every

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<sup>36</sup> Emily Davies (1830-1921) was an English educator who crusaded for girls to be able to write university entrance examinations. She opened New College for Women in Hitchin in 1869. The college moved to Girton in 1873 and became part of Cambridge University in 1880.

<sup>37</sup> Emily Davies, *The Higher Education of Women*, (London: Alexander Strahan, 1866), reprinted (New York: AMS Press, 1973), 157-162.

<sup>38</sup> Maria Grey (1816-1906) and her sister, Emily Sheriff (1814-1897), were advocates for female education who set up the Girls' Public Day School Company in 1873, and the Teachers' Training and Registration Society in 1876.

<sup>39</sup> Maria Grey, "On the Special Requirements for Improving the Education of Girls (1871)", *The Education Papers: Women's Quest for Equality in Britain. 1850-1912*, ed. Dale Spender, (New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1987), 176.

market town in England, operated under municipal or government authority rather than by individuals for profit. She was prepared to consider one school for both girls and boys in smaller towns, but this suggestion was too far ahead of its time to be accepted.<sup>40</sup> Schools modeled on North London Collegiate School for Girls and Cheltenham Ladies College which allowed girls to pursue serious academics while still maintaining genteel ladylike decorum were much more preferable to parents.

Through much of the nineteenth century, male influence still dominated governance of all but the smallest of the ‘public’ female schools. Dorothea Beale found power concentrated in a male head at Queen’s College, in an all-male board at the Clergy Daughters’ School, and in a male council in her early years at Cheltenham Ladies College. The gentlemen of the council had “entire control of the finances, the reception or rejection of nominations, the appointment or dismissal of teachers, and all that relate[d] to the external government, and to the admission of pupils”.<sup>41</sup> Gradually, through her strong personality, she was able to reduce the council’s power essentially to a veto over her recommendations. Although Miss Buss began her school as a private enterprise for personal satisfaction and to support her family, after twenty years she turned it into a ‘public’ institution with a board of governors to ensure its survival. In return for a salary she gave up her personal ownership and freedom of action.<sup>42</sup> As their founders aged, many private schools followed this pattern in the twentieth century. To define and protect their internal authority, duties, and powers, the headmistresses of nine girls’ schools met

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<sup>40</sup> Elizabeth Wolstenhilde-Elmy, “The Education of Girls, its Present and its Future (1869)”, *The Education Papers*, ed. Spender, 156. Elizabeth Wolstenholme-Elmy (1834?-1913) was active in female educational and suffragette movements in Manchester, England.

<sup>41</sup> Dorothea Beale, “Address to the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science (1865)”, *The Education Papers*, ed. Spender, 130.

<sup>42</sup> Kamm, *How Different*, 101.

in 1874 at Miss Buss' house in London to form the Association of Headmistresses.<sup>43</sup> Others were later invited to join. A similar group formed in British Columbia in the twentieth century.

Financing a girls' school was difficult. When the Schools Inquiry Commission [Taunton Commission] reviewed the state of schooling in Britain in 1886, it learned that there were 820 endowed schools for boys and only 20 comparable schools for girls.<sup>44</sup> When the Commission recommended that girls' schools similar to North London Collegiate be founded in all towns with more than four thousand residents, Parliament provided the financial solution by appointing the Endowed Schools Commission in 1869 to ensure funding for girls' schools. Endowments enabled schools to provide facilities and quality teaching at an affordable price. Such schools, serving as models and training centres for teachers, would raise the education level of girls throughout the country.<sup>45</sup>

Another alternative emerged. Schools did not need to be charities, run by the church or state, to be good; they could be successful if administered by a limited liability company. The most successful of these ventures was the above-mentioned Girls' Public Day School Company (later Trust), spearheaded by Maria Grey and her sister, Emily Shirreff. Money came in quickly, with Miss Beale, Miss Buss, and the Duke of Devonshire amongst the first to buy shares. By 1876 schools had been established in Bath, Chelsea, Clapham, Croydon, Hackney, Norwich, Notting Hill, Nottingham, and

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<sup>43</sup> Kamm, *How Different*, 185-186.

<sup>44</sup> Walford, *Private Schooling*, 22.

<sup>45</sup> Jessie Boucherett, "Endowed Schools: Their Uses and Shortcomings (1862)", *The Education Papers*, ed. Spender, 59-63.

Oxford by local demand, each educating girls to university entrance level. North London Collegiate School for Girls was the model they adopted.<sup>46</sup>

During their early years of operation, girls' schools rarely occupied purpose-built accommodation. Most schools were lodged in buildings that had recently been private homes, the larger and more prestigious-looking, the more the parents approved. Although conversion could be expensive, often more than the cost of a new building, it could be spread over several years making it easier to raise funds. Meanwhile, teachers, staff, and students put up with the eccentricities of the premises. Miss Buss with the move in 1870 from the family home and neighbouring houses to a new building and Miss Beale with an ambitious building programme were among the few fortunate ones.<sup>47</sup>

The introduction of a scholarly curriculum changed the purpose of girls' schools. Miss Beale and Miss Buss set university entrance as their goal and other schools began to follow. Music and other 'accomplishments' remained a part of school life, but no longer enjoyed a central position. By the 1890s, for example, girls in the sixth form at Manchester High School studied "English Grammar and Literature, French, Geography, History, Latin, Mathematics, and German . . . Drawing and Harmony were taken by most girls. Singing, Pianoforte playing, and Political Economy were each taken by a few . . . Greek . . . by those who were going to Oxford or Cambridge".<sup>48</sup> Miss Beale, with difficulty in recruiting suitable faculty, expanded her curriculum to include an educational and training programme of high standard for girls interested in a career in teaching. With

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<sup>46</sup> Turner, *Equality for Some*, 111-112 and Walford, *Private Schooling*, 21-22.

<sup>47</sup> Turner, *Equality for Some*, 103.

<sup>48</sup> Turner, *Equality for Some*, 142-142.

acquiring trained teachers still a major difficulty for many schools in 1900, few were able to offer as comprehensive a curriculum as Cheltenham, North London, or Manchester.

Men still controlled academia and their attitudes towards suitable curricula for girls were slow to change. At the end of the nineteenth century, a classics master at Rugby<sup>49</sup> echoing the sentiments of a century earlier remarked that “music, drawing, and modern languages have so long been the staple of girls’ education that it is perhaps too late now to make any radical change”.<sup>50</sup> These were hardly inspiring words for girls aspiring to university entrance. Change was inevitable in the final third of the nineteenth century but not all parents were quick to agree. Miss Beale’s famous anecdote, told and retold in the literature, concerned a father withdrawing his daughters from Cheltenham. “My dear lady, if the girls were going to be bankers it would be very well to teach them arithmetic as you do, but really there is no need!” The man subsequently died leaving his young daughters with a large fortune. They were unable to manage their money, had no one to protect them, and sank into financial distress.<sup>51</sup> That father still sought ‘accomplishments’ rather than academic study for his daughters, as did many others. Even academic schools were not yet prepared to relinquish the aesthetics from the curriculum and made a deliberate effort to combine intellectual work with traditional female ‘culture’. One compromise was to teach the demanding academic subjects in the morning and a more rigorous study of the arts in the afternoon.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Rugby is one of the ‘great public schools’ of England, founded in 1567 by the purveyor of Queen Elizabeth’s groceries. It is located in Rugby, Warwickshire. After having been boys only for most of its history, it has become completely coed within the last quarter century.

<sup>50</sup> Michele Cohen, “Gender and the Private/Public Debate on Education in the Long Eighteenth Century”, *Private or Public*, ed. Aldrich, 29.

<sup>51</sup> Kamm, *How Different from Us*, 56.

<sup>52</sup> Brentwood College School, Mill Bay, Vancouver Island, still has academic classes six mornings a week and alternates athletics and arts in the afternoons.

A considerable change in curricula came with the introduction of athletics in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The ‘jolly hockey sticks’ style of school, immortalized in schoolgirl literature, projected an image of muscular girls “all set to beat men at their own games, on and off the playing fields”. St. Andrews, founded in 1877, Roedean, in 1885, and Wycombe Abbey, in 1896, played the game (field hockey) with regulation (for men) rules and equipment.<sup>53</sup> Other schools, not wanting to be left behind, developed their own athletic programmes. Some of the new schools employed professionally trained drill and games mistresses to design exercise routines specifically for growing girls and organize competitive games. Schools, without facilities for cricket or hockey, encouraged running, jumping, skipping, rounders, and fives. Rowing, swimming, netball, and tennis were considered equally suitable when venues were available. Cycling, at first condemned as being rather unladylike, soon gained popularity especially as public roads were available at no expense to the school. The school reformers embraced physical education, believing that sports would give girls those “moral qualities, such as loyalty, discipline, determination and resourcefulness” deemed so important in the public schools in making middle class boys into gentlemen.<sup>54</sup>

Although most of the new schools operated from a Christian moral base, almost always Anglican, they were not closed parochial schools. Miss Buss showed exceptional tolerance for her time, by making small adjustments so that girls of any faith could participate in the life of her school. Jewesses, Catholics, and Non-Conformists were unwelcome in many schools, but at North London Collegiate these girls were exempted

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<sup>53</sup> Turner, *Equality for Some*, 137-148.

<sup>54</sup> Kathleen E. McCrone, “‘Playing the Game’ and ‘Playing the Piano’: Physical Culture and Culture at Girls’ Public Schools c. 1850-1914”, *Private Schooling*, ed. Walford, 37-45.

from Church of England catechism, or any part of religious studies. Whereas the Miss Byerleys were unusual in accepting Non-Conformists in the previous century, they were Protestant, Miss Buss' acceptance of non-Protestants was far more courageous.

The 'hidden curriculum' set private school girls apart, or so it was believed. To Dorothea Beale, education should be the acquisition of "those branches of study especially calculated to form the judgment, to cultivate the understanding, and to discipline the character (which would fit her to perform the duties of life)".<sup>55</sup> 'Judgment', 'discipline', 'character' were recurring words in the mission statements of girls' schools, from Erasmus Darwin's Plan to the present day. Playing a stirring game of hockey out on the field or playing in the school orchestra might seem very different, but were very much the same. Both provided respite from scholastic studies, but still required cooperation, "accuracy, concentration, patience, initiative, discipline, balance, and self-reliance"<sup>56</sup> all admirable characteristics to develop in girls or boys. Both built fellowship and a sense of community. The games might be different but it was the playing that was important.

Also in the 'hidden curriculum' was the movement to increase woman's legal and political rights. Many women working for the reformation of education were also suffragettes. Rising prosperity made control of property increasingly important. By the end of the century some girls were anticipating university and then careers. Self reliance led to determination to be independent of the control of fathers, brothers, and husbands. The struggle for equal education was also a battle for equal rights.

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<sup>55</sup> Beale, Address to the National Association, *The Education Papers*, ed. Spender, 123.

<sup>56</sup> McCrone, "Playing the Game", *Private Schooling*, ed. Walford, 49.

With the move to more academic schooling, the lack of standards became obvious. The Taunton Commission report stated bluntly “however bad the education of men may be, that of women is undoubtedly worse”.<sup>57</sup> Suggesting that working class girls were receiving a better education than those in the private schools, Maria Grey advocated better organization of schools, some system of inspection and evaluation by an outside authority, and upgrading of the qualifications of female teachers as basic requirements. Permitting girls to write the University Local Examinations for university entrance was a great advance. These exams set a standard of scholarship requiring intellectual discipline on a par with boys. Examination of the schools themselves, rather than of carefully prepared chosen pupils, was more difficult to achieve. For some years Cambridge University and the College of Preceptors, London, offered such a service but at a cost far beyond the means of small schools.<sup>58</sup> Registration and certification of schools and teachers were essential to improving their quality. The best of schools and teachers had no objection to scrutiny; Miss Beale proclaimed, “Bring the work to the light!” She had nothing to fear from close scrutiny by examiners or parents, but others were apprehensive.

Schools are more than the sum of a particular model, style of governance, finances, curriculum, buildings and grounds, they are institutions of people. The quality, dedication, and attitudes of headmistresses, teachers, and students can overcome gnawing deficiencies in other areas. A successful headmistress needed to have a strong character and a great deal of stamina. In many schools a shortage of staff meant she was expected to fill the gaps in the classroom as well as her administrative duties. At Casterton,

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<sup>57</sup> Emily Davies, “Special Systems of Education of Women (1868)”, *Classics in the Education*, ed. Kersey, 236.

<sup>58</sup> Grey, “On the Special Requirements”, *The Education Papers*, ed. Spender, 171-178.

Dorothea Beale had been required to teach “Scripture, ancient, modern and Church history, physical and political geography, English literature, grammar and composition, Latin, French, German, and Italian” regardless of whether she had any knowledge of the subjects.<sup>59</sup> The Taunton Commissioners identified two major problems with the women they observed during their inspection. “Teachers, that is women who teach, have two defects; they have not themselves been well taught, and they do not know how to teach. Both these defects are accidental, and may be remedied!”<sup>60</sup> Gradually, the problem of not knowing how to teach was lessened by courses offered by institutes such as the Home and Colonial School Society (at the urging of Mrs. Buss), the female colleges associated with London University (Queen’s and Bedford), and Girton at Cambridge, as well as training programmes conducted at such places as Cheltenham Ladies College whose students wrote the London University examinations. Maria Grey stressed that being well taught was “the best lesson in teaching well,” as she continued to seek endowments for girls’ schools. As the few female colleges could not provide the necessary quantity of competent teachers, nor could all suitable candidates afford to attend, she suggested that interested girls, after completing their own school curriculum (at good, endowed day schools), become student teachers in schools, with lectures on theory, special examinations, and eventual certification of their competency.<sup>61</sup> Josephine Butler proposed that a great good could be done for society by finding other occupations for the legions of women who needed employment but were unfit to be teachers.<sup>62</sup> If schools

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<sup>59</sup> Kamm, *How Different from Us*, 30-31.

<sup>60</sup> Wolstenholme-Elmy, “The Education of Girls”, 151 and Grey, “On the Special Requirements”, 180, both *The Education Papers*, ed. Spender.

<sup>61</sup> Grey, “On the Special Requirements”, *The Education Papers*, ed. Spender, 180-181.

<sup>62</sup> Josephine Butler, “The Education and Employment of Women (1868)”, *The Education Papers*, ed. Spender, 74.

were to improve, people must view teaching as a vocation, not as an occupation until something better came along.

The late Victorian girl of the upper middle and upper classes had two choices, marriage or a career. Society could accept an unmarried woman using her university education for meaningful work close to home, but not a married woman. The two exceptions to this social norm were schoolmistresses and clergymen's wives (working without pay in their husbands' parishes), yet there was no evidence that theirs were more neglected husbands, ill-reared children, or disorganized houses than those of pampered wives frittering away their time at home. Even at the end of the century, when girls in the academic schools were encouraged to develop their intellectual abilities to the fullest, including attending university, they were still expected to identify success in life with marriage and domesticity.<sup>63</sup> For a suitable marriage, a young woman could give up a career and "lawfully leave a blind father and dying mother, and go to India with Ensign Anybody"<sup>64</sup> with her parents, their friends, and relations cheering her on her way.

Contrary to the commonly believed rosy concept that all women married and were taken care of by a devoted husband and surrounded by a loving family, many women, single, widowed, or abandoned, were forced to support themselves and often feed that devoted family as well. Middle class girls, even if they were not planning a career, needed enough education to avoid being left in less-than-genteel poverty. One of the important differences between the academic schools and the traditional boarding-schools for young ladies was that now girls learned work habits (observation, thought, method,

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<sup>63</sup> McCrone, "Playing the Game", *Private Schooling*, ed, Walford, 51.

<sup>64</sup> Frances Power Cobbe, "The Education of Women, and How it Would be Affected by University Examinations (1862)", *The Education Papers*, ed. Spender, 39.

perseverance, and self-control), how to think for themselves, and gained an education with recognized standards, which would help them access a wider range of professions and be able to support themselves. Now that they had qualifications were doors beyond the classroom and playing field opening to them? For many, World War One enabled and necessitated their goals as they filled servicemen's and essential wartime jobs away from house and family and gained work experience. Other educated, healthy, energetic young women left Britain in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century to establish careers throughout the British Empire. For those who came to British Columbia teaching and nursing were popular choices. Some returned home after a few years but others placed an enduring, personal stamp on the schools they established on Vancouver Island and on the 'British colonial' schoolgirls they taught.

Girls' schools in Eastern Canada, being older, mostly had their roots in the earlier English residential tradition, whereas the successful ones on Vancouver Island followed the reformed, academic model. The 'British Dominions' section of *Steiger's Educational Directory for 1878* provided insight into the styles of schools then existing in Canada.<sup>65</sup> The New Brunswick and Nova Scotia selections for girls were almost entirely Catholic convent schools similar to the St Ann's Academies in British Columbia but much more numerous. The Female Academy of the Mt. Allison Wesleyan College and Academies in Sackville were the exceptions. Ontario offered more abundance with many schools based on the British free enterprise 'school for young ladies' model of the late seventeenth to mid-nineteenth century and Protestant and Catholic-based church schools, including a few with programmes leading to university entrance. Small single-proprietor or family-run

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<sup>65</sup> Ernst Steiger, *Steiger's Educational Directory for 1878*, (New York: E. Steiger, 1878). This publication gave the contact person and varying amounts of information about each school listed.

schools were numerous. Typically, like their English counterparts, they offered a quiet home to ten to twenty-five girls and instruction in English, Languages, Singing, Drawing, Painting, Drill, ornamental Needlework, and Callisthenics. (Although schools of this type operated in Victoria, there is little evidence that any were transplants from Ontario).<sup>66</sup> Even the larger schools still retained the traditional girls' curriculum in 1878 untouched by influence from the reformed schools in Britain. The Ladies Institute in Cobourg (Brookhurst) arranged with Victoria College and the Brantford Young Ladies' College with the University of Toronto to introduce academic programmes but only in addition to their regular fare.<sup>67</sup> The Bishop Strachan School for Young Ladies in Toronto and Ontario Ladies College (now Trafalgar Castle School) in Whitby were two of the few which adapted to changing times and remain in existence today. The exception was the Quaker Pickering College in Pickering and later in Newmarket, Ontario which from its founding in 1841 offered the same academic education to boys and girls until difficulties in the First World War. Girls rejoined the boys in the 1990s. Although its ties were with the American Quaker schools, both had their roots in the Quaker schools in Britain and a long tradition of academic programmes. English-speaking Quebec had a similar range of schools. Typical of the private enterprise type was Mrs. Simpson's Establishment for the Board and Education of Young Ladies on Mansfield Street in Montreal. In 1863 she offered board and tuition in all branches of English, Writing, Latin, History, Geography, and Arithmetic for \$200 a year. 'Extras' of French, German, Piano, use of a piano at

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<sup>66</sup> John Jessop was notable amongst his contemporaries in Victoria for being the only private school founder from Ontario. Elsie Ina Watts, "Attitudes of Parents toward the Development of Public Schools in Victoria B.C. during the Colonial Period", MA Thesis, Simon Fraser University, August 1986, 80.

<sup>67</sup> Alison Prentice, "Scholarly Passion: Two Persons Who Caught It", *Women Who Taught: Perspectives on the History of Women and Teaching*, ed. Alison Prentice and Marjorie Theobald, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), 262-264. Brookhurst closed in 1880 and Mary Electra Adams, co-founder with her sister, Augusta, became headmistress of Ontario Ladies College in Whitby.

school, Singing, Drawing, Dancing, Laundry, Stationery, and a pew in church added another \$242 a year for a total of \$424. Each boarder was to bring a silver spoon and fork, a dinner-knife, six table napkins, two pairs of sheets, six towels, a pillow, two pillow cases, and four blankets.<sup>68</sup> Only the upper and upper middle classes could have afforded these fees which were much higher than those in similar schools in Victoria on Vancouver Island at the same time.

Influences on the Vancouver Island private schools, except for the St Ann's Academies with their mother house in Lachine Quebec, came with people coming directly from Britain, either around Cape Horn or across Panama in the early days and later via the Canadian Pacific Railway without cross-pollination from Eastern Canadian schools.<sup>69</sup>

The path of female education traversed changes in societal and family values from ancient times to the mid-twentieth century. Some of the ideals of Spartan education such as physical fitness and interest in politics re-emerged with the development of the reformed schools in Britain. Religious-based education, the norm for centuries in Europe, immigrated to Eastern Canada and to a much lesser degree to Vancouver Island. The non-Catholic schools of the Far West founded before the end of the Second World War, even those with strong Church of England roots, favoured codes of morality of the Erasmus Darwin model over strict church dogma. Because of later immigration, parents were familiar with and favoured the types of reformed schools exemplified by the North London Collegiate and Cheltenham Ladies College. Although there is evidence of single proprietor schools teaching the accomplishments in Victoria, these were short-lived as

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<sup>68</sup> Mrs. Simpson's Ladies' School, Early Canadiana Online, <http://www.canadiana.org/ECO/PageView/id=c15ad24647c0b702&display=36150+0003>, 03/05/2008.

<sup>69</sup> See Chapter III.

parents sought the security of a more academic education for their daughters. Being a drawing room ornament was not practical for life on the edge of nowhere. Teachers, coming directly from Britain to the private schools, brought their traditions, curricula, and methodologies with them. These women even if they had not trained as teachers were better taught than previous generations. They knew how to play the game of the girls' private school.

### CHAPTER III *The Establishment of Schooling on Vancouver Island*

Public and private schooling developed in parallel streams from the early days of settlement on Vancouver Island. As families arrived in Victoria, parents, the Hudson's Bay Company, and then the colonial government acknowledged the need for some form of schooling. Their decisions set in motion four stages of education which spanned the next century. During these periods schools - both public and private differing in model, governance, finance, curricula, teachers' qualifications, parental expectations, and student body - developed to meet societal needs. As there was little manpower to enforce compliance to legislation, the public schools in sparsely settled areas of Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands varied widely in the quality of buildings, equipment, and teaching. The Department of Education in Victoria provided curriculum and prescribed textbooks for government-supported schools but private schools could select their own. The perennial shortage of teachers for rural public schools coupled with lack of money and the inadequate education and training of many of those hired locally continued long past the First World War, and in some cases to the end of the century.<sup>1</sup> Students ranged from disinterested to bright and eager, with many of the more affluent attending private schools for at least part of their education. There were critics and advocates for government,

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<sup>1</sup> In 1998 the Gulf Islands School Board hired a local young woman with a general degree, one year of teacher training, and no teaching experience to teach senior English in the high school and did not grant an interview to a Queen's University trained teacher with an Honours Degree in English, an MA, six years of teaching experience in an American accredited school in Mexico and the public system in Ontario, and glowing teaching references (The writer read the Mexican ones and wrote the Canadian one). Reason given was that the Board chose the cheapest candidate it could find.

religious, and private schools as a plurality of systems developed on the Islands to fulfill the expectations of immigrant parents.

Class and religious differences dominated the first phase which lasted from the beginnings of settlement in 1849 until the mid 1860s. Governor James Douglas and the Hudson's Bay Company tried to reproduce the social structures of schooling in Britain. As the Company employed a Church of England cleric as chaplain in Fort Victoria, even though the majority of the employees belonged to other denominations, the Anglican Church perceived itself to be the official religious institution with authority over spiritual and earthly education.<sup>2</sup> Among their other duties the chaplain and his wife conducted a school with separate classes for each sex, and boarding facilities as needed, for the children of the Company's officers. For this purpose the Company gave the Rev. Robert Staines, the first chaplain, space for classes in the dining room in the fort, accommodation for boarders in rooms above, and an additional annual salary of £340 (about \$1700) a year for conducting this class-based school.<sup>3</sup> The chaplain collected a further £20 (\$100) per year from each student for tuition, room, and board.<sup>4</sup> The tradition of fee-based private schooling took root in Victoria even before colonial government was established.

For other children, James Douglas decided to follow the English practice of providing Church-supported charity schools if parents were too poor to pay school fees.<sup>5</sup> He suggested to Archibald Barclay of the Hudson's Bay Company on October 8, 1851, that

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<sup>2</sup> Vincent J. McNally, "Church-State Relations and American Influence in British Columbia before Confederation", *Journal of Church and State*, 34, no. 1, (1992): 97.

<sup>3</sup> This income was in addition to his annual chaplain's stipend of £200 (\$1000) a year.

<sup>4</sup> Donald Leslie MacLaurin, "The History of Education in the Crown Colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia and in the Province of British Columbia", PhD. thesis, University of Washington, 1936, 12.

<sup>5</sup> Compulsory attendance laws were enacted in England between 1870 and 1880, much later than Douglas' term as Chief Factor.

the Company establish “one or two elementary schools . . . [with teachers] of strict principles . . . [providing] a good sound English education and nothing more”<sup>6</sup> for the children of labourers and agrarian settlers. The Company agreed and subsequently paid each teacher a salary of £50 (\$250) a year plus a free house and garden.<sup>7</sup> District schools opened in Victoria in 1852, Nanaimo in 1853, and at Craigflower in 1861. Each was administered by the Church of England with grants from both the Company and the colonial government, supplemented by modest fees. Parents who could afford to pay more sent their children to the Company’s school for officers’ families.

When the Rev. Edward Cridge replaced Rev. Staines (who had been dismissed by Douglas)<sup>8</sup> as chaplain in 1855, he took charge of the boarding school as well as the district schools. He received one hundred acres of land from the Company in addition to his salary and rectory, significantly more than the stipend and free house and garden paid to teachers in the district schools. Rev. Cridge found that at least two girls’ schools were operating on an early nineteenth century English model as private ventures for profit,<sup>9</sup> but they seem to have been short-lived. The following year, he and his wife opened a girls’ boarding school in addition to their other educational responsibilities.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Jean Barman, “Transfer, Imposition or Consensus? The Emergence of Educational Structures in Nineteenth-Century British Columbia”, *Schools in the West*, ed. Nancy M. Sheehan, J. Donald Wilson, David C. Jones, (Calgary: Detselig Enterprises, 1986) 242 and MacLaurin, “History of Education in the Crown Colonies”, 13.

<sup>7</sup> MacLaurin, “History of Education in the Crown Colonies”, 13.

<sup>8</sup> Rev. Staines died on his way to England to protest.

<sup>9</sup> Barman, “Transfer”, *Schools in the West*, ed. Sheehan, Wilson, and Jones, 243.

<sup>10</sup> MacLaurin, “History of Education in the Crown Colonies”, 15-16

This Anglican monopoly of education did not last long. Visiting Catholic priests had taught French-Canadian children on a casual basis <sup>11</sup> until Oblate Honoré Lempfrit attempted to establish a Catholic school in 1849. <sup>12</sup> Bishop Modeste Demers, after reluctantly assuming his appointment to Vancouver Island, opened a boys' school in the fall of 1856 but had great difficulty in recruiting and retaining English-speaking priests to teach. This, historian Vincent McNally maintained, was largely due to his inability to work with people. <sup>13</sup> The Hudson's Bay Company compounded his problems by refusing to provide free passage in their ships for those he did secure. He solved the issue in 1858 by, in desperation, bringing the Oblate priests of Mary Immaculate and the Sisters of St. Ann to Vancouver Island to establish schools. <sup>14</sup>

The founding of the Catholic girls' and boys' schools, St. Ann's and St. Louis' College, was followed in 1860 by the Church of England's Collegiate School for Boys and Ladies' College (Angela College) in Victoria and a girls' school in Nanaimo. <sup>15</sup> All three were in operation before the educational census of Vancouver Island in 1864. This assessment revealed that about seventy-five boys and perhaps ten girls attended the

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<sup>11</sup> Vincent J. McNally, *The Lord's Distant Vineyard: A History of the Oblates and the Catholic Community in British Columbia*, (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2000) 17-27 and McNally, "Church-State Relations", 192.

<sup>12</sup> Jacqueline Kennedy Gresko, "Gender and Mission: the Founding Generations of the Sisters of St. Ann and the Oblates of Mary Immaculate in British Columbia 1858-1914", PhD thesis, University of British Columbia, 1999, 70-71.

<sup>13</sup> McNally, *The Lord's Distant Vineyard*, 17-27 and McNally, "Church-State Relations", 192. Demers had not only opposed the creation of his ecclesiastical province, but was also a poor administrator who had difficulty with organization and finances, as well as people, 24-25.

<sup>14</sup> McNally, *The Lord's Distant Vineyard*, 104, Gresko, "Gender and Mission", 143-144 and 147. Demers had encountered difficulties in his dealings with the Oblates in Oregon Territory before he was named to his new bishopric on Vancouver Island. There is some discrepancy in these two accounts over the early teachers. McNally records that the Oblates were initially assisted by two members of the French-Canadian Clerics of St. Viator. Gresko maintains that the Oblates took over the school when the Clerics of St. Viator defaulted on their agreement.

<sup>15</sup> Barman, "Transfer", *Schools in the West*, ed. Sheehan, Wilson, Jones, 243.

colonial district schools in Victoria, Craigflower, and Esquimalt, <sup>16</sup> fifty-eight boys were at the Collegiate School, forty-five girls at Angela College, and probably fifty at St. Ann's. In Nanaimo, about thirty boys and girls attended the colonial school and about twenty went to the Anglican girls' school. A fragment of the report, which has been credited to Rev. Cridge, indicated that another 150 children attended private day schools in Victoria. Cridge was aware of schools being conducted by a Mrs. Brown, Madame Petibeau, Miss Fernetell, Miss Lester, Miss Alsap, and probably by Rev. Hall of the Presbyterian Church. <sup>17</sup> Fees for day pupils at the various private schools ranged from \$3 to \$5 per month. <sup>18</sup> This comparatively low cost made the private schools a popular alternative to the colonial district schools.

Both colonial and church schools received varied amounts of funding from the Hudson's Bay Company, the colonial government, the churches, and parents. <sup>19</sup> Governor Douglas was unable to support a free public school system, such as Egerton Ryerson advocated in Upper Canada, as his only source of revenue prior to the gold rush was from the sale of liquor licenses. From this income he had to pay administration costs, build and maintain public buildings and roads, as well as schools. All he could manage was to supply some funding to the Catholic schools, though not as much as Bishop Demers accustomed

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<sup>16</sup> Responsibility for the HBC schools for poorer children was transferred to the colonial government between the opening of the Craigflower School in 1861 and Cridge's report in 1864.

<sup>17</sup> Mrs. Wilson Brown came from England and established Church Bank House Academy for Young Ladies by 1862; she taught "the useful and ornamental" parts of tuition. *Colonist*, December 12, 1862. Mme. Petibeau (various spellings are recorded) had her Ladies' Seminary on Victoria St. and her Young Ladies' Seminary on View St. in 1860 – probably the same school which moved to different rented premises during the year. By 1864 she owned Fairfield Academy on Fort Street.

<http://www.vpl.ca/bccd/index.php/browse/index> . Other schools are untraceable. See Chapter IV Appendix for a listing of schools.

<sup>18</sup> MacLaurin, "History of Education in the Crown Colonies", 45-46. The range of fees for day students at private schools on Vancouver Island in 2009 is \$300 to over \$1200 per month.

<sup>19</sup> John Calam and Thomas Fleming, *British Columbia Schools and Society*, (Victoria: Queen's Printer, 1988), 54.

to state support for Catholic schools in Quebec would have liked, in addition to grants to the Anglican schools. This contribution helped to ensure an alternative to the schools under Church of England control.<sup>20</sup> Douglas gave further indirect support, by sending his own daughters to St. Ann's for a time.<sup>21</sup>

With the influx of people and capital following the discovery of gold on the mainland in 1858 the population of Victoria increased from five hundred to three thousand necessitating the opening of more schools. Expanded revenues were sufficient for denominational schools and a non-sectarian public school system, but the increasing number of Americans settling in Victoria helped to sway public opinion towards a common system.<sup>22</sup> When the British Government reduced the original one hundred acre church reserve to twenty-two acres and, by the Christ Church Trust Deed, placed it as a trust partially under the control of the colonial government, the Anglicans lost any hope of being the 'established church' and having the resources to administer the 'established school system' of the colony.<sup>23</sup>

During the second phase, between 1865 and 1872, public opinion turned further away from denominational schools in favour of common, state-supported education. In response, British Columbian legislators, colonial and later provincial, initiated the pattern of education for the next century. In the spring of 1865, the Legislature of Vancouver Island [the colonies of British Columbia and Vancouver Island were not united until

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<sup>20</sup> McNally, "Church-State Relations", *Journal of Church and State*, 97.

<sup>21</sup> Sister Mary Margaret Down, *A Century of Service: 1858-1958*, (Victoria: The Sisters of St. Ann, 1966), 35.

<sup>22</sup> Barman, "Transfer", *Schools in the West*, ed. Sheehan, Wilson, Jones, 242-244.

<sup>23</sup> McNally, "Church-State Relations", *Journal of Church and State*, 100-101.

November 1866] established a system of free, non-sectarian, public education supported by local taxes. Under Vancouver Island's Common School Act of 1865,

XIII. All schools established under the provisions of this Act shall be conducted strictly upon Non-Sectarian Principles. Books inculcating the highest Morality shall be selected for Use of such Schools, and all Books of a Religious Character teaching Denominational Dogma shall be strictly excluded there from. . . .

XV. Every Common School shall be open to the Children of Persons of All Denominations<sup>24</sup>

By clarifying the separation of church and state, the Act further eroded the already weakening position of the churches. Father Julien Baudre of St. Louis' College quickly petitioned for funds, arguing that his college was "open to all regardless of race, colour, creed, or financial position".<sup>25</sup> Attorney General George Cary refused his and all similar requests. Because the government of British Columbia had not supported denominational schools before Confederation, the language and religion provisions of Section 93 of the British North America Act,<sup>26</sup> so vital for ensuring the continuance of Protestant education in English in Quebec and Catholic education in French in Ontario in the years following Confederation, were not applicable to the westernmost province. Thus, the Public Schools Act of 1872 provided one secular school system for all, in contrast to educational organization and funding in the other provinces.<sup>27</sup> It guaranteed to "every child in the

<sup>24</sup> MacLaurin, "History of Education in the Crown Colonies", 48-49.

<sup>25</sup> McNally, "Church-State Relations", *Journal of Church and State*, 106.

<sup>26</sup> This Act applied to each of the four originating provinces, and to British Columbia in 1871 and Prince Edward Island in 1873.

<sup>27</sup> See Peter W. Hogg, *Constitutional Law of Canada*, Fourth Student Edition, (Toronto: Thomson Canada, 1996) 973-974, for his interpretation of minority school rights in Section 93 of the British North America Act. Language, in his opinion, was covered under the "right or privilege of denominational schools" provision. Section 93 only provided protection for denominational schools receiving government funding at the time of entry into Confederation, thus public schools in British Columbia remained secular with English as the language of instruction, as they were at entry into Confederation. Some Western Canadian historians disagree with Hogg's interpretation.

Province such knowledge as will fit him to become a useful and intelligent citizen”.<sup>28</sup> All non-publicly funded schools, including the religiously based ones, became private schools operating outside of and ignored by school law.

Societal division did not disappear with the passing of this act. Conservatives clung to the belief that “[e]ducation’s function was to ensure the maintenance of class distinctions from generation to generation”,<sup>29</sup> whereas reformers promoted a more egalitarian society.<sup>30</sup> The gold rush had changed Victoria from a company town with essentially two classes of non-aboriginals, the Anglican British officers of the Hudson’s Bay Company as one strata and their Catholic French-Canadian employees and a few English-speaking settlers supported by the goodwill of the Company comprising the other, to a much larger settlement with representatives of every race, creed, and class. Jean Barman, a historian, maintained that on the eve of confederation in 1871 immigrants from Britain “formed the psychological and political, if not the numerical majority” in the colony, thus reaffirming their political power.<sup>31</sup> Vincent McNally found that these British colonists viewed organized religion as “at best . . . a necessary evil and at worst . . . totally irrelevant”; their influence was secular rather than religious. In Quebec and Ontario, taxpayers accepted funding for Protestant schooling in Quebec and Catholic schools in Ontario following the earlier British charity school tradition,<sup>32</sup> but people in British

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<sup>28</sup> Calam, *BC Schools*, 54.

<sup>29</sup> Barman, “Transfer”, *Schools in the West*, ed. Sheehan, Wilson, Jones, 255.

<sup>30</sup> These reformers tended to be non-Anglican, nominally Protestant, of various nationalities including American who had found prosperity for themselves in the colony.

<sup>31</sup> Jean Barman, “The West Beyond the West: the Demography of Settlement in British Columbia”, *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 24 no. 3, (1990), 7.

<sup>32</sup> The Catholics were a large minority of voters in Ontario and the Protestants in Quebec were too influential to be ignored.

Columbia rejected the concept of government funding for parochial schools, insisting upon a complete separation of church and state in publicly-funded education.<sup>33</sup>

Two vocal crusaders came forth to do battle for the cause of free public schools. Amor de Cosmos, editor of the local newspaper, *The Colonist*, allied himself with the sector determined to end Anglican influence. He found a strong ally in John Jessop, a devout Methodist, who had studied educational reform under Egerton Ryerson in Ontario.<sup>34</sup> Jessop, later to become the province's first Superintendent of Education (1872-1878), prepared a plan for non-sectarian schools.<sup>35</sup> Although religious groups continued to clamour for funding for their schools, Jessop refused during his time as Superintendent. Private schools were to be just that.

The Public School Act of 1872 introduced the third era.<sup>36</sup> Although bills introduced in the legislature in 1873 and 1875 to amend this Act to include compulsory attendance at either state-supported secular schools or privately-funded schools did not pass,<sup>37</sup> British Columbia developed its own school system, accessible and free, intended to fit the needs of children throughout the province but within governmental financial constraints. The concept of tuition-free non-sectarian schooling received wide public support.<sup>38</sup> The reality proved to be somewhat different.

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<sup>33</sup> McNally, "Church-State Relations", *Journal of Church and State*, 93-102.

<sup>34</sup> Both of these reformers came to Vancouver Island from Eastern Canada, not from Britain.

<sup>35</sup> Barman, "Transfer", *Schools in the West*, ed. Sheehan, Wilson, Jones, 247 and Patrick A. Dunae, "John Jessop", *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online*, [www.biographi.ca](http://www.biographi.ca), 1-4.

<sup>36</sup> These private schools could be religious or secular, but received no public funding.

<sup>37</sup> Maclaurin, "History of Education in the Crown Colonies", 142 and *Colonist*, April 17, 1872, 3.

<sup>38</sup> J. Donald Wilson, "Introduction: Schools in the West", *Schools in the West*, ed. Sheehan, Wilson, Jones, 10.

On assuming his role as Superintendent of Education John Jessop surveyed as many of the existing schools in the Districts established by the new Act as he could physically reach. He submitted his First Annual Report of the Public Schools in British Columbia to The Honourable Joseph W. Trutch, the Lieutenant-Governor of the province, on July 31<sup>st</sup>, 1872.<sup>39</sup> This report was historically important as it outlined existing conditions at the start of the third phase. The challenges ahead must have appeared almost insurmountable. Jessop found many buildings required immediate repair or were otherwise unsuitable. Craigflower School was “exceedingly dilapidated and almost past repair. New School house required.” The two schools in the South Cowichan School District were no better, “Both require immediate repair before bad weather sets in. The one . . . being only a shell about 12x14 with roof of boards and very leaky. . . The other is a log house and about the same size. Both will need stoves and proper desks and seats.” He added the note that the first building was destroyed by a bush fire sometime between his inspection on June 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> and his writing of the report. Cedar Hill School was housed “in a portion of the Episcopal Church on sufferance. A new school house required”. A few schools were in good repair but almost all needed remedial work ranging from minor to major to replacement. Attendance and tardiness presented their own set of problems which may have exaggerated because he made his visitations in May, June and July, close to the summer vacation.<sup>40</sup> At the Craigflower School with about forty children of school age in the district, he found ten pupils in attendance during his first visit in May and only four when he returned in mid-July. Twenty children were on-time for opening exercises at the

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<sup>39</sup> John Jessop, *First Annual Report of the Superintendent of Education for the Year Ending July 31<sup>st</sup>, 1872*, The Homeroom, [www.viu.ca](http://www.viu.ca), 12/05/2008.

<sup>40</sup> Schools were still conducted along the British timeline with the third term continuing until the end of July, with longer breaks at other times of the year than became the Canadian norm.

Esquimalt School, ten arrived later. Of about eighty of school age in the district, twenty-seven children were on the Register at the Cedar Hill School. Nineteen were present during his first visit on May 2<sup>nd</sup> but this number had dwindled to four girls and six boys by his second visit on May 23<sup>rd</sup>. In Nanaimo the morning began with ten students and others “kept dropping in till 26 arrived” during the July 2<sup>nd</sup> visit, in a district with about 175 children of school age. In a number of areas some children lived too far from the schoolhouse to be able to attend regularly. The nine or ten children at Sayward’s Mill in the South Cowichan District were seven miles from the closest dilapidated school building. A similar situation existed on Salt Spring Island where the twenty-one children in the Fulford Valley at the South End were eight miles from the mid-island school. These conditions, the realities of a frontier society, must have been just as discouraging to parents as they were to the superintendent.

Jessop’s comments on teaching and learning were as disparaging as those on facilities and attendance. After the passage of the Act ‘qualified’ teachers were appointed to each of the district schools. Some were the incumbents and others were hired as replacements or to staff new schools. He noted that the teachers in the Victoria City and District Schools were “all duly qualified” but did not elaborate on what these qualifications were. Esquimalt, Craigflower, North Cowichan, and Nanaimo had teachers certified by the Board of Education (based on the knowledge examination as discussed later). Saanich was fortunate to have a graduate of the University of Aberdeen, while Salt Spring made do with a man “teaching under a temporary arrangement”. Jessop’s supplement of August 30<sup>th</sup>, 1872 listed teachers by school and gave their salaries. Stipends for male teachers averaged \$60 a month, with Comox, North, and South Cowichan paying

\$50 a month, and a low of \$40 a month to the temporary teacher on Salt Spring Island. Those in the Victoria area and Nanaimo were paid more, with the principal in Victoria earning \$100. Female teachers received \$40 a month except Metchosin and Sooke with \$55 and \$50 a month and those in charge of girls' departments in Victoria and Nanaimo up to \$80 a month. A newly appointed teacher at Esquimalt received \$70 a month perhaps with justification. Jessop describes his school as "classes all backward. Some of them merely beginners. . . . Small children troublesome" but the teacher was "very industrious and painstaking, as well as patient and persevering." In Lake School District all were backward, whereas in Nanaimo "children were somewhat disorderly, and but little attention paid to teacher. Discipline and arrangement of studies very deficient. Reading and spelling not credible. . . . Arithmetic behind what it ought to be. Geography and Grammar unsatisfactory." Comox had had no classes for three months because the building owned by the Anglican Church was needed for Mission purposes. On Salt Spring, the most advanced of the three students present was not proficient in work he supposedly had mastered. In contrast, Metchosin students seemed to be doing reasonably well.<sup>41</sup> Although the results of this survey showed how little progress had been made in providing even adequate education to all children, it gave a baseline for improvement.

Once common schools became government policy parents who did not wish to expose their children to a secular, or egalitarian system, or the conditions in their local public school, enrolled them in private schools, sometimes at considerable financial sacrifice.<sup>42</sup> Jessop maintained that private schools would be unfunded and unsupervised; their existence was not even acknowledged in the educational annual reports for over one

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<sup>41</sup> All quotes in this section are from John Jessop's *First Annual Report*.

<sup>42</sup> See John Jessop's *First Annual Report* for conditions in many public schools.

hundred years.<sup>43</sup> His stance may have been taken for practical rather than pedagogical reasons as the whole provincial civil service consisted of nineteen people in 1878. He, like Ryerson in earlier times in Upper Canada, was virtually the entire Department of Education. Both men personally drafted most of the replies to the many letters which came into their offices.<sup>44</sup> The Superintendent did not have time to concern himself with private schools so the practice of their operating outside of educational constraints became entrenched.

The religious schools, especially the Anglican, faced problems often of their own making in the years following Confederation. For a further two decades the Anglican Church in British Columbia remained directly under the control of the Archbishop of Canterbury who clung to the concept of maintaining a colonial, class-based society. When a theological dispute<sup>45</sup> erupted between Bishop George Hills and his thoroughly British Columbianized Dean, Rev. Edward Cridge, the latter split away from the cathedral in 1874 and established the Reformed Episcopal Church of Our Lord<sup>46</sup> taking with him many of the old Hudson's Bay Company families and the staff of Angela College. The emergence of competing Anglican schools led to decline in prestige and enrolment for Angela College.<sup>47</sup> During this third phase, both the Sisters of St. Ann and Angela College maintained two

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<sup>43</sup> Jean Barman, "The Emergence of Educational Structures in Nineteenth-Century British Columbia", *Children, Teachers and Schools in the History of British Columbia*, eds. Jean Barman, Neil Sutherland, J. Donald Wilson, (Calgary: Detselig Enterprises, 1995), 31.

<sup>44</sup> J. Donald Wilson, "Some Observations on Recent Trends in Canadian Educational History", *Contemporary Approaches to Canadian History*, ed. Carl Berger, (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1987), 225.

<sup>45</sup> Rev. Cridge, Dean of Christ Church Cathedral, believed that divine authority rested in the body of the church itself [Church of England], whereas Bishop Hills maintained that the bishop already had divine authority which, through a synod, he was sharing with church and laity.

<sup>46</sup> This church is still in use on Blanshard Street in Victoria down the hill from the Anglican Christ Church Cathedral.

<sup>47</sup> Barman, Transfer, *Schools in the West*, ed. Sheehan, Wilson, Jones, 255-256, citing *Colonist*, 1874, 1892, 1893, 1894 and Anglican Church Diocese of Columbia Reports 1881-1895.

distinct streams of education. At St. Ann's the 'Select' school catered to the daughters of the affluent white population and all others were relegated to the 'Free' (with much lower fees) school for poor, orphaned, mixed-blood, and coloured children.<sup>48</sup> As the prosperous in Victoria were no longer only of European descent those who were Catholic but not Caucasian probably resented this racial discrimination directed towards their children. The Anglican division between Angela College and St. Mary's was based on parents' ability to pay rather than race with non-Caucasian girls admitted to both campuses.

In the third phase the basic curriculum of the common schools centred on the textbooks chosen by John Jessop. Within three weeks of his appointment as superintendent in 1872 he approved a selection of books, mostly from the Ontario list with which he was familiar. Like Egerton Ryerson, he hoped to instill a uniform set of values in the children of the province. His choices of texts suggested that "[c]hildren were to develop their God-given abilities by showing backbone and working diligently. Individualism was stressed, with events often being grouped around men of strong personality who overcame hardship and adversity through sheer determination." Hard work was depicted as glorious, whereas 'idleness and ignorance' were vices. Mathematics books showed Canada as a developing commercial and industrial nation. Racism was accepted and filtered down through the curriculum even to arithmetic problems with the Chinese working for lower wages than Caucasians. Perhaps the most surprising aspect was the inclusion of textbooks giving a "literal interpretation of the Bible and a belief in orthodox Christian doctrines". One example from Collier's *Outlines of General History* "held that the world was created in 4004 B.C. and that Adam's fall into sin, the deluge, and the story of the Tower of Babel

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<sup>48</sup> Down, *Century of Service*, 81-82 and Deborah Rink, *Spirited Women*, (Vancouver: Sisters Association of the Vancouver Diocese, 2000), 13.

were all literal history events”. Grammar books used texts from the Scriptures and such maxims as “Were they wise, they would read the Scriptures daily”.<sup>49</sup> Although public education was to be free of denominational dogma, it was not without specific Christian reference and morality. The strongest influences came from Ontario through Jessop’s association with Ryerson. Private schools operated outside this sphere, free to teach religion as they chose, unconstrained by the prescribed curriculum and textbooks.

Professional training was not required for teachers in the public schools at this time; the marks obtained on a series of knowledge examinations determined the type and duration of certificate an applicant received. The unquenchable demand for teachers meant that a mark as low as 30% on content roughly equivalent to high school was sufficient to earn a Third Class Certificate valid for one year but renewable; higher grades ensured longer terms of certification. Candidates scoring over 50% received a Second Class certificate of three years’ duration, whereas those with over 70% were rewarded with a permanent First Class certificate. University graduates from any acceptable area in the British Empire were granted permanent Academic certificates. Taking up a career in teaching either on a permanent or temporary basis was an individual or family decision that required almost no financial investment.<sup>50</sup> Those who attended high schools in towns or cities covered the material in their day school classes. Candidates living in rural areas could accomplish all their preparation for the examinations in the evenings with no loss of daytime employment. Men waiting for their farms to pay, women before they married, and older women supporting themselves and often children could easily qualify to fill positions

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<sup>49</sup> Haro Van Brummelen, “Shifting Perspectives: Early British Columbia Textbooks from 1872 to 1925”, *Schools in the West*, ed. Sheehan, Wilson, Jones, 18-25.

<sup>50</sup> Jean Barman, “Birds of Passage or Early Professionals? Teachers in Late-Nineteenth Century British Columbia”, *Historical Studies in Education*, 2, no. 1 (1990): 18-19.

in one-roomed schools in the hinterland. Some in this last group were as unsuited to teaching as many women who established the eighteenth and nineteenth century private venture schools in England. The only classroom assistance for teachers in the remote schools came from an occasional visit by an over-extended inspector. As Jessop noted in his first report, facilities in poorer areas ranged from meager to totally inadequate, making the task of attracting a competent teacher almost impossible. Legislation made schooling free, non-sectarian, and accessible to all non-aboriginal children, but beyond the Victoria area (including Esquimalt, Craigflower, Metchosin, Sooke, Cedar Hill, the Lake District, and Saanich), the Cowichan Valley, Salt Spring Island, Nanaimo, and the Comox Valley<sup>51</sup> settlements on Vancouver Island lacked teachers and were without schools in the early years of the third stage. This reality was not adequate to meet even the immediate needs of an expanding society.

Catholic schools with their reliance on teachers from the religious orders had an advantage. Individuals who staffed their classrooms viewed teaching as a vocation or at least a duty to God, not just as a means of ensuring food on the table. The non-religious private schools also fared better than the public schools by enticing British men and women of a scholarly and adventuresome bent to accept employment, as noted in Chapter II. Establishing her own private school provided a particularly suitable entrepreneurial venture for a woman graduating from one of the new English women's colleges. This enterprise utilized her school and college education while appearing sufficiently genteel to be acceptable to her family. A school on Vancouver Island required less financial outlay and promised greater reward than a similar endeavour in Britain. With no requirements of

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<sup>51</sup> John Jessop, *First Annual Report* .

certification or regulation, private schools flourished or faded dependent largely on the reputation, strength of character, and abilities of the founder and the suitability of the teachers she was able to hire.

By the fourth phase, from the passing of the Education Act of 1886 onwards, the structure of the modern educational system was in place but it was very much a work in progress as the practices continued to be developed for decades. Increases in population from the completion of the transcontinental railway until the outbreak of the First World War, followed by the influx after the war, brought more children and more difficulties. Vast discrepancies existed between the quality of schooling in Victoria, Vancouver, and a few smaller urban centres and that in the rural areas. The larger centres offered public schools with grade-specific classrooms, adequate finances for equipment and supplies, a standardized curriculum, and better educated teachers. One-roomed schools remained the norm in the more remote settlements. Private schools continued as previously, outside of regulation.

The Department of Education's Annual Review of 1918 portrayed the rural schools as a pressing problem. A combination of "improper and useless buildings, insufficient apparatus, and incompetent teachers or officials" resulted in "hundreds of children . . . attending schools who as a result of distance, weather, outside work, physical defect are receiving the merest scraps of education."<sup>52</sup> Achievement levels were low in the early decades of the twentieth century. Dr. A.M. Menzies wrote in his *Memories* that in 1903 twenty-three pupils from rural schools wrote the high school entrance examination in

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<sup>52</sup> J. Donald Wilson and Paul J. Stortz, "'May the Lord Have Mercy on You'. The Rural School Problem in British Columbia in the 1920s", *Children, Teachers and Schools*, ed. Barman, Sutherland, Wilson, 210.

Sidney. Only Menzies and Ethel Phelps from Pender Island, Beatrice Winstanley from Galiano, and one other person were successful.<sup>53</sup> Students in other schools must have been even more ill-prepared, as only children whose parents were willing to pay the cost of boarding in town would even have sat the exam. Girls in the rural schools had as little intellectual challenge from their peers or teachers as those educated by governesses or in the small ladies' boarding schools of a previous era in England.

The isolated schools suffered not only from inadequate buildings and scarcity of equipment, but often from instability. Those designated as 'rural schools' received some financial support from taxation in the community while the 'assisted schools' were totally government supported once the settlement provided a building. Both types of schools frequently opened and closed due to population shifts. Attendance was sporadic and fluctuating.<sup>54</sup> School inspectors as late as 1922 informed the Department of Education that only one third of the settlers in any remote community actually planned to stay permanently. The 'projected attendance', so beloved by ministry officials, was impossible to determine. Any long-range planning by a teacher even if she had the capability was useless.<sup>55</sup> Nor were communities always supportive of their school as ill-educated, untrained teachers without sufficient equipment and supplies often had to fight local parents and trustees for the meager allotments they did receive. Well into the twentieth

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<sup>53</sup> *A Gulf Islands Patchwork*, (Victoria: Fleming Review Printing, 1977,) 106. These students appear to have been the children of prominent farmers in the Gulf Islands from 1901 Census Victoria, British Columbia, Div. H3, Pages 1 to 3 accessed from [http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~canbc/1901vic\\_cen/divh3/divh3p01.htm](http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~canbc/1901vic_cen/divh3/divh3p01.htm).

<sup>54</sup> See Helen Harger Brown, "Binaries, Boundaries, and Hierarchies; The Spatial Relations of City Schooling in Nanaimo, British Columbia, 1891-1901", PhD Thesis, University of British Columbia, 1998 for a discussion of enrolment and attendance in an urban area. Fluctuations in rural boards would have been even greater.

<sup>55</sup> Wilson and Stortz, "Rural School Problem", *Children, Teachers and Schools*, ed. Barman, Sutherland, and Wilson, 224, and citing Survey 124, Annual Report 1922, C23.

century, a teacher at the Burgoyne Bay School on Salt Spring Island complained to the Teachers' Bureau that many of the locals held the attitude that "what was good enough for them 40 years ago is good enough for the children of today".<sup>56</sup> Rural school consolidation rarely occurred on Vancouver Island or the Mainland until after the Second World War; in 1945, forty-nine percent of all the public schools (educating twenty percent of the children in the province) still had just one teacher.<sup>57</sup> In sixty years from the start of this phase in 1886, there was essentially no change in the rural public school model. The difference came in the attitudes of new immigrants.

Once the euphoria of settling on a farm in the new land of plenty wore off, educated parents with some financial means began to worry about what to do with their daughters. They were faced with the choice of lessons at home with mother, renting a house in 'town' for mother and children during the school year, a governess or tutor, the local one-roomed school, a religious school, or a private venture school. The Anglican schools more-or-less collapsed.<sup>58</sup> This left only the Catholic schools in the religious field until the middle of the next century. The girls' schools administered and staffed by the Sisters of St. Ann, who

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<sup>56</sup> Wilson and Stortz, "Rural School Problem", *Children, Teachers, and Schools*, ed. Barman, Sutherland, and Wilson,

214. Salt Spring and the other Southern Gulf Islands can only afford to have school four days a week in the twenty-first century, not due to insufficient taxes collected, but to government reallocation of funds. Transportation costs for water taxis between islands are funded at the same mileage rate as school buses on roads. There is one high school for the board, so once arrangements for boarding on Salt Spring ended, water transportation became essential.

<sup>57</sup> Wilson, "Some Observations", *Contemporary Approaches*, ed. Berger, 225 and "Rural School Problem", *Children, Teachers and Schools*, ed. Barman, Sutherland, Wilson 210.

<sup>58</sup> Barman, "Transfer", *Schools in the West*, ed. Sheehan, Wilson, Jones, 244 and Synod Executive Committee Text 209, Minutes, January 23, 1893, Box 1, File 2, 60-61, Anglican Diocese of British Columbia Archives. (hereafter ADBC). The difficulties leading to the demise of Angela College will be discussed in detail in the Chapter IV. The girls' Reformed Episcopal School conducted by Rev. and Mrs. Cridge closed in the 1880s.

provided essentially free labour, kept their fees affordable and provided sufficient places for those, Catholic or not, who wished to enrol their daughters.<sup>59</sup>

The private venture schools, perhaps unfairly termed elitist by Barman and Downey,<sup>60</sup> were a viable option for parents who could afford the fees. The ladies boarding schools, founded by various denominations in Eastern Canada with their concentration on learning ‘the accomplishments’ had little place in the West, where they were considered old-fashioned. The girls’ schools which survived on Vancouver Island were formed in the image of the reformed, academic schools established in Britain after 1850.<sup>61</sup> Fathers, who had themselves attended the expanding British ‘public’ schools and been turned from middle class boys into gentlemen and their wives who had attended similar schools, found this model suitable for their daughters. The Vancouver Island schools were started by one individual or a small group of friends who had attended the reformed schools in Britain. Through personal commitment and hard work, these women created institutions independent of outside influence or interference. Boards of Governors, non-profit status, and succession plans came much later. These academic boarding schools appealed to British parents because of their ethnic identity and class differences but also to those with money but not position in society. These schools became the means of transferring the ‘official’ upper middle and upper class British culture to children of generations of immigrants. Whether their parents settled in the

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<sup>59</sup> Philip Jensen, “The Sisters of St. Ann & Their Vancouver Island Mission”, *Beaver*, 78, no. 4 (1998): 30-31.

<sup>60</sup> L.W. Downey, “The Aid-to-Independent Schools Movement in British Columbia”, *Schools in the West*, ed. Sheehan, Wilson, Jones, 306. In many cases the academics and expectations in the good private schools were superior to those in the available public schools, but usually buildings and conditions were not. Scarcity of heat and hot water was almost always considered to be a virtue in private schools. Mucking out a barn at 5:30 am in winter was certainly not elitist, just part of the daily routine at Queen Margaret’s School in Duncan.

<sup>61</sup> See discussion of Cheltenham Ladies College and North London Collegiate in Chapter II.

Cowichan Valley, Buenos Aires, Perth, or on the Veldt, they, to use Jean Barman's phrase, learned to 'grow up British'.

Finances were difficult for both the rural public schools and the private schools. Whether 'rural' or 'assisted', almost all the isolated schools laboured in poor facilities with inadequate government allowances for salaries, equipment, or supplies and little financial support from the community. Money was always a constant worry for unendowed private schools. Unlike the religious schools, they had no benefactresses such as Angela College's Angela Burdett-Coutts, or established mother houses like St. Ann's to help them become established. Founders scrounged their own monies from personal resources, from relatives 'back home', from friends, grateful parents, from fees, and if fortune smiled, from sympathetic bank managers to provide basic facilities. The financial difficulties of private schools on Vancouver Island were very much akin to those experienced in Warwickshire by the Byerley sisters a century earlier. Founders, like the Byerleys, usually lived on the school premises never distant from their vocation. The work was often strenuous, the hours long, but the independence was as stimulating as the paying of bills was daunting.

Curriculum motivated parents' choice of schooling. Textbooks from the approved list remained as central to teaching in the public schools in the fourth phase as they had been in the 1872-1886 era. Timothy J. Stanley found that the books used in these schools stressed patriotism, citizenship, character-building, but always with white society in control, legitimizing European domination. Aboriginals and Asians were 'others' of lesser merit. Inspectors, especially in rural areas, judged teachers' competence by how closely they adhered to the contents of the books provided for their use. Stanley concluded that the government bureaucracy was attempting to create an elitist white society in the public

schools.<sup>62</sup> Van Brummelen, who continued the study of textbooks in the fourth period,<sup>63</sup> thought that the highly held patriotism noted by Stanley was actually loyalty to the British constitution and laws, since “they best served liberty and prosperity”. England “led all peoples in the struggle against vice and tyranny, and from her all lands derived hope and encouragement. Canada, textbooks proclaimed, was the full beneficiary of this remarkable heritage.” He found little to foster pride in anything specifically Canadian. Readers [a sequence of anthologies which passed for literature] in the elementary schools encouraged children to be hard-working and obedient, to accept their lot in life with fortitude and contentment. About the turn of the century another theme began to appear, temperance in the use of alcohol and tobacco. The textbooks preached that excess in such vices resulted in “dull minds and stupidity as well as in stunted growth”.<sup>64</sup> The books stressed simple, clean living as an admirable virtue.

If the public school curriculum was instilling such virtues, why did some parents look elsewhere for different educational philosophies? This curriculum caused concern to many of the members of the middle and upper classes arriving from Britain between 1886 and the Second World War. This group had higher levels of education and more personal knowledge of the world than most of the earlier immigrants from Britain.<sup>65</sup> Some probably viewed the championing of English justice and liberty from afar as not quite genuine. They had emigrated for reasons important to them, for more opportunities for themselves and their children, and felt distaste that their children were being indoctrinated with thoughts

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<sup>62</sup> Timothy J. Stanley, “White Supremacy and the Rhetoric of Educational Indoctrination: A Canadian Case Study”, *Children, Teachers and Schools*, ed. Barman, Sutherland, Wilson, 39-42.

<sup>63</sup> Van Brummelen’s study of textbooks covered the period from 1872-1925, the third and fourth phases of education in the province.

<sup>64</sup> Van Brummelen, Textbooks, *Schools in the West*, ed. Sheehan, Wilson, Jones, 21-27.

<sup>65</sup> Jean Barman, *Growing Up British in British Columbia*, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1984), 21-22 and 180-181.

that the best of life had been left behind in Britain. Those who had struggled to retain middle class status in Britain hoped to improve their children's position on Vancouver Island, not lower it by having them taught what they considered to be working class values. Parents, especially those who had attended university, sought a more classical, academic preparation which could lead to higher education for their children. Others favoured a strong religious foundation. Thus, they turned away from the curriculum in the public schools and sought out the private ones.

The public school curriculum was no more effective in assimilating non-white children into mainstream life in the province. During the first decade of the twentieth century, the Victoria School Board refused admission to its schools to Chinese students who could not speak English.<sup>66</sup> Aboriginal children if they lived on reserves, as most did, attended segregated schools with their own curricula under the authority of the federal government. The message given by the 'hidden curriculum' underlying the public system was one of "dominance, imperialism, racism . . . [in which] racist notions of innate differences among Whites, Asians, and First Nations people justified school segregation".<sup>67</sup> The provincial curriculum did not attempt to fill the basic needs of these groups anymore than it satisfied the expectations of the more educated British immigrants.

In contrast, the private schools could adopt whatever curricula they judged most suitable. No government official would ever know or care about their individuality or eccentricity. It was common for them to order textbooks from England, with the Canadian

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<sup>66</sup> Timothy Stanley, "Schooling, White Supremacy, and the Formation of a Chinese Merchant Public in British Columbia", *BC Studies*, 107 (Autumn 1995): 19-22.

<sup>67</sup> Stanley, "White Supremacy", *BC Studies* 107, 41.

titles used perhaps as supplements. Even when the private schools used books from the prescribed list, they did not have to use them in the manner intended by the ministry.

The ‘hidden curriculum’ was just as present as in the public system, but with somewhat different but still class-motivated values. Carolyn Gossage maintained that the ideals stressed by the British-type private schools in Canada were very much upper middle class, “integrity, fair play, service, and responsibility.”<sup>68</sup> Ethel Wilson wrote of her experiences in school in 1898, “[p]erhaps the most important things that were taught at Miss Gordon’s school [Crofton House in Vancouver] were not mentioned in the curriculum at all. They were, I think, integrity, consideration, and simple good manners.”<sup>69</sup> Maude C. Edgar, the strong-minded co-founder of Miss Edgar’s and Miss Cramp’s School in Montreal, stated bluntly in 1927 that “the building of Character is the whole aim and end of any school worthy of its name . . . nearly all independent schools continue to make a conscious effort to perpetuate and instill a particular code of ethics and set of values. It is the cornerstone of their purpose and function.”<sup>70</sup> The headmistresses of private schools on Vancouver Island understood the importance of Character. This was to be very much an upper class character, not the values identified in the public schools by Van Brummelen and Stanley which headmistresses and their clientele considered to be for the working classes. Private school curricula were concerned with educating individuals not faceless masses.

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<sup>68</sup> Carolyn Gossage, *A Question of Privilege*, (Toronto: Peter Martin, 1977), 4-5.

<sup>69</sup> Jean Barman, “Vancouver’s Forgotten Entrepreneurs: Women Who Ran Their Own Schools”, *BC Historical News* (Fall, 1998): 22.

<sup>70</sup> Gossage, *Privilege*, 4.

Just as school model, governance, finance, curricula, and parental expectations varied between public and private schools in this fourth phase, so did teachers and principals. Young women in British Columbia as in the earlier phases frequently took up teaching in the public system as one of the few choices available to them in resource-based communities. No training was essential until into the twentieth century, just the knowledge exam or terminal high school examinations as noted previously. After the establishment of provincial normal schools in Vancouver in 1901 and Victoria in 1915, a relatively short course led to First and Second Class certification. Third Class certificates based on high school marks could be obtained until 1921.<sup>71</sup> The concerns of Inspector G.H. Gower of the Prince George District, would have applied equally to isolated schools on Vancouver Island.<sup>72</sup> He wrote in his Annual Report in 1921:

A number of schools in these northern parts are handicapped year after year by the employment of unskilled, temporary certified teachers, who have little knowledge of our courses, standards and methods. Inability to organize the work of their classrooms constitutes the chief criticism of the teachers in the one-roomed schools of this inspectorate.<sup>73</sup>

There was little wonder that the ministry was not eager to support this anecdotal report with statistics. From the 1890s onwards a small number of better qualified teachers such as Jessie and Annie McQueen<sup>74</sup> were attracted from the Maritimes by higher salaries in

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<sup>71</sup> Patrick Dunae, *The School Record: A Guide to Government Archives Relating to Public Education in British Columbia*, (Victoria: British Columbia Archives and Record Service, 1992), 38-39. Before 1920, the four month course led to a Third Class Certificate and the nine month course to a Second Class with Junior Matriculation and a First Class with Senior Matric.

<http://records.viu.ca/homeroom/content/topics/programs/Curriclm/nschool.htm>

<sup>72</sup> Karin Weber, who raised three children in Winter Harbour on the north end of Vancouver Island and suffered through a steady annual rotation of teachers of varying abilities during the 1970s at the local one-roomed school, had similar criticisms.

<sup>73</sup> Wilson and Stortz, "Rural School Problem", *Children, Teachers and Schools*, ed. Barman, Sutherland, and Wilson, 217.

<sup>74</sup> Jean Barman, *Sojourning Sisters, The Lives and Letters of Jessie and Annie McQueen*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003).

British Columbia. Even these women usually possessed only high school and normal school certificates which did not equal the educational attainments of teachers from the women's colleges in Britain who came to many of the private schools.

The teachers in private schools, at least until after the Second World War, usually lacked certification as teachers but were more academically qualified than those in the public system outside of the larger urban centres and often more interested in making a career of teaching. A large number came from Britain as young women looking for adventure, and employment, after having attended Miss Beale and Miss Buss type schools and then university. Unlike many of the teachers visited by the Taunton Commission in Britain in the 1860s, they had been 'well-taught' which was certainly part-way toward knowing how to teach. They understood how to 'play the game' in the classroom and on the playing fields. The pay was low but room and board were usually provided at the school. Some found the new environment too raw and returned home almost immediately, others taught for a few years, married, and made Vancouver Island home. The writer's father used to tell of the young bachelors in the Cowichan Valley making a point of strolling near the train station in Duncan when the crop of new teachers for Queen Margaret's was scheduled to arrive.<sup>75</sup> Others stayed on at the schools for the rest of their lives, some passing the century mark being cared for by 'their school'.

The headmistresses who founded these schools were women of character. Jean Barman divided those who began their own schools in Vancouver into three categories, the first being "genteel entrepreneurs, the second collegial entrepreneurs, and the third

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<sup>75</sup> Eric C. Powell, Maple Bay, BC.

entrepreneurs of necessity”.<sup>76</sup> Elements of all three were combined in the founders of the Island’s girls’ schools. Entrepreneurs they certainly were. Free from government bureaucracy a woman could advertise to attract pupils and set up her school as she saw fit. If enough parents liked her school she would succeed. Perhaps it was “uncontrolled speculation in people’s lives” by strong-minded women but the endurance of some of these schools has confirmed their validity. Who were these headmistresses? Almost all had no provincial certification for teaching or principalship; some had university degrees; most had attended British reformed, academic girls’ schools. Virtually all could easily have qualified under the examination-based certification process to teach in the public school system. But that route severely limited their options, as the Nanaimo school board, in common with other urban boards, appointed only men to teaching positions in the high school and principalships in schools larger than two rooms at the beginning of the twentieth century.<sup>77</sup> These women, unmarried or widowed with children to support, had higher aspirations than teaching primary grades or in a one-room school. Unlike the boys’ private schools, the founders of the girls’ schools tended to come in pairs or triples, and, in the case of York House in Vancouver, a group of seven.<sup>78</sup> Usually one would be designated as The Head, with all contributing in complementary areas of expertise and

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<sup>76</sup> Barman, “Vancouver’s Forgotten Entrepreneurs”, *BC Historical News*, 21. Barman’s genteel entrepreneurs were Jessie Gordon of Crofton House (for girls) and Eveline Richards of Pitman Business College (about two-thirds of the students were women). The collegial entrepreneurs were the seven women of York House School (for girls) and Isabel Bodie and her seven associates at Queen’s Hall (for girls). The entrepreneurs of necessity were Violet Dryvynsyde of Athlone School (for boys) and Anna Sprott assumed the presidency of the Sprott-Shaw Business Schools after her husband’s death.

<sup>77</sup> Brown, “Binaries, Boundaries, and Hierarchies”, Thesis, 190-192. Ontario did not have even one female high school principal in the public school system in 1970.

<sup>78</sup> Pairs often formed, or continued, partnerships which included not only conducting the school, but also living together in support and companionship for the rest of their lives. The Organization of American Historians website: <http://www.oah.org/pubs/nl/2004aug/freedman.html> provides references to writings on such “Boston Marriages”. The York House founders were singular in having husbands and families.

responsibility.<sup>79</sup> Collegiality and bonds of gender, together with the necessity of earning a living, drove these genteel women with dedication and almost crusade-like intensity to accomplish whatever was necessary to ensure the survival of their institutions. Some failed financially to keep the school open; others made no succession plans and allowed their schools to close upon their retirement or death; a few made their life's work into corporations so that continuation, while not ensured, was at least possible.

In addition to the women who founded or taught in the private schools, a few well-educated, well-trained English governesses put great effort into the schooling of independent, semi-tamed children accustomed to spending most of their time on the water or in other active pursuits. Dorothy Wise Trickey was one of these. The First World War broke out while she was visiting her brother making it impossible for her to return to England. As she needed employment, Mrs. Bradley-Dyne of Duncan recommended her to her widowed brother on Saturna Island. Dorothy Payne Richardson remembered much talk in her aunt's house about "[t]hose poor girls of Gerry's on the island, running wild and not getting educated."<sup>80</sup> Miss Trickey rose to the task, established regular school hours, and had Mr. Payne build a schoolroom apart from the house. She stayed for four years until all of the children went to boarding school<sup>81</sup> but she was exceptional.

As the headmistresses, most of the teachers in private schools, and most but not all parents were British born, Barman, Gossage, and Downey each applied the term 'elitist' to these schools, but in a much narrower sense than Stanley's based on race.<sup>82</sup> Downey used

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<sup>79</sup> Barman, "Vancouver's Forgotten Entrepreneurs", *BC Historical News*, 24.

<sup>80</sup> Derek Reimer, *The Gulf Islanders*, (Victoria: Provincial Archives of British Columbia, 1977), 30.

<sup>81</sup> Reimer, *Gulf Islanders*, 31.

<sup>82</sup> Stanley, "White Supremacy", *Children, Teachers and Schools*, ed. Barman, Sutherland, Wilson, 39-41.

the term apologetically as he could find “no better description for the kind of non-mass-education ideology which characterizes them”.<sup>83</sup> Gossage presented two sides of the argument, with defenders of these schools asserting that their function was to train those of ability and status to lead and to accept social responsibility, and detractors insisting they were bastions to maintain a privileged position by excluding all outsiders. By her tone in *A Question of Privilege*, Gossage showed her acceptance of this form of elitism. Barman, in many writings, emphasized the preponderance of boys from wealthy and socially superior families attending private schools. She wrote of a local boy, the son of an admiral, at P.T. Skrimshire’s Quamichan Lake School who “led all of Canada in the entrance examination for the new Royal Naval College at Halifax”,<sup>84</sup> but made no mention of his schoolmate, the youngest son of a farmer, who boarded at the school and then went on to be a successful plumber in Duncan.<sup>85</sup> All of the private schools charged fees, and collected them when they could, but these were not as high in proportion to average incomes in the timeframe of this paper as those of the long-established private schools today.<sup>86</sup> The girls’ schools were probably never as concerned as the boys’ private schools with social status and impeccable family references as requirements for admission as they perhaps concentrated less on ethnic preservation and more on developing women of strong morals

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<sup>83</sup> Downey, “The Aid-to Independent Schools Movement”, *Schools in the West*, ed. Sheehan, Wilson, Jones, Note 2, 306.

<sup>84</sup> Jean Barman, *Growing Up British in British Columbia*, 32.

<sup>85</sup> Stanley Bonsall, Duncan BC.

<sup>86</sup> Even in 2009 a choice of private schools is available to parents of moderate incomes. Fees at the Salt Spring Centre School (secular) are \$3575 a year with the possibility of ‘working off’ part or all of the fees at jobs about the school. [www.saltspringcentreschool.ca](http://www.saltspringcentreschool.ca). Queen of Angels School (Catholic) in Duncan B.C. costs \$3303 per year for members of the parish and \$3734 for non-parish supporters. [www.cisdv.ca](http://www.cisdv.ca). Duncan Christian School (Protestant Reformed) is \$4825.75. These are fees for the upper levels of the junior schools (K-7). All of these schools offer reductions for siblings attending at the same time. In contrast, fees for the same level at Queen Margaret’s are now \$9400 per year, [www.qms.bc.ca](http://www.qms.bc.ca) and \$13,705 at Glenlyon-Norfolk, [www.glenlyonnorfolk.bc.ca](http://www.glenlyonnorfolk.bc.ca). Buildings, equipment, and heating plants at these two schools have been very much improved and updated since 1945.

and character to benefit Canadian life. Also families would almost always sacrifice a daughter's education in favour of a son's in difficult economic times, so girls' schools needed to accept a wider social range of families, and varied academic preparation and ability, in order to maintain their enrolment. If girls did not have the right attributes when they enrolled, the successful ones soon learned them. Perhaps this made them elitist. With the exception of the religious schools, buildings, grounds, and living conditions of the schools were not amongst the best or choicest, but were often spartan to the extreme. There was no hint of luxury, but a large expectation for personal responsibility and hard work. No girl mucking out a stable at 5:30 am on a dark, rainy winter's morning in the Cowichan Valley thought that she was being pampered as a superior young lady. The experience, though, may have made her more socially-responsible than her counterpart in one of the Eastern Canadian girls' schools which strove to exhibit its 'poshness'. Criticism of elitism misses the essence of these schools in the West. Many parents chose them because they offered a superior education to the public schools outside of the large cities. Better educated teachers, an enriched curriculum (both overt and hidden), homogeneous classes, more motivated students, and higher parental expectations all contributed to the attraction of private schools to not only British-born parents but to successful Canadian and American-born families. If leadership, independent thinking, and social responsibility are elitist, then these schools are too.

Barman has researched extensively into immigration patterns and ethnicity in the province. In identifying the families of most of the boys attending such schools as Vernon Preparatory and Shawnigan Lake, she used Leo Driedger's definition of ethnicity which maintained that "territorial, institutional, and cultural factors . . . tend to reinforce each

other, so that when individuals of a given ethnic group identify with their in-group along these dimensions, they tend to remain more distinctive!”<sup>87</sup> To her, the clusters of British settlement, private schools, clubs, and closed social circles all contributed to preserving a separate upper middle class ethnicity within the British immigration into the province. There was no doubt that these factors existed and survived for much of the twentieth century. By 1921, the majority of the adult residents in the province identified themselves as British. Greater numbers were of limited means but about 24,000 were of the upper middle class who came to British Columbia to maintain rather than improve their socio-economic position. This group acquired an influence far beyond its actual percentile ranking of immigrants because these people settled in Vancouver, Victoria, and the countryside of the Cowichan Valley, the Gulf Islands, and the Okanagan, the clusters of British settlement.<sup>88</sup> The men perhaps not products of Eton or Harrow, although those schools were represented, were at least from the boys’ equivalents of Cheltenham Ladies’ College and North London Collegiate for Girls and thus part of the new wave of reformed private education. They were younger sons, retired naval and military officers, pensioned Indian civil servants, and adventurers settling down with families, seeking a freer, more affordable version of the life-style they had known but could no longer sustain ‘at home’, with their clubs, sporting activities, and familiar circle of like-minded friends. Occupations for gentlemen not of the medical or legal professions were limited; finance and company management were acceptable but amongst the most popular was that of ‘gentleman-

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<sup>87</sup> Jean Barman, “Growing Up British in British Columbia: The Vernon Preparatory School 1914-1946”, *Schooling and Society in Twentieth Century British Columbia*, ed. J. Donald Wilson, David C. Jones, (Calgary: Detselig Enterprises, 1980), 120.

<sup>88</sup> Jean Barman, “Ethnicity in the Pursuit of Status: British Middle and Upper-Class Emigration to British Columbia in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries”, *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, 18, no. 1 (1986), 36.

farmer'. Being people of some means, they did not need to homestead on the almost free land of the Prairies but were able to select a more congenial climate and landscape. Hence the choice was made to settle on Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands, where "[t]he social life of the English counties was faithfully replicated in calling cards, formal dinners, tennis, field hockey, and cricket parties and festive, all-night dances."<sup>89</sup> All of these activities could be pursued at a fraction of their cost 'at home'. Looking back on her childhood on Saturna Island, Dora Payne recalled, "They really had an awfully carefree life. They weren't tied to their farms. They had boats, they went fishing, they went to regattas, and they went visiting in Victoria. . . . We farmed in a gentle sort of fashion."<sup>90</sup> Life was much the same in the Cowichan Valley.

Existence may have appeared to be idyllic but nevertheless "education was a big problem".<sup>91</sup> The local school, lessons at home with mother or a governess, mother and children staying in town for the school year, a boarding school, or no schooling at all were the choices for any rural children, not just those of the 'elite'. Some parents, concerned about the conditions in the local school or the hopelessness of retaining governesses, made sacrifices to educate their daughters. The boarding schools offered a different education from that of the large schools in cities or one-roomed schoolhouses. They attracted girls from urban areas and the countryside not only because of ethnic preservation, or the socio-economic status of the students, but most importantly because of their academic standards and breadth of curriculum. They promised parents a good sound education coupled with producing leaders, or at least girls suitable to be the wives of leaders. Parents not of upper

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<sup>89</sup> Reimer, *Gulf Islanders*, 1.

<sup>90</sup> Reimer, *Gulf Islanders*, 37 citing the Sound Heritage project of the Provincial Archives. The quote was later cited by Barman.

<sup>91</sup> Reimer, *Gulf Islanders*, 75.

middle class British backgrounds soon viewed the private school as the route to a better education and social advancement for their daughters.<sup>92</sup> Daddy might be a logger with little formal schooling but his daughters were going to grow up to be ladies and marry the sons of a mill-owner, doctor, or lawyer. If a girl were not to marry or became widowed, she would need education beyond that offered by the local rural school to be able to support herself in the resource-based economy. Teaching, nursing, and office work beyond the level of typing and shorthand all required the equivalent of high school matriculation for entry. In a new country far from the support of extended family, education was an insurance policy for daughters. Sons could be sent away to school (even back to England if family budget could be stretched to meet the expense), continue on to university and enter one of the professions, or make their fortunes in the local economy. Girls were kept closer to home with not as much money made available for their schooling as for their brothers’.

The girls’ schools on Vancouver Island which achieved some degree of sustainability belonged to one of three distinct types, the religious schools both Protestant and Catholic, the urban schools in Victoria, and the country schools in the Cowichan Valley. I have investigated Angela College, an Anglican school in Victoria, as an example of a religious school, Norfolk House School in Victoria as an urban school, and Queen Margaret’s School in Duncan as a country school.

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<sup>92</sup> Gossage, *Privilege*, 173-174 and Barman, *Growing Up British*, 107-130.

## CHAPTER IV *Angela College, an Anglican Private School.*

To counteract a Roman Catholic and largely French presence after the arrival of the Sisters of St Ann and the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate from Quebec in 1858, the leaders of the Anglican community in Victoria decided parents wanted Protestant schools with close ties to England. These schools began with high hopes of instilling British religion, habits, customs, and ideals in colonial children so that they would grow up supporting the Church of England, Queen, and Empire. Unfortunately, the girls' school was beset with problems in governance, leadership, and acceptability to parents. An antiquated curriculum, increasingly dire financial straits, and an inability to adapt to changing circumstances doomed the institution as a religious school from its early days. Finally the Church, unable to cope with its increasing debts, decided to lease the buildings and the 'Angela College' name to women to operate private venture schools. This also failed as rent for the semi-derelict premises was insufficient to cover the property taxes and interest on the mortgages. After much discussion and many delays the agony was brought to a close by the sale of the property. The school in its varied forms was never able to satisfy sufficient parental needs or aspirations to ensure its survival for any significant length of time.

Undaunted that the colonial Church had not yet even developed a synod,<sup>1</sup> Bishop Hills proceeded with his plans for religious schools independent of Hudson's Bay Company. At the Organizational Meeting<sup>2</sup> of clergy and laity in January 1861, he

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<sup>1</sup> Although officially a bishopric in the eyes of Canterbury, the Diocese of Columbia was still in structural formation in 1860.

<sup>2</sup> This meeting was the forerunner of formal Synods – Church councils of Clergy and delegated laity.

reported that the Church had opened two institutions, the Collegiate School for boys and the Ladies' College for girls which he felt would fulfill pressing family needs.<sup>3</sup> The Bishop worked diligently to obtain financial support for his girls' school. As Miss Angela Burdett-Coutts, an English banking heiress,<sup>4</sup> had showed considerable interest in the colony by endowing a church and his bishopric, he hoped that she would oblige with a building for this endeavour. He had already applied to the Christian Knowledge Society for a grant for the girls' school, but needed additional support as he estimated that the building itself would cost more than £2000.<sup>5</sup> In writing to her, the Bishop emphasized that the institution would be for middle and upper class girls whose parents desired an English, Anglican education for their daughters. Pupils would come not just from Vancouver Island and the Mainland, but also from along the Pacific Coast, California, Mexico, and from the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii). Thus, he told her the selection of "the right person for head" was of prime importance. Rev. A.C. Garrett, the founding headmaster of the boys' Collegiate School, suggested an Anglican female teaching order for the girls in his correspondence with Miss Burdett-Coutts. Bishop Hills, however, declared that these women would be better suited to training native girls in some future institution which he hoped to establish. Probably the real reason, judging from his future actions, was his confidence that he could control "the right person", but not a teaching order with its base in England. He wanted to be in charge of financial matters as well as

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<sup>3</sup> *The British Colonist*, January 19, 1861, 1. The Ladies' College was later renamed Angela College.

<sup>4</sup> During her lifetime she contributed millions of pounds to charitable causes in Britain and throughout the Empire. These gifts included the endowment of the bishopric of the Diocese of Columbia (originally both the mainland and island colonies, now the Diocese of British Columbia encompassing Vancouver Island and the Northern and Southern Gulf Islands) but not the whole diocese.

<sup>5</sup> Bishop Hills to Miss Burdett-Coutts, published in *The London Times*, December 26<sup>th</sup>, 1860, reprinted in *The British Colonist*, March 14<sup>th</sup>, 1861, 1. This amount was a gross underestimate of the actual costs.

administration. By appointing clergy wives to head the institution, he gained double control, over the women hired and over the husbands as clerics in his see. His choices, though, were not lasting successes and contributed to many of the school's difficulties.

Although the school opened in a rented house on Rae Street (Courtney, east of Douglas), which had been recently occupied by Chief Justice Cameron,<sup>6</sup> Bishop Hills soon secured funding for a new building. Miss Angela Burdett-Coutts provided most of the money<sup>7</sup> with the remainder coming from the Anglican Church and related sources, including £400 from The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.<sup>8</sup> The bishop employed architect John Wright to design an imposing edifice for the lip of Cathedral Hill looking down over the grounds of the Catholic St Ann's Academy on Humboldt Street. The firm of Wright and Sanders completed plans and specifications by August 28 and called for tenders by September 7, 1865.<sup>9</sup> This was to be a building of stature and significance in colonial Victoria.

The *British Colonist* treated the laying of the cornerstone in October 1865 as a grand social occasion befitting the structure which was to arise. Women, the newspaper reported, donned their silks and satins and men their top hats for the gathering on Burdett Avenue. Contrary to the accepted custom, Mrs. Arthur Kennedy, the Governor's wife, rather than a man, performed the ceremony, an auspicious move for female education in Victoria. The Governor spoke of the importance of educating future wives and mothers of

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<sup>6</sup> *Colonist*, "Ladies College", August 30<sup>th</sup>, 1860, 2.

<sup>7</sup> Valerie Green, "From refinement to retirement: The Story of the Angela", *The Islander*, March 1983, 10.

<sup>8</sup> Bishop Hills Collection, Text 57, Box 3, File 3, Bishop Hills to Rev. T.W. Bullock, December 31, 1867, ADBC.

<sup>9</sup> *Colonist*, "Carpenters and Builders", August 31, 1865, 4.

the colony, and drew much applause with the sentiment “no race of useful people could descend from any but good and virtuous mothers.” Bishop Hills stressed the need of “a sound English education for young ladies”.<sup>10</sup> The religious aspects of such an education were especially important to him as the passing of the Common School Act that year had ended any hope of an Anglican monopoly on public education.

Seven years after its founding the Ladies’ College, or Angela College as it was renamed in 1867 in honour of its benefactress, moved from the rented house to a substantial, purpose-built structure. The building, with its red brick walls with quoining at the front corners, gothic spire, decorated eaves, and be-crossed gables all enclosed within a neat board-and-batten fence, not only presented a sharp contrast to the more temporary buildings, rutted dirt streets, and open fields of much of Victoria, but also made a deliberate statement about the status of those in positions of power in the Church and colony.<sup>11</sup> The founders described classrooms and study halls as “lofty and spacious”, dormitories and lavatories as “fitted with every convenience” to “ensure the health and comfort of pupils.”<sup>12</sup> The secular girls’ schools of later years were never able to replicate the elegant facades or domestic facilities of the religious schools, nor did they attempt to provide much physical comfort. The physical grandeur of Angela College became a contributing factor in its downfall.

Before the new building was even designed, there was foreshadowing of the coming problems for the school. Leadership lacked continuity. An advertisement in *The British*

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<sup>10</sup> *Colonist*, “Collegiate School for Girls”, October 13<sup>th</sup>, 1865, 3.

<sup>11</sup> Angela College, photographs A-02868, A-02869, A-03427, C-03857, c. 1865, BCAC.

<sup>12</sup> *Angela College Prospectus, 1869*, Early Canadiana Online, <http://www.canadiana.org/ECO?PageView/14040/004> (18 October 2004).

*Colonist* of August 30<sup>th</sup> announced the opening of the Ladies' College on Monday, September 24<sup>th</sup>, 1860 naming Mrs. Lowe, presumably the wife of the Rev. R.L. Lowe, as the Lady Superintendent pro tem to be followed by Mrs. Woods, wife of Rev. Charles T. Woods,<sup>13</sup> by the start of the first term. This change in headship before the school even opened was an indication of the difficulties to come. Starting with these two women, the habit of relying on clergy wives, whether personally interested or suitable or not, to lead the school became entrenched. The announcement named Miss Penrice and her younger sister<sup>14</sup> as the two assistants, and the Bishop as the Visitor. The original curriculum, termed the course of education, would "comprise Religion and Moral Training, English in all its branches, Modern Languages, Music, Singing, Drawing, Painting, etc.", was hardly progressive even for 1860. Fees were moderate at \$5 per month for children under 10, \$6 an month for those between 10 and 15, and \$10 for girls over 15. Modern Languages, Music and Painting, and Drawing and Painting were extra at \$2 per month each. These fees were similar to those charged by the private enterprise schools at the time.

Although the school remained at the Rae St. house until the new building was completed, the leadership certainly was not as stable as the facilities. Mrs. Woods was in charge until the end of 1860 but her husband, who was also head of the Collegiate School, replaced her in January 1861.<sup>15</sup> By mid-August, Mrs. Woods was again the Lady

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<sup>13</sup> Rev. Charles Woods became Headmaster of the Collegiate School by September 6<sup>th</sup>, 1860 as the original headmaster, Rev. A.C. Garrett, left the fledgling school to become principal of the Victoria Indian Mission School. *Colonist*, September 6<sup>th</sup>, 1860, 2.

<sup>14</sup> Little is known of the Misses Penrice, but they were ladies of sufficient means for each to be able to contribute \$5 to the building fund for the Female Infirmary. *Colonist*, June 12, 1865, 4.

<sup>15</sup> *Colonist*, "Ladies' College", January 11, 1861, 2.

Principal <sup>16</sup>. This absence may have been due to a pregnancy rather than any decision of Bishop Hills, although there is no evidence of the Woods having a child at this time. She continued in this position until some point in February 1863 when Mrs. Reece, wife of Rev. W.S. Reece, Vice-Principal of the Collegiate School replaced her.<sup>17</sup>

Although the Misses Penrice, the two original assistants, continued to teach some parts of the curriculum, Rev. Reece joined them in the spring of 1863 giving instruction in Latin, Mathematics, Arithmetic, Natural Philosophy, and Astronomy. Besides these classes the school offered English in all its branches, the Use of Globes, Music and Singing, Drawing and Painting, Needle Fancy Work, and, of course, Religious and Moral Training. Needle Fancy Work was an addition but otherwise the original course of education had altered little from opening day. <sup>18</sup> In contrast, the boys' Collegiate School taught English Language, Composition, and Literature, Greek and Latin Classics, Arithmetic, Mathematics, Algebra, Geometry, Trigonometry, History, Book-keeping, Astronomy, Natural Philosophy, Modern Languages (French, Spanish, Italian), Drawing, and Religious and Moral Training, <sup>19</sup> comprising a much more rigorous academic curriculum than was available to the girls.

Rev. and Mrs. Reece and Rev. and Mrs. Woods took boarding students into their homes in the spring of 1863. In the Reeces' case this may have been an attempt to increase enrolment by attracting out-of-town girls as well as to improve their income. Rev. Reece had more than full-time employment with teaching in both schools, and Mrs.

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<sup>16</sup> *Colonist*, "Ladies' College", August 21, 1861, 2.

<sup>17</sup> *Colonist*, "Ladies' College", February 28, 1863, 1.

<sup>18</sup> *Colonist*, "Ladies' College", March 21, 1863, 1.

<sup>19</sup> *Colonist*, "Collegiate School for Boys", August 26, 1862, 3.

Reece would not have been idle. The Reeces seem to have been successful house parents as numbers increased to forty-five girls in 1864, sufficient to warrant more classroom space and increased accommodation for boarders.<sup>20</sup> Weekly boarders were accepted during the winter months.<sup>21</sup> Rev. Woods had a larger enrolment in his school, so the motivation may have been to compensate for the loss of his wife's salary from the Ladies' College.<sup>22</sup>

Although Angela College was a school for young ladies, beyond day to day administration by the Lady Principal, governance of the school was provided, as was the custom at the time,<sup>23</sup> by a male Board of Management. Bishop Hills, Chief Justice Needham, Dean Cridge, Archdeacon Woods of New Westminster, Archdeacon Reece of Cowichan, Roderick Finlayson, Esq., J.D. Pemberton, Esq., E.G. Alston, Esq., and Rev P. Jenns, Rector of St. John's Church on Quadra Street, prominent men in the community, made up this board in 1869.<sup>24</sup> Their mandate was to "ensure a sound, religious, moral and secular education, and to place within the reach of the greatest possible number, in this our distant home, the means of forming the habits and character of an English lady".<sup>25</sup> The "greatest possible number" included only those girls whose parents could afford to pay the fees. The type of English lady board members seem to have desired was perhaps a

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<sup>20</sup> See Rev. Cridge's report on school attendance in previous chapter.

<sup>21</sup> *Colonist*, "Ladies' College", July 15, 1864, 4.

<sup>22</sup> Mrs. Reece replaced Mrs. Woods in February 1863, see above.

<sup>23</sup> See reference to Miss Beale and the school for daughters of the clergy in Chapter II.

<sup>24</sup> Roderick Finlayson was a chief factor of the Hudson's Bay Company, and later a large landowner, financier, and member of the Legislative Council for the colony; Joseph Pemberton was Surveyor-General of the colony; E.G. Alston was trained as a barrister but served as a member of the Colonial Board of Education and then as Inspector-General of Schools for the colony; all were notables in Victoria. Clergy were frequently moved about the diocese, so several rotated through the board.

<sup>25</sup> *Angela College Prospectus, 1869*.

memory from their youth in England, even their own mothers. This image was the product of a fashionable boarding school offering little serious scholarship, very much different from the reformed schools, which Miss Beale and Miss Buss were developing in England. These men would have had almost no knowledge or understanding of the vast changes taking place in female education in Britain, as they emigrated before they the changes gained acceptance. They were trying to replicate the past, not envision the future needs of parents and daughters in the colony. As a report on Angela College followed by discussion was usually an item on the agenda of the Synod Executive Committee, it appears that the men closely supervised the school and had control over any changes, in the same vein as the Clergy Daughters' School in England. The rapid turn-over of Lady Principals further suggests that the board members were active participants (perhaps frequent meddlers) in the running of the school rather than mere figureheads for prestige. Angela College, for much of its history, lacked the leadership of strong-minded, strong-willed women which appealed to parents and brought success to their schools.

Miss Angela Burdett-Coutts paid for the impressive, expensive building, but bestowed no endowment to maintain it. The school relied on fees from students, private donations, any support the Anglican Church could manage, and the time and financial acumen of the directors to enable the enterprise to balance its books. By 1869 fees had been reduced from those published at school opening in 1860. Parents of girls in the First Class now paid \$5 per month, those in the Second \$4, and the Third \$3.<sup>26</sup> Boarders over ten years of age were charged \$30 a month and those under ten, \$25, including the basic

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<sup>26</sup> The First Class was the senior level and Third Class the lowest.

tuition. Additional children from the same family received a \$5 per month per child reduction. Clergy daughters received a 25 per cent reduction. Angela College relied on fees for ‘extras’ to increase the income. With music at \$4-\$6 a month, Singing, French, and Drawing in pencil at \$1.25 each, and Drawing in water colours at \$2.50, the extras could easily total more than the standard tuition. The basic fees were lowered presumably to be in line with those of the competition and changing economic times. St Ann’s Academy with Catholic Church support and no salary demands for teachers could afford modest fees and still make a good profit from the select school.<sup>27</sup> Edward Mallandaine at his Private Educational Institute on Broad Street charged \$10 a quarter or \$4 a month, payable in advance for his basic programme. He accepted children of both sexes and appeared to offer the same education to both but had a teacher exclusively for the girls who may have been less rigorous.<sup>28</sup>

With over ninety girls enrolled by 1869, Angela College should have been viable by the close of its first decade. Its problems, however, were just beginning. Having set the stage with the opening of the school in the new building in 1867, issues of governance, finance, buildings and grounds, curriculum, principals and staff, and students will be examined in chronological order.

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<sup>27</sup> Even though the nuns at St. Ann’s received room, board, and clothing, the resident teachers at Angela College would have received room and board. Those not living at the school would have expected to receive more salary. The difference in cost between providing clothing and paying salaries would have been strongly in financial favour of St. Ann’s. In addition, the Sisters of St. Ann used private music lessons to subsidize their schools.

<sup>28</sup> *Private Educational Institute, Prospectus*, <http://www.ourroots.ca/e/viewpage.asp?ID=216212> (August 11, 2005). Edward Mallandaine was a well-known architect, a surveyor, a publisher (including the early Victoria directories), and a government official in addition to his stint as schoolmaster of day and evening schools.

Governance retained the same structure through the first three decades even though the incumbents changed. The board was composed of men from church and business who still had almost no knowledge of and probably in many cases little interest in developments in girls' education. They tended to appoint their own kind to the board and wherever possible their wives and female relatives to the school. The competence of the lady principal in the day to day running of the school made the difference between success and financial disaster. The legion of clergy wives did not have or develop the needed skills.

Finance and buildings and grounds are closely tied together. Bishop Hills had the right of use (fee of land) of property belonging to the Christ Church Trust in the vicinity of the present Christ Church Cathedral, and could have arranged a 99 year lease for the college with a peppercorn (nominal) rent for the first five years.<sup>29</sup> Instead, he chose to lease ten lots on the south side of Burdett Avenue for the new building so that he could rent out the Church land at a higher rate to provide income for the cathedral. This decision turned out badly when the congregation was not eager to come forth with donations in addition to the fees for their children's education, and so between 1865 and 1870 he was forced to subsidize the school with \$2500 for land rent and other expenses.<sup>30</sup> Eventually the Church purchased a portion of the rented land for the school property. The

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<sup>29</sup> After granting 100 acre plots of land to the first two chaplains, the Revs. Staines and Cridge, the British Government established, by the Christ Church Trust Deed, a church reserve of 22 acres. A board of trustees was to use the monies generated by this land to support the Church and Christian education in the colony.

<sup>30</sup> ADBC, "Memorandum: Lease of Site of A.C.", included in Christ Church Fund file, Bishop Schofield Collection, Text 55, Box 5, File 8, March 3, 1873. [Possibly written by Dean Cridge.] Why this memorandum is filed in the Bishop Schofield Collection rather than the Bishop Hills Collection is unknown, but perhaps because Bishop Hills was the first bishop and Bishop Schofield the last included in this trust fund file.

handsome building was large, probably hard to heat, and expensive to maintain. It was never filled to capacity, so costs would have been much the same but revenue was less than it should have been.

Staffing the school was not easy. Finding a long-term principal and teachers who would stay at the school plagued the first two decades. The first three clergy wives as principals have already been mentioned. Mrs. Lowe was on her way out before the first students were admitted. Mrs. Woods and her husband carried on for two and a half years. Mrs. Reece lasted almost three years. Then an ‘outsider’ was chosen; Miss Susan Pemberton, sister of Joseph Pemberton<sup>31</sup> of the Board of Management, assumed the position in January 1866. She was a success. At examination and prize-giving time in late June of 1867 she organized a large social affair, written up in the *Colonist*, attended by many notables of the day. Bishop Hills, Dean Cridge, Rev. Woods, Rev. Gribbell, and Mr. E.G. Alston conducted the public examination. Chief Justice Needham addressed the assembly, complimenting the Bishop on the great success of the institution whose establishment he attributed to Bishop Hills’ “indefatigable exertions whilst in England.” The Bishop presented more than twenty book prizes to the girls. Others attending included Mrs. Hills, Mrs. and the Misses Needham, Mrs. and Miss Wood, Dr. Tolmie, Mrs. and Miss McDonald, Mrs. Alston, Mrs. Rhodes, Mrs. Woods, Captain and Mrs. Moriarty, Miss Elliott, and additional parents whose names were not listed. Miss Pemberton finished off the day with a picnic and dance for the girls. There were now

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<sup>31</sup> Miss Pemberton joined her brother in Victoria in 1856 and became a renowned hostess for him at his estate, *Gonzales* (the larger house which he built in 1885 later became the boarding house for Norfolk House School for many years – see Chapter V). Joseph married a woman half his age in 1864 and proceeded to have a family of four children. After the birth of the first child in 1865, Susan likely started looking for something to do away from *Gonzales*.

about sixty girls in attendance.<sup>32</sup> At the closing of the school for the Christmas holidays in 1868 her retirement for reasons of ill-health was announced. As the girls presented her with a large album of photographs of the management board, pupils, and scenes of Victoria, her departure was anticipated. A *Colonist* reporter wrote glowingly of “this estimable lady, who has so long presided over the institution with honour to herself and advantage to the children” and “the duties she has assiduously performed for years”. The writer continued his compliments with “much of the prosperity of the college is due to Miss Pemberton, and it speaks volumes in her praise that on retiring from its management, she leaves it with seventy pupils”. Her position was to be assumed by Miss Gribbell, sister of the Rev. F.B. Gribbell, who was expected to arrive from England within a few weeks.<sup>33</sup> She did not arrive so Miss Pemberton carried on until school closing at the end of June 1869. Once again, Miss Pemberton staged an examination and prize-giving spectacle, with now about ninety girls, attended by parents and notables of the town including the Chief Justice, the Attorney-General, businessmen, professionals, and members of the clergy including Dean Cridge and Rev. Gribbell.

The prize recipients represented a broad cross-section of middle class society in Victoria just prior to the colony becoming a province.<sup>34</sup> All the girls were Protestant and most were Anglican. Some were born in British Columbia, with no differentiation between Vancouver Island and the Mainland colony, some elsewhere in Canada, at least

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<sup>32</sup> *Colonist*, “Angela College”, June 24<sup>th</sup>, 1867, 3.

<sup>33</sup> *Colonist*, “Angela College”, December 23, 1868, 3.

<sup>34</sup> The following data was extracted from *First Victoria Directory, 1869*, [http://www.vpl.ca/bccd/index.php/browse/title/1869/First\\_Victoria\\_Directory\\_3rd\\_Issue](http://www.vpl.ca/bccd/index.php/browse/title/1869/First_Victoria_Directory_3rd_Issue), *Victoria 1871 Municipal Census*, <http://vihistory.uvic.ca/content/census/1871/census1871.php?show=y> and *The Colonist*.

one in England, another in Scotland, and a group of unknowns. Almost all the parents were born in England or Scotland, with some from Eastern Canada of British descent, the United States also of British descent, Ireland, and one mother born in Ceylon, probably of a British colonial family. Other families were untraceable perhaps due to residing on Vancouver Island for only a short time or the girls were boarders from outside the colony. The Hudson's Bay Company was well-represented with Lizzie and Mary Munro's father, Alexander, being a company accountant in Victoria; Annie Finlayson's father, Roderick, the Chief Factor in Victoria; and Susette Wark's father, John, the Chief Trader at Barkerville. Annie Ella's father worked for the Company following his immigration in 1850 before becoming a captain and marine pilot.<sup>35</sup> Kenneth Mackenzie, Wilhelmina's father, a farmer with holdings at Craigflower and Lake Hill, came to Victoria as general supervisor of farming for the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, a subsidiary of HBC. Almost all of the HBC families were of Scottish descent. Other families in the professions included the Woods with Kate's father serving as Registrar of the Supreme Court and Mary Elliott's father, William Alfred, an English marine engineer. Two families were in the newspaper business with Nellie Seelye's father working as a reporter with a side interest in British Columbia joining Confederation, and Robert Holloway, father of Emma and Mary J., owning and operating the *Cariboo Sentinel* in Barkerville. Robert was born in England, spent some time in Quebec where he married Margaret and Emma and Mary J. were born, before continuing to British Columbia in 1862. The family later moved to

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<sup>35</sup> Capt. B. Ella drowned crossing Burrard Inlet in a canoe in February 1873, leaving his wife, Martha, and eight children, all born in BC. Mrs. Ella ran a boarding house for many years to support her family. Annie, the daughter attending Angela College in 1869, died in September 1874 from a chill caught on a boating trip. Mrs. Ella continued to meet socially with prominent members of the community for the next thirty years. *Colonist*, September 19, 1874 and later.

Victoria where he became a printer. The two daughters who had attended Angela College became teachers. Boarders from Nanaimo included Emily Bate whose father, Mark, was a mine manager and Emily Cooper, whose father operated a stationary engine. The two Emilys' parents were all Anglicans born in England, with Emily Cooper born there too, but Emily Bate was probably born in British Columbia. Annie Wooton's father was the post master and harbour master in Victoria. Sarah Waldron's father appears to have been a prospector, so she may have been a boarder, too. Florence King's father took up farming after he and his wife arrived from England.

All of the other parents earned their livings from businesses or trade. Moses and Sarah Ann Smith and their daughter Selina were born in Ontario. Mr. Smith was a baker and confectioner in Victoria. Bertha Piper's father was also a confectioner, caterer, and ran a coffee saloon. Sarah Todd and her father, Jacob, like the Smiths were born in Ontario (of Irish descent) but her mother, Rosanna, was born in England. Mr. Todd was a merchant in the growing colony. Annie and Pattie Rhodes' father, Henry, was also a merchant and importer. In addition he was consul in Victoria for the Sandwich Islands and a member of the Legislative Council. His wife, Sophia, was born in Ceylon. Ront and Susan Jane Harvey, the parents of Anne, were born in England but as Anne's older and younger siblings were all born in British Columbia her arrival at sea was either during a return trip to Britain or just mischance. As Mr. Harvey was a dry goods merchant, he and his wife may have been on a business trip when the event occurred. Zilpha and Ethel Pitts' father was another merchant and importer. Three fathers of the prize winners were house-builders. Jane Kinsman was probably born in British Columbia but her father, John, came from England and her mother, Christina, from Ontario of Scottish ancestry.

Interestingly, this family was Methodist and so chose the school for reasons other than religious sectarianism. E.J. Barnard was born in Quebec of English parentage and his wife, Ellen, was from Ireland, daughter Alice was born in some unspecified location in Canada. The third house-builder, Robert Jenkinson, and his wife Martha were born in England but Annie's birthplace is one of the unknowns. Mr. Jenkinson supplemented his construction income by also being a funeral director.<sup>36</sup> These families represented the successful entrepreneurs who could afford to send their daughters to a private school. With a few exceptions the fathers were not well-educated. Almost none would have the Oxford and Cambridge backgrounds of the members of the clergy in the colony. They had come to the colony and prospered and now looked to Miss Pemberton to supply the polish and prestige for their daughters which money could buy. She was successful because she lived the social lifestyle the parents desired.

At this June 1869 closing Dean Cridge announced Miss Pemberton's retirement once again and applauded her for being "for some years . . . the presiding genius of the institution". They may have seemed long years to Miss Pemberton, and in light of the short terms of her three predecessors in five and a half years, also to the board. This myth of her longevity in the position seemed to become widespread. Valerie Green credited her with twelve years by her retirement in 1868,<sup>37</sup> but this was impossible as the school did not open until 1860 and Mrs. Lowe, Mrs. Woods, and Mrs. Reece had to be squeezed in before her. In actuality, Miss Pemberton devoted three and a half years to Angela College,

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<sup>36</sup>"Jenkinson", *British Columbia City Directories*, passim. <http://vihistory.uvic.ca/index.php>. As furniture manufacturers were often in the funeral business, perhaps it was common for house-builders, such as Mr. Jenkinson, to combine the two activities.

<sup>37</sup> Valerie Green, *Above Stairs: Social life in Upper Class Victoria 1843-1918*, (Victoria: Sono Nis Press, 1995, 51.

not a long term in the tradition of girls' private schools. Miss Gribbell with her "high qualifications and experience" was again announced as the successor.<sup>38</sup>

Miss Pemberton's final task was collecting fees from delinquent parents. E. Graham Alston of the Board of Management of Angela College placed a notice in the *Colonist* from late June until mid-July of 1869 requesting that all claims against the college be submitted, and all sums payable be settled with the Lady Principal by July 7<sup>th</sup>.<sup>39</sup> Someone, at least, was trying to straighten out the school accounts before the new principal assumed her post .

Who was this elusive Miss Gribbell? What were her qualifications and experience? Rev. Frank B. Gribbell was an active Anglican cleric in the diocese, even performing a short missionary stint at Metlakatla until his wife became too ill for them to remain. He showed an interest in education by frequently serving on examination committees for public and private schools. Within a year after he became principal of the Collegiate School in 1868 he increased the enrolment from 26 to 70 boys and made the school self-supporting.<sup>40</sup> What had his success to do with his sister, was it only reflected glory or comforting expectations? A larger problem for the board was her whereabouts. The Misses Florence and Amy Gribbell arrived in Victoria on the *Gussie Telfair* in June 1869,<sup>41</sup> but nothing further appeared in the *Colonist* about these women until a short announcement in late October of the marriage of Amy Maria Gribbell to Staff

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<sup>38</sup> *Colonist*, "Angela College", June 30, 1869, 3.

<sup>39</sup> *Colonist*, "Angela College", June 29, 1869, 1, to July 19, 1869, 2.

<sup>40</sup> *Colonist*, "Collegiate School", January 2, 1869, 2, and July 1, 1869, 3.

<sup>41</sup> *Colonist*, "Gussie Telfair", June 14, 1869, 3.

Commander D. Pender, R.N. on October 27, 1869 at St. Paul's Church in Esquimalt.<sup>42</sup>

Florence is not mentioned after the announcement of her arrival, nor does she appear in social lists with her brother and his wife, so she did not become a part of their family.

Likely, she, too, married or else viewed the situation in the colony and returned home to England.

The Bishop's choices continued to be short-lived. A lengthy advertisement on July 31<sup>st</sup> named Mrs. Cave, another clergy wife, as the Lady Principal.<sup>43</sup> Mrs. Sebright Green was appointed pro tem to replace her in January 1870.<sup>44</sup> She was not a clergy wife, but her husband was prominent in the Anglican Church as he accompanied Bishop Hill at the consecration of the cathedral. The next was Miss Emily Howard Crease, sister of Henry Pering Pellew Crease, a noted lawyer in Victoria and New Westminster. Her qualifications are unknown, but her father held the rank of Captain in the Royal Navy, her mother was heiress of Ince Castle in Cornwall and an artist of some note, her brother Henry graduated from Cambridge University,<sup>45</sup> so it is possible that her parents paid some attention to her education, even though she was born too early to attend one of the reformed girls' schools.

Miss Crease was living in England when Bishop Hills offered her the position as principal of Angela College. Friends and family assisted her in negotiating the terms of her contract. Her brother made careful inquiries about salary, expectations, duties, and teaching load expected of the head. He discovered that she would be required to supervise

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<sup>42</sup> *Colonist*, "Married", October 28, 1869, 3.

<sup>43</sup> *Colonist*, "Angela College/Victoria VI", July 31, 1869, 2.

<sup>44</sup> *Colonist*, "Angela College", January 7, 1870, 2.

<sup>45</sup> Green, *Above Stairs*, 60.

staff and students, maintain order in the school, receive visitors, and manage the accounts in addition to teaching. He sensed there was a problem with the retention of teachers as two sisters of a young clergyman had come from England to teach but had promptly got married instead.<sup>46</sup> These could have been the Gribbell sisters. Bishop Hills and Miss Crease finally agreed on a contract with the provision that if after two years she found she was unable to live on her salary and profits from the boarders, he would pay her passage home to England.<sup>47</sup> As the Bishop was in England early in 1870, he corresponded frequently with his new lady principal. He advised her that taking a boat to Panama, and crossing the isthmus was preferable to taking the railway across the United States. First he suggested sailing from Southampton but then settled on the route from Liverpool to New York City on the Cunard Line, a steamer to Panama, and another up the Pacific coast via San Francisco. He named the hotels in New York and San Francisco where she was to stay. When instructing her to hire a servant to accompany her and do the housework at the college, he specified that this person was to be older, not too attractive, and unlikely to get married. Miss Crease was to offer no more than £35 for the first year with the possibility of rising to £45 on the second year of a two year contract.<sup>48</sup> He forwarded two tickets for their passages and £25 for expenses on the journey.<sup>49</sup> His deciding every detail of her journey was probably more indicative of his supervisory style in his diocese than

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<sup>46</sup> Sarah Crease to Emily Howard Crease, August 10, 1869, Crease Family Collection, Box 91, File 9, BCA.

<sup>47</sup> Bishop George Hills to Emily H. Crease, January 31, 1870, Crease Family Collection, Box 91, File 20, BCA.

<sup>48</sup> This was probably considerably less than the going rate for servants in Victoria; otherwise the Bishop would not have paid for her passage.

<sup>49</sup> Hills to Crease, London, February 2, 1870, February 5, 1870, February 10, 1870, Crease Family Collection, Box 91, File 20, BCA.

particular concern for her well-being. Nevertheless, she arrived in Victoria and assumed her position by May 1870.

Miss Crease and the school operated uneventfully through the end of the initial two year contract and into December 1872. On Christmas Eve the Bishop informed the Lady Principal that he was reducing payments to Angela College. She would receive all fees and with this money she was to pay the teachers, herself, other staff, and all the expenses except for large repairs. If fees were not sufficient she was to pay less or reduce the staff. If there was a surplus, she was to refund it to the Bishop. In return, he undertook to pay the ground rent of \$250, insurance, and major repairs. He entertained the rather unrealistic thought that parents would be more interested in paying if they knew that the teachers were dependent on fees. The Collegiate School for Boys operated on this plan under Rev. Gribbell, but it had higher enrolment due to his efforts and occupied rented premises. It was not saddled with an imposing edifice to maintain.<sup>50</sup> Miss Crease replied that she had consented to the position on guidance from friends and family and so was not prepared to accept any changes contrary to their advice.<sup>51</sup> By July 1873 the Bishop was getting desperate over his financial problems. He wrote to her again, stating that Church Funds could no longer afford any outlay for Angela College (including the annual rent) except for substantial repairs and insurance. He asked her if she would undertake the school on these new terms. Fifteen more girls, he calculated, would make up the deficiency. The alternatives were to join with another school or close. He informed her that if they could

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<sup>50</sup> GH to EHC, December 24, 1872, Crease Family Collection, Box 91, File 20, BCA.

<sup>51</sup> EHC to GH, December 26, 1872, Crease Family Collection, Box 91, File 20, BCA.

not reach an agreement, this was her notice and the school would close on October 1<sup>st</sup>.<sup>52</sup> As the school and Emily Crease continued until December 1874, they must have reached some working agreement. She, at least, had some staying power, lasting from 1870 until 1874.

With the appointment of Miss Crease, life had settled down at the school after the turmoil following Miss Pemberton's retirement until the financial and theological woes of the Church worsened. The on-going dispute between Dean Cridge and Bishop Hills finally erupted in 1874. The Dean had been part of the life of the colony since early Hudson's Bay Company days and understood and accommodated the fairly casual religious views and practices of his flock. George Hills, on the other hand, was very conscious of being an English bishop, and expected the full high church, cathedral ritual which he believed accompanied his position. When Dean Cridge publicly doubted the divine right of bishops and the issue proceeded to trial in September of 1874, schism was inevitable.<sup>53</sup> In October, Rev. Cridge established the Church of Our Lord under the auspices of the Reformed Episcopal Church, and took nine-tenths of the congregation, including many of the old, established families and most of the teachers of Angela College, with him.<sup>54</sup> In December Bishop Hills served notice on Miss Crease that she must demand that all Angela College teachers, except for the French teacher, either withdraw from all connection with the Reformed Episcopal Church or she must discharge

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<sup>52</sup> GH to EHC, July 14, 1873, Crease Family Collection, Box 91, File 20, BCA.

<sup>53</sup> *Colonist*, "Trial", September 12, 1874, 3.

<sup>54</sup> *Colonist*, October 29, 1874, 3, and October 30, 1874, 3. Names of prominent families included Langley, Macdonald, Pemberton, Williams, Pearse, Finlayson, Elliott, Devereux, Helmcken, Courtney, Chambers, Douglas, Short, Cowper, Hayward, Siffken, Engelhardt, Mason, De Weiderhold, Wilson, Johnston, Thorne, Lester, Higgins, Newbury. *Colonist*, *Formation of a Reformed Episcopal Church*, October 30, 1874.

them. Furthermore, names of any replacement teachers were to be submitted to him for approval.<sup>55</sup> This was yet another example of his heavy-handed supervision of those working under him. When the teachers all resigned,<sup>56</sup> people were outraged at the Bishop. As a citizen pointed out in a letter to the editor, attending the Bishop's church had never been a condition of employment and in the past teachers of other denominations had been hired with no regard to their religious opinions.<sup>57</sup> Enrolment declined sharply as parents moved their daughters to other schools including the new Reformed Episcopal school established by Rev. and Mrs. Cridge. Miss Crease remained in Victoria for a time occupying herself with church work, travel, and an active social life until she moved to Lytton in 1877 to teach at the Indian mission school. She died there in the evening of February 7, 1900 after being hit by a train.<sup>58</sup>

The teaching staff proved to be only slightly more stable than the principalship. The Misses Penrice<sup>59</sup> taught at the school during the time of the first three heads, supplemented by Rev. Reece in his wife's tour of duty. In 1868 the First Victoria Directory listed Miss Pemberton as Principal with Mrs. Haywood and Mrs. C.N. Young as Assistants.<sup>60</sup> Mrs. Nicholls and Miss Pitts taught Music, Miss Thain Fancywork and

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<sup>55</sup> GH to EHC, December 22, 1874, Crease Family Collection, Box 91, File 20, BCA.

<sup>56</sup> *Colonist*, "The Lady Teachers at Angela College receive a Christmas Box from the Bishop of Columbia", December 30, 1874.

<sup>57</sup> *Colonist*, "Letter to the Editor from A Citizen", January 10, 1875, 3.

<sup>58</sup> *Colonist*, "Sudden Death", February 9, 1900.

<sup>59</sup> Very little can be ascertained about Ann and Catherine Penrice in addition to their teaching at Angela College except that they contributed to the Female Aid Association up to July 1865, *Colonist*, July 12, 1865, 4. They came to Victoria from England under "special patronage" of Miss Burdett-Coutts. H.P.K. Skipton, *A Life of George Hills: First Bishop of British Columbia*, ed. Rev. Sel Caradus (Victoria: Christ Church Cathedral, 2009), 109. Nothing seemed to be known about their family.

<sup>60</sup> The two assistants were career teachers. Mrs. Hayward upon leaving Angela College attempted to establish her own school in 1870, *Colonist*, May 4, 1870, 2 and onwards. She was Principal of the Girls' Department at the Victoria Public School in 1872, *Colonist*, July 24, 1872, 3. In 1880 she was involved in

Mr. H.O. Tiedman German and Drawing.<sup>61</sup> By the end of July 1869 the Angela College advertisement listed Mrs. Cave with Mrs. Hayward as First Assistant but Mrs. Lethbridge as Second Assistant and Miss Fry as Junior Assistant.<sup>62</sup> Miss Pitts and Mrs. Nicholls continued to teach Music and Singing but were joined by Miss McDonald, Madame Blum taught French, and Mr. Coleman, Drawing. Dean Cridge and the Rev. P. Jenns shared Religious Instruction but Rev Jenns alone taught Natural Science, no doubt in a Church-approved manner.<sup>63</sup> The larger number of teaching staff would be a result of Miss Pemberton's efforts in increasing enrolment. There was a problem with retention by the time Miss Crease was hired, as mentioned earlier, and no teachers after Bishop Hills' decree in December, 1874.

During the following year the Cridges opened two Reformed Episcopal Schools in direct competition with the Collegiate School and Angela College. Early in 1875 Rev Cridge advertised for parents interested in a grammar school education for their sons. The school began in rented premises at the Central School<sup>64</sup> with himself as master until sufficient enrolment permitted the employment of another teacher.<sup>65</sup> By the fall term in 1878, Mr. J.F. Smith was master of the school now located on Humboldt Street,

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controversy over the teachers' examination, *Colonist*, "Letters to the Editor", May 29, 1880, 2. Mrs. C.N. Young was the wife of a Vice-Principal of the Collegiate School, *Colonist*, "Collegiate School", August 26, 1869. She was teaching at the Nanaimo Public School in 1875, *Colonist*, "Nanaimo", July 8, 1875, 3.

<sup>61</sup> *First Victoria Directory – 1868*, <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com>.

<sup>62</sup> Miss Fry was probably the eldest daughter of a prosperous Cowichan farming family. She was a frequent passenger on the steamers serving the east coast of Vancouver Island. *Colonist*, March 27, 1874, 3 and numerous other dates.

<sup>63</sup> *Colonist*, "Angela College", July 31, 1869, 2.

<sup>64</sup> John Jessop built Central School as one of his early endeavors. It was closed at this time due to lack of public funding.

<sup>65</sup> *Colonist*, "Grammar School", March 3, 1875, 4.

indicating some success.<sup>66</sup> But, by school closing in June 1883 fortunes had reversed. Schoolmaster Rt. Rev. John B. Chantrell announced his departure for health reasons, and expressed hope that the school would reopen for the fall term despite the small number of students.<sup>67</sup> The closure seemed to be permanent. Mrs. Cridge's school received the greater part of the founders' attention and even though it only survived for slightly longer was certainly more successful. The girls' school, with a class for boys under eight, opened in a house at the corner of Kane (Broughton) and Quadra Streets with 14 girls but numbers rose quickly.<sup>68</sup> By the end of term in December 1876, the combined total of the two Reformed Episcopal Schools had reached 60 with the majority being in the girls' school.<sup>69</sup> Although many of the old Hudson's Bay Company families left Christ Church Cathedral with the Rt. Rev. Cridge, their children were mostly beyond school age by 1875. The children who attended Mrs. Cridge's school were the daughters, and some young sons, of professionals and successful tradesmen. The only one of prize recipients in 1876 still connected to the old trade was Leopold Boscowitz whose father was listed in the directory as a fur trader, but probably not an 'old company man'.<sup>70</sup> The Cridges may have earned much respect for their tolerance judging by the variety of students attending the school at the end of 1876.<sup>71</sup> It is also possible that financial reasons encouraged them

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<sup>66</sup> *Colonist*, "Grammar School", August 8, 1878, 1.

<sup>67</sup> *Colonist*, "Grammar School", June 29, 1883, 3.

<sup>68</sup> *Colonist*, "Classes for Young Ladies", March 3, 1875, 4.

<sup>69</sup> *Colonist*, "Reformed Episcopal Schools", December 14, 1876, 3.

<sup>70</sup> Leo Boscowitz's father dealt in furs and pelts and later invested heavily in the sealing trade.

<sup>71</sup> From the Censuses of 1871 and 1881 and the Victoria Directory of 1882 the most socially prominent of the students were the Hon. Senator William John Macdonald's daughters. The Higgins girls were the daughters of the editor and proprietor of *The Colonist*. The mothers of Anita Thain, May Ella, and Isabella Oppenheimer were widows by 1881 but had sufficient means to keep their daughters in school. Fathers ranged from a cabinet maker, house builder, accountant, engineer, stationer and bookseller, general manager, to a stableman. It is notable that not all the parents were members of the Reformed Episcopal Church. The Oppenheimer family was Jewish, the Bowkers were avowed Free Thinkers, the Sargisons were

to seek applicants beyond their own church. As the Reformed Episcopal Church had no endowment or assistance from England, it relied upon the exertions and generosity of the congregation for its revenue including the Bishop's salary.<sup>72</sup> As the school continued to grow Mrs. Cridge was able to hire 'competent teachers' by the fall of 1877 to work under supervision of herself and her husband. Two years later she was advertising for boarders with accommodation provided by a lady living on Kane Street.<sup>73</sup> Then, in 1883, she moved the school to Marifield Cottage, next to her own residence in James Bay, and seemed to quietly close it down.<sup>74</sup> She busied herself with church works including the Protestant Orphan's Home (much later to become the Cridge Centre for the Family).

In the early years the students at Angela College were daughters of prominent early settlers, the 'establishment' of Victoria. Some of these girls had careers in their adult lives but most married and became untraceable as their names changed. Emma and Mary J. Holloway became teachers and thus potentially self-supporting. A few followed artistic interests perhaps begun when at school. Martha Douglas Harris (1854-1933), the youngest of James Douglas' daughters, continued her education at Landsdowne House in England where she studied drawing, elocution, French, composition, and music, very similar to the curriculum at Angela College. After returning to Victoria she painted portraits and still life, collaborated with her niece, Edith Helmcken, on a children's book, and published *History and Folklore of the Cowichan Indians* in 1901. She was also active in the Island Arts and Crafts Society promoting the use of local wool for spinning and

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Methodist. In the Barron, Wallace, and McTavish families the father was Presbyterian and the mother Anglican.

<sup>72</sup> *Colonist*, "Formation of a Reformed Episcopal Church", October 10, 1874, 3

<sup>73</sup> *Colonist*, "Kane Street Ladies School", July 13, 1879, 1.

<sup>74</sup> *Colonist*, "Mrs. Cridge's Classes", June 19, 1883, 2.

weaving.<sup>75</sup> Although these interests gave her a fulfilling life, they would have done little to contribute to the comfortable family income. Josephine (1864-1947) and Susan Crease studied art at the Ladies' Department, King's College, London. Josephine was a founding member of the Island Arts and Crafts Society and exhibited her watercolours in their annual shows from 1919-1941. As she did not marry she continued to live at home with her parents, Sir Henry and Lady Crease, at 23 Cadboro Bay Road as befit the times for an unmarried daughter.<sup>76</sup> Kathleen O'Reilly (1867-1945) also continued her education in England, in her case at Lady Murry's School in Kensington, London. She, too, never married but devoted her life to drawing, painting, embroidery, social and church activities, and caring for her widowed father, Judge Peter O'Reilly, and their family home, Point Ellice House.<sup>77</sup> The parents of these girls were sufficiently prominent and wealthy that the daughters rarely needed to support themselves. James Douglas came as Chief Factor of the HBC and later became the second governor of the colony. Josephine Crease's father arrived in Victoria in 1858 and soon made his mark as Victoria's first barrister and later as Attorney-General of British Columbia. After appointment to the Legislative Council only five years after his arrival in Victoria in 1859, and later retiring as a County Court Judge in 1881, Kathleen O'Reilly's father went on to become an Indian Reserve Commissioner. These girls' achievements were recorded probably due to their fathers' positions. Their education at Angela College prepared them for the social lifestyles which their parents expected and were prepared to support but for little else.

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<sup>75</sup> Green, *Above Stairs*, 21-32, 58-79.

<sup>76</sup> The Crease sisters were nieces of Emily Howard Crease. Fort Street became Cadboro Bay Road just east of Cook Street at Linden Avenue until about 1910, thus the Crease home at Pentrelew was registered as 23 Cadboro Bay Road. When Fort Street became the name of the road all the way to the Victoria/Oak Bay boundary at Foul Bay Road, the address of the property became 1201 Fort Street.

<sup>77</sup> Canadian Women Artists History Initiative, <http://cwahi.concordia.ca>, 01/05/2008.

Meanwhile, after the opening of the Cridges' schools, Angela College was silent until late June 1877. There were no advertisements recruiting new students. No reference to the establishment appeared in official church records, even though much discussion must have taken place privately. Absence of teachers and low enrolment probably forced the school to close for at least part of this time. It reopened at some point prior to June 1877. At the end of term Archdeacon Wright examined the pupils and proceeded to eulogize the new Lady Principal, Miss Percival, as "a person of high character and great accomplishments". Archdeacon Wright's daughter was the assistant teacher at the school, but as no one else was mentioned she was probably the only other teacher. Attendees at the prize-giving included such notables as Mrs. Albert Richards, wife of the new Lieutenant-Governor; Mrs. William Charles, wife of the Chief Factor of the Hudson's Bay Company; Mrs. Henry Crease and her daughter; Miss E. Crease, the former principal; Mrs. Robert Beaven, wife of the Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works; as well as Mrs. Geratal Jenns, wife of an office clerk; Mrs. Morgan; Mrs. Musgrave ; Mrs. Gribbell and Mrs. Mogg, both clergy wives.<sup>78</sup> Although many of the women had daughters of a suitable age, it is unclear whether or not they attended Angela College. Some women may have been invited to lend prestige to the occasion or to attract their daughters as future students.

The college was able to reopen on August 9, 1877 for the fall term. A short advertisement in the *Colonist* named Miss Percival and Miss Wright in their positions assisted by Mrs. C. Ward as matron and assistant teacher. As the Lord Bishop of

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<sup>78</sup> *Colonist*, "Angela College", June 28, 1877, 3.

Columbia is listed as the Visitor, Angela College was still at least nominally an Anglican Church school.<sup>79</sup> Once again having a matron showed the intent if not the reality of having boarders, but as Mrs. Ward was also a teacher, there could not have been many girls in residence. There must have been a severe shortage of pupils as the same modest announcement appeared daily from mid -July until the end of September, almost two months after the term had begun. No further advertisements for the school bore Miss Percival's name. Over the next three years she was among the guests at two naval balls along with the Wright family<sup>80</sup> and appeared frequently as a passenger on the mail steamers to the mainland, usually in the company of some of the Wright family. She does not appear to have continued with a career in teaching. Mrs. C. Ward probably had no experience as a teacher but she was certainly versatile as she later established herself in a millinery and dressmaking business on Douglas Street (between Pandora and Cormorant Streets).<sup>81</sup>

Events following the long-running advertisement of 1877 cannot be ascertained. The school may have continued with a teacher, perhaps even Miss Percival, and a few students or closed at some point in late 1877. The Church may have quietly sought a tenant for the premises, but no advertisement appeared in the *Colonist*. By July 1878 church officials must have acknowledged that there were serious problems with the school as a note appeared in the Visitations book that Mr. "Cridge said he had approved

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<sup>79</sup> *Colonist*, "Angela College", July 22, 1877, 2.

<sup>80</sup> *Colonist*, "Ball at the Dockyard", October 6, 1877, 3, and "The Ball to the Fleet", July 16, 1880, 3.

<sup>81</sup> *Colonist*, "Mrs. C. Ward", January 31, 1879, 2.

of the reduction of rent of Angela College as a just measure”.<sup>82</sup> (It is unlikely that Mr. Cridge was in any way directly connected to the now Bishop E. Cridge of the Reformed Episcopal Church.)<sup>83</sup> As ‘rent’ was involved, the governance of the college must now have been somewhat at arm’s length from synod and church committees and the principal not salaried by the Church.

Early in the following year yet another clergy wife was persuaded or enticed to take on the school. Ellen Mary Mason, wife of the Rev. George Mason, announced that Easter Term would commence at the college on Monday, January 20<sup>th</sup>, 1879 with herself as Lady Principal “aided by a large staff of competent assistants”.<sup>84</sup> As the advertisement for the opening on the 20<sup>th</sup> was first placed in the newspaper on the 19<sup>th</sup>, her decision to assume this position seemed to have been made hastily. The previous summer parishioners in Nanaimo had presented her with a purse of \$250 in gratitude for her care of the sick and needy while her husband was rector of St. Paul’s in that city.<sup>85</sup> The family returned to Victoria because Rev. Mason was appointed Dean of Christ Church Cathedral. Mrs. Mason did have some previous contact with education which would have made her a ‘suitable’ candidate for the position, especially as the Bishop probably did not have too many choices. Her husband had been the principal of the Collegiate School in the early 1870s, which would no doubt have given her vicarious experience, and she may even have been called upon to teach. Between the Collegiate School and going to Nanaimo,

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<sup>82</sup> ADBC, Bishop Hills Collection, Text 57, Bishop Hills Visitations 1867-1892, Box 7, 49, Christ Church Victoria – July 28, 1878.

<sup>83</sup> Two possibilities are J.C. Cridge who was an importer and general merchant and Richard Cridge, a land surveyor.

<sup>84</sup> *Colonist*, “Angela College”, January 19, 1879, 2.

<sup>85</sup> *Colonist*, “Nanaimo”, July 4, 1878, 3.

Rev. and Mrs. Mason opened a select school in Victoria.<sup>86</sup> This school seemed to be short-lived, but its demise was probably more due to the move than to incompetence.

Mrs. Mason was able to breathe a little life back into Church of England girls' education (as opposed to the Cridges' flourishing school) and hired more teachers. Miss Dupont taught Physical Geography for at least the Midsummer Term of 1879, as her pupils were complimented for their achievement on the midsummer examination. Enrolment rose to 46.<sup>87</sup> By this term, Mrs. Mason not only had students in the Angela College building but also opened St. Mary's School in a leased house on Vancouver Street (near Humboldt) for the daughters of families with lesser means. Fees for the Senior Class were \$2 a month, for the Intermediate \$1.50 and for the Junior \$1. French, Drawing, and Music were extra charges. The same teachers were to staff both schools,<sup>88</sup> which must have necessitated a gallop up and down the hill between classes. Operating two distinct buildings, albeit with the same teachers, reflected the societal and Church views of the time. As Angela College had accommodated 90 girls under Miss Pemberton and now had only half that number, both schools could have operated at much less expense, and considerably more convenience, in the same location. Such a mix of social classes on school grounds, though, would not have been proper. Similarly, St. Ann's kept its select academy and its school for 'coloureds' and those of lesser means in separate locations as did Miss Buss with her North London Collegiate and Camden School. The intent in each case was to increase income by extending enrolment to a wider economic range of families.

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<sup>86</sup> *Colonist*, "Select School", November 6, 1874, 3.

<sup>87</sup> *Colonist*, "Angela College Midsummer Examination", July 23, 1879, 3.

<sup>88</sup> *Colonist*, "St. Mary's School", April 8, 1879, 4.

Both schools opened in September under Mrs. Mason's direction. St. Mary's was quite successful as thirty students attended the New Year's Eve party which Dean and Mrs. Mason hosted for them at Angela College.<sup>89</sup> By January 1880 she advertised that Angela College had vacancies for a few more boarders under the care of a Resident Governess, Miss Dupont.<sup>90</sup> The Principal placed large advertisements in the *Colonist* for the Midsummer Term, stating that "courses of lectures are given on various subjects by Eminent Professors". Who these teachers were is not mentioned but Mr. Durny was in charge of the Musical Department, assisted by Miss Wilson. Mrs. Henderson and Miss McKay taught French. Boarders were under the care of a Resident Governess.<sup>91</sup> It is unknown whether Miss Dupont filled this position as no name was provided in the April announcement. Mrs. Mason continued to recruit pupils with the same advertisement until the end of July 1880, showing the intention of continuing the two schools in the fall term.

Abruptly, with no published explanation, and no farewell, Mrs. Mason disappeared from public view. She may have disagreed with the bishop, or simply had had enough of trying to build up the schools in addition to her other numerous clergy-wife duties. Her husband was suffering from failing eyesight but continued to serve as Archdeacon of Vancouver Island until he returned to England with his family for treatment in the following summer, so her departure would seem unconnected to his position. The change in school leadership was made public when Miss Dupont simply announced in the *Colonist* that on September 27, 1880 that she was moving her "Miss Dupont's Young

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<sup>89</sup> *Colonist*, "The pupils of St. Mary's School", January 3, 1880, 3.

<sup>90</sup> *Colonist*, "Angela College", January 4, 1880, 2. It is not known if Miss Dupont was the resident governess.

<sup>91</sup> *Colonist*, "Angela College", April 4, 1880, 2.

Ladies Select School” to the Angela College premises and would continue operating the establishment there.<sup>92</sup> She had decided to open her own school by June of 1880 as she began advertising for boarders and day students for a school for young ladies to commence on August 18<sup>th</sup>.<sup>93</sup> The initial location of the school was unspecified, but would probably have been in a rented house. In her advertising, she listed Wykeham Hall and Dufferin House, Toronto as her educational credentials<sup>94</sup> but gave no mention of teaching at Angela College.

Angela College, as Miss Dupont renamed her school, continued under her leadership for twelve years. Small advertisements announced the re-opening each term. The break-up for summer holidays in 1882 was marked in the grand tradition of the past, complete with white dresses with silk sashes. Miss Dupont invited the Lieutenant-Governor and Mrs. Cornwall, Bishop and Mrs. Hills, and Bishop Paddock of Washington Territory whose attendance lent dignity to the occasion.<sup>95</sup> Bishop Hills distributed the prizes, which suggested a close connection to the Anglican Church even though the Select School would have been a private venture school. The Church also used the school building for charitable causes, such as a sale of useful clothing and fancywork by the

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<sup>92</sup> *Colonist*, “Miss Dupont’s”, October 3, 1880.

<sup>93</sup> *Colonist*, “Young Ladies Select School”, June 17, 1880, 4.

<sup>94</sup> Bishop Strachan School’s purchase of Wykeham Hall on College Street, Toronto in 1869 may have encouraged Miss Frances Dupont’s move to Dufferin House. At age thirty, she became Lady Principal of Dufferin House School in 1869 and continued in the position until 1872. She was assisted by Miss Amy Dupont and a staff of 11. The school had the reputation of offering a “thorough English education” of French, German, Italian, Music and Drawing – of the young ladies college tradition rather than of the reformed school model. The Duponts are probably relations of the Charles T. Dupont family and his sister, Miss Clara Dupont, who sailed from San Francisco on the steamer *Prince Alfred* on July 5, 1873 bound for Victoria. *Colonist*, “California”, July 6, 1873, 3. Miss Dupont first appeared in social circles in Victoria in late 1873.

<sup>95</sup> Bishop Paddock told the audience that Miss Dupont had been a member of his parish in the east when she was a young girl. *Colonist*, “Breaking Up Day at Angela College”, June 30<sup>th</sup>, 1882, 3.

Bishop's Close Ladies Working Party.<sup>96</sup> Relations appeared amiable between Church and school. Miss Dupont was the longest lasting of the lady principals at Angela College and brought stability, if not the same enrollment as in Miss Pemberton's time, to the institution.

Miss Dupont, unlike many of the other principals, must have run the school as a successful business venture. She lived at the school during her years as principal and then was able to purchase a house and two additional lots on Scoresby Street (now McClure Street between Vancouver and Cook Streets), where she was living in 1901. Whether she had remained full-time in Victoria after her arrival with her brother and his wife in July 1873 is not known, but she appeared in the social columns of the *Colonist* in 1873, 1876, 1877, and 1878 before she was noted at Angela College. Over her years in Victoria she attended all the military and civil affairs of note, usually with her brother and his wife. Charles T. Dupont was initially posted to British Columbia as a Dominion Government Inspector for Internal Revenue. In addition to his government positions he became active in the local community; he rose to the rank of major in the Provincial Rifle Association (militia) and routinely used his title, belonged to the French Benefit and Mutual Society (both he and his sister were born in Quebec), the Esquimalt Regatta Committee, Victoria Battery Garrison Artillery, the Anglican Church Synod, and numerous other causes. He mingled freely with the city's 'high society' and so, by association, did his sister. She had the means to attend to attend the balls, receptions, garden parties, entertainments, and weddings, often mentioned for her handsome clothes and gifts. In 1889 she and Mrs.

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<sup>96</sup> *Colonist*, July 27, 1882, 2.

Dupont enjoyed a seven month trip to Europe.<sup>97</sup> After her retirement from Angela College she supported community causes including the YWCA, the Jubilee Hospital, the Aged Women's Home, L'Alliance Française, and served as president of the Women's Auxiliary to the Missionary Society of the Anglican Church.<sup>98</sup> She was able to retire at the age of 48 and appeared to live in comfortable circumstances until her death at 79 on January 20, 1923.

Miss Dupont's retirement on the 1<sup>st</sup> of August, 1892 was anticipated as it was announced the previous month. The *Colonist* complimented her for bringing the institution up to its present reputation. Her successor was to be the "thoroughly competent" Mrs. J. Wastie Green.<sup>99</sup> This woman was yet another clergy wife. Her husband, the Rev. J. Wastie Green, was warden of Victoria College for boys. In the spring of 1891 she had opened a school for boys under ten and a limited number of girls in connection with the boys' school.<sup>100</sup> In July 1892 in advertising Angela College she announced the addition of lectures on practical subjects to the curriculum. These classes giving "special attention . . . to table and home comforts" were open to girls who did not "belong to the college".<sup>101</sup> Mrs. Green would be available at the school daily from August 1<sup>st</sup> with school scheduled to open on August 29th. It appeared that Mrs. Green had full intention of increasing enrolment and income.

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<sup>97</sup> *Colonist*, March 31, 1889, 4 and November 14, 1889, 4.

<sup>98</sup> *Colonist*, December 12, 1904, 5.

<sup>99</sup> *Colonist*, July 8, 1892, 5.

<sup>100</sup> *Colonist*, April 7, 1891, 2.

<sup>101</sup> *Colonist*, "Angela College", July 8, 1892, 1 to August 6, 1892, 4.

A week after the last advertisement went to print, a new one announced Mrs. Langford Brooke Lipscomb as principal with the term commencing on September 14<sup>th</sup>. The prospectus could be obtained from the leading bookstores in the city. The only continuity seemed to be Bishop Hills remaining as patron.<sup>102</sup> After the years of Miss Dupont's stability this sudden change must have seemed disconcerting to parents. Another advertisement a week later listed the teaching staff. Rev. E.F. Lipscomb would be in charge of divinity, Mrs. Lipscomb for French, drawing, watercolour painting, Miss Lipscomb for French, English, callisthenics, Miss Fielding for German and music, Miss Legge for mathematics and needlework, and Miss Woods for flower painting. A highly educated lady from England was expected to arrive shortly to join the staff.<sup>103</sup> A large advertisement at the end of the month provided more information. The school year would be divided into four terms of ten weeks each. Fees would range from \$8 per term for the Elementary Class to \$12.50 per term for the Senior Class. Latin, Italian, and German were offered at \$6 each per term, French at \$5. Music, instrumental and vocal, ranged from \$10 to \$12 per term, painting in oils was \$11, in watercolours \$10, flower painting \$6, and dancing \$6. Prof. Strauss was hired to teach advanced piano, Mrs. Temple, vocal music, and Prof. Loemans, painting in oils.<sup>104</sup> There was no further mention of the English lady.

Whether Mrs. Lipscomb had any qualifications for conducting a school beyond being a clergy wife is unknown. The Lipscomb family appeared in Church circles in Victoria in 1891 seemingly from missionary work in Asia. The Rev. Lipscomb in addition to various other duties was superintendent of the Church of England Chinese Mission in

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<sup>102</sup> *Colonist*, August 13, 1892, 2.

<sup>103</sup> *Colonist*, "Angela College", August 21, 1892, 1.

<sup>104</sup> *Colonist*, "Angela College", August 31, 1892, 3.

Victoria. Mrs. Lipscomb assumed an active part in the mission, teaching English and Christianity each evening, and took charge in the absence of her husband.<sup>105</sup> At the same time she was trying to make a success of Angela College, at least financially if not academically. Enrolment was a problem as by January 1893 she was advertising “Pupils received at any time”,<sup>106</sup> a sure sign of desperation for any private school. Financial problems will be discussed below.

The curriculum suggested by the lists of teachers in the advertisements of 1892 was very little different from that of 1862. There was no evidence of rigorous academic subjects, just the modern languages, art, and music of the traditional accomplishments. Mathematics of some description was offered, but the combination of one person teaching mathematics and needlework was unusual and not really indicative of advanced classes. This programme of studies would have appealed to fewer and fewer of the parents who had been in Victoria since the colonial era and to none of the new immigrants. In contrast, Victoria High School offered tuition-free preparation for the matriculation examinations in a wide variety of subjects. Other private schools offered scholarly programmes appealing to parents who desired smaller classes and a more genteel atmosphere than the public school offered for their children. For example, Rev. and Mrs. Greer opened a school in January 1893 at 10 Caledonia Avenue which specialized in English and mathematics and prepared candidates for all Civil Service Examinations as well as matriculation leading “to English and Colonial Universities for Divinity, Medicine, and

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<sup>105</sup> *Colonist*, December 21, 1892, 5.

<sup>106</sup> *Colonist*, January 13, 1893, 2.

Law".<sup>107</sup> The Greers were anticipating male applicants but theirs was the type of education now available in Victoria and promised parents a level of security for their children's futures. St. Ann's offered a commercial programme for girls who were expected to earn their own livings. The accomplishments could no longer compete. Poor Mrs. Lipscomb, lacking the charisma, reputation, and social contacts of Miss Dupont, facing the demands placed upon her by her husband's mission work and her several children, having difficulty in recruiting and retaining pupils, sank into financial distress. Even when relieved of rent payments for the buildings, she could not meet expenses and closed her school in July 1893.

With unusual speed the Church secured Miss Kitto as the next tenant. She along with her mother and her sisters needed more space for their successful Victoria College for Girls at 69 Belcher Street (now part of Rockland Avenue). Trained at Cheltenham Ladies College, she was much better qualified and had considerably more savvy than her predecessors at Angela College. She insisted on essential repairs and improvements, including sanitary arrangements, being made to the buildings before she assumed occupancy. The school was largely a family enterprise with the two younger sisters (also trained in England) as part of the teaching staff, her mother in charge of the boarders, and her father helping out in various capacities.<sup>108</sup>

The whole family put considerable effort into the school. In January 1894 thirty pupils performed *A Midsummer Night's Dream* before an audience of over 300 at a Diocesan Literary and Scientific Society meeting. Enrolment must have risen to at least

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<sup>107</sup> *Colonist*, January 14, 1893, 2.

<sup>108</sup> *Colonist*, "Angela College", December 31, 1893, 7.

thirty by the end of the first term to have that number on stage.<sup>109</sup> These girls came from middle and upper middle class families. Kitty Davie's father, John, was a medical doctor; Fanny and Kate Devereux's father, also John, was listed as a superintendent; Bluebell Kitto was one of the family. Norah Drummond from a farming family in North Cowichan and Lida King were boarders in Victoria. Winnie and Katie Worlock were daughters of Frederick King, the bank manager. Milly Wilson was the daughter of William Wilson of the clothier family; Gertrude Rithet was the daughter of Robert Rithet, a prominent businessman in Victoria with interests in San Francisco and Hawaii;<sup>110</sup> Una Nicholles' father John was a hardware dealer. Gabriell Aspland's father was a farmer in the James Bay district of Victoria. The Davie, Devereux, Drummond, Wilson, Rithet, and Nicholles girls were born in British Columbia. Norah Drummond's parents were Presbyterians with her father born in Scotland and mother in British Columbia, Gertie Rithet was also Presbyterian, but with father born in Scotland and mother born in England of Scottish ancestry. The others had fathers born in England, but Kitty Davie, and Una Nicholles had mothers born in the United States and the Devereux' in the West Indies but all belonged to the Church of England. The Johnsons were Lutherans from Iceland. The Kitto, Worlock, and Aspland girls were born in England of English Anglican parents.<sup>111</sup> These families were relative newcomers to the province who had immigrated probably with some capital to invest, no longer the 'old guard' of the HBC and early entrepreneurs of

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<sup>109</sup> *Colonist*, "Midsummer Night's Dream", January 6, 1894, 6.

<sup>110</sup> Gertrude Rithet married Lawrence Arthur Genge, who was employed by her father's company, in one of the most fashionable events of the 1904 social season. *Colonist*, July 17, 1904, 2. She was active in tennis and social circles in Victoria and her husband obviously prospered as in 1908 they built a house on Vancouver St. with construction costs of \$8000, the most expensive in Victoria from Jan., 1<sup>st</sup> to Nov. 30<sup>th</sup> of that year. *Colonist*, December 13, 1908, 127.

<sup>111</sup> <http://vihistory.uvic.ca/search/searchcensus.php?form=basic&show=y&year=1891>

Miss Pemberton's day. Most were better educated than the earlier settlers. Although fees were never high, they all had sufficient means to make the choice to send their daughters to a private school rather than sending them to the free public ones. The Kitto sisters had much superior training in teaching than virtually all the female teachers in Victoria, in public or private schools,<sup>112</sup> a factor which would have influenced some of the parents to choose their school over others, private or public, for their daughters rather than been influenced solely by the prestige of a private school education. Most had left England after the reforms in girls' education were firmly in place and thus had greater expectations of academic schooling than earlier immigrants.

The school continued with this clientele at Angela College until the closing ceremonies in July, 1894. This event consisted of music, recitations, and a fancy drill by the girls followed by the presentation of prizes by the Bishop. Awards were given for Scripture and Church History, Geography, General History, English History, Botany, Arithmetic, Grammar, Writing and Dictation, French, Drawing, Music, Fencing, and Conduct. The winners included the Earles, Livingstons, Tingleys, Johns, and Fells in addition to the girls taking part in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.<sup>113</sup> With an eye to parental satisfaction, most if not all of the girls were awarded a prize for something. Miss Kitto fulfilled her lease with that closing ceremony but chose not to renew for another term. Instead, the Misses Kitto announced that they were returning to their former

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<sup>112</sup> Certificates for public school teaching were still based on the results of a knowledge exam at this time. Private schools were entrepreneurial enterprises with essentially no governmental regulation or supervision – see previous chapter.

<sup>113</sup> Thomas Earle and James Fell were grocers, the Tingleys and Johns were farmers, perhaps enrolling their daughters as boarders. They, with the families above give an indication of the range of family backgrounds of the students twenty-five years after Miss Pemberton's retirement..

premises on Belcher Street and re-opening for the fall term as Clovelly College.<sup>114</sup> Theirs was one of the more successful tenancies of the Angela College buildings and name, as their school had a reasonable number of students, finished in style, and continued to exist after departure from the college property.

By January 1895 Synod was seeking a new tenant. An advertisement offered “well-known buildings standing in spacious grounds, fronting on Burdette [sic] Avenue and McClure Street. Two story brick house, 15 rooms. Large detached frame hall 45x27 with classrooms. Terms moderate”.<sup>115</sup> With the repairs undertaken to satisfy Miss Kitto, the building must have been in somewhat better condition than in Mrs. Lipscomb’s time. Miss Julie Devereux thought it sufficiently enticing to move her existing *English Academy* into the building and add elementary and junior departments.<sup>116</sup> She concluded the first term with a lavish “At Home” for pupils, parents, and friends. The young people performed a grand march in the drawing room in fancy dress before dancing and a late supper. The gardens were brightened with Chinese lanterns for the evening occasion. Almost two hundred guests attended.<sup>117</sup> Despite being considerably older than most headmistresses at the time,<sup>118</sup> Miss Devereux put her energies into pleasing parents and adding new programmes to increase her income. She announced The Angela Art (Needle and Thread) Society to teach cutting, fitting, and sewing all articles of apparel, as well as various branches of artistic and lace fancywork. Girls who did not attend Angela College

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<sup>114</sup> *Colonist*, “Angela College”, August 17, 1894, 4.

<sup>115</sup> *Colonist*, “To Let or Lease, Angela College”, January 23, 1895, 2.

<sup>116</sup> *Colonist*, April 12, 1895, 4.

<sup>117</sup> *Colonist*, “Angela College”, July 11, 1895, 8.

<sup>118</sup> Julie Devereux of 47 Vancouver Street was 75 years old at the time of the 1901 Census as she was born on September 3, 1826 .

could also join.<sup>119</sup> Although this sounded very close to being the old accomplishments, the dressmaking could be practical vocational training for girls anticipating a career. The fall term was a success with Miss Devereux and her staff being complimented on their excellent teaching and thoroughness of preparation for the examinations. She managed to retain the Earle sisters, and the Tingleys from Miss Kitto's time, plus gained Dunsmuir, a Drake, and others.<sup>120</sup> Most of the girls came from professional or successful merchant families.<sup>121</sup> She continued reopening each term at Angela College, adding a special primary class for the fall of 1896 for 6 to 8 year olds, until the summer of 1897. Then in the all too familiar pattern she announced that her English Academy (Late Angela College) would reopen at 8 Richardson Street at the corner of Vancouver Street. The principal would be at home professionally each day from 12 until 4pm at her residence, 47 Vancouver Street.<sup>122</sup> It would be much more convenient for her to operate out of her own home with leased premises around the corner for classrooms and certainly more economically viable than in the college buildings. The Collegiate School for Boys occupied the premises that fall bringing to an end Angela College as a girls' school.

Financial problems, including the lack of an endowment fund for the preservation of the school buildings continued for decades but were never solved. Bishop Hills in his appeal for support to the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge described the

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<sup>119</sup> *Colonist*, "The Angela Art", August 15, 1895.

<sup>120</sup> *Colonist*, "Angela College", December 21, 1895, 7.

<sup>121</sup> Amongst the prize winners, Lizzie, Nellie, and Ethel Earle were the daughters of Thomas Earle, the grocer; Mabel Walkem's father was a judge; Hilda Harris was a granddaughter of James Douglas and daughter of a civil engineer; Hilda Monroe's father was probably Capt. Dan Monroe, a ship's master; and Ethel Bechtel's father was a butcher. May Dunsmuir was James and Laura Dunsmuir's daughter. James Dunsmuir and Charles Vernon, Violet's father, were listed as gentlemen in the Victoria Directory of 1892, meaning men of considerable wealth. Violet Drake was part of the coal merchant's branch of the family and Gladys Perry's father was a civil engineer. <http://vihistory.uvic.ca/content/documents/documents.php>.

<sup>122</sup> *Colonist*, "Change of Residence", August 25, 1897, 4.

school as being housed in “the handsomest and most substantial of the public buildings of the city”, but this building was its biggest liability. He wrote that both Angela College and the Collegiate School had “experienced the ordinary fluctuations to which all schools without endowment are liable” especially with the competition from the public and high schools financed by the public purse.<sup>123</sup> The Society was not sufficiently moved to contribute any money. By 1889, the bishop decided that a wealthy patroness or two would be very beneficial. He appealed to both the Baroness Burdett-Coutts, who had funded both his bishopric and the building of Angela College, and to Princess Louise, wife of the Governor-General, who had once expressed an interest in the work of the Church in the West.<sup>124</sup> Neither was forthcoming with money for an endowment. The situation was critical as rent payments from the school were insufficient to cover the cost of the needed repairs.

After Miss Dupont’s retirement in 1892, the successive principals were no more adept at managing school finances for so large a building than the churchmen had been and departed at the expiration of their leases. As there was an existing mortgage of \$5500 at 6%, more than half the anticipated rental was needed to pay just the interest on the mortgage, let alone the principal, taxes, or maintenance.<sup>125</sup> Although the Church had desperately needed the rent money, it had felt morally obliged to relieve Mrs. Lipscomb

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<sup>123</sup> ADBC, Bishop Hills Collection, Text 57, Correspondence (In/Out) 1860-1892, Box 6, File 4, Bishop Hills to the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, June 21, 1884, 61.

<sup>124</sup> ADBC, Bishop Hills Collection, Text 57, Correspondence (In/Out) 1840-1914, Box 2, File 16, Bishop Hills to unknown recipient (partial letter), December 12, 1889, 36-37.

<sup>125</sup> Private schools in Victoria paid property taxes until the mid-1950s. As rent was being charged, Angela College would not have been termed Church property.

of her payments for the last part of her tenancy.<sup>126</sup> She had also requested Synod to apply to the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge for an endowment. The Synod Executive Committee decided against appealing to the SPCK probably because of that Society's previous refusal to aid Angela College. A special committee was established and given full powers to act in regards to the Angela College buildings and grounds. By the Synod Executive Committee Meeting on March 17, 1893, Archdeacon Servin reported that the committee had received a written offer from the Misses Kitto to rent the college for \$75 a month if certain improvements were made. It was estimated that these would cost about \$1000. After much discussion, Major Dupont moved and the Hon. Justice Drake seconded that the sisters be offered a lease for one year at \$50 a month provided that the college was run as a day and boarding school. If the Misses Kitto decided not to take up the lease, then an advertisement offering the school for lease should be placed in the Toronto and local papers.<sup>127</sup> No explanation was given in the minutes for the reduction in rent but it was probable that the Church was only prepared to complete fewer repairs than the Misses Kitto included in their offer. Nevertheless, the Kittos agreed to a one year lease. By August the committee was authorized to take out a mortgage against the property of up to \$2000 to make the necessary renovations.<sup>128</sup> The Christ Church Trust very unwisely lent this money. As the interest alone on the two mortgages would now consume seventy-five percent of the rent payments, this was not a

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<sup>126</sup> ADBC, Synod Executive Committee, Text 209, Box 1, File 2, Minutes, December 21, 1892.

<sup>127</sup> ADBC, Synod Executive Committee Text 209, Minutes, Box 1, File 2, 62, March 17, 1893, Angela College.

<sup>128</sup> ADBC, Synod Executive Committee Text 209, Minutes, Box 1, File 2, 72, August 3, 1893, Angela College.

safe investment for the Trust and one which would inevitably come back to haunt the trustees.

When Miss Kitto and her sisters fulfilled their rental contract but did not renew, Synod again faced the problem of what to do with Angela College. Members discussed the situation at length until finally advertising the buildings for rent in January, 1895. Eight months' income was lost before Miss Devereux relocated her school and operated under the name of Angela College from April 22<sup>nd</sup> onwards.<sup>129</sup> During her tenancy, members of Synod thought that they had relieved, at least temporarily, their financial anxiety, by borrowing \$10,000 from the Christ Church Trust Fund using Angela College and the Church-owned Mountain District lot (Nanaimo) as security. The money was used to discharge the mortgages against these two properties. The men were confident that with the promises made and the rent from Angela College there was "no fear of our being unable to meet the \$600 a year interest upon our consolidated loan".<sup>130</sup> Indeed, there was another tenant in hand as the Rev. C. Sharp and Mr. M.J.W. Laing had applied in December 1896 to lease the property for the use of the Collegiate School.<sup>131</sup> The confidence of the July 1896 Synod was short-lived, as by February 1897 the property was mortgaged for \$8000 with interest payments in arrears;<sup>132</sup> The sums pledged at Synod in the past July had not yet all been paid; Miss Devereux' rent was insufficient to cover the interest payments; so the account was in "considerable deficit". In the summer of 1897 members approved the application from the boys' school and encouraged the Rev. Sharp

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<sup>129</sup> *Colonist*, "Miss Devereux", April 10, 1895.

<sup>130</sup> *Colonist*, "Synod", July 22, 1896, 7.

<sup>131</sup> ADBC, Synod Executive Committee Text 209, Minutes, Box 1, File 2, 140, December 23, 1896, Angela College.

<sup>132</sup> *Colonist*, "Synod", February 9, 1897, 6.

as the retiring headmaster and Mr. Laing as his successor to lease the premises.<sup>133</sup> The two men then inspected the buildings and requested a delay. Negotiations continued with Mr. Laing offering to lease at \$30 a month and the Finance Committee insisting on \$35 a month. The matter was finally resolved by both parties agreeing to Mr. Laing renting the building but not the hall for \$30 a month for one year.<sup>134</sup> The Bishop made some effort to improve the condition of the property by requesting that a drain be continued along McClure Street to connect the college buildings to the sewage system.<sup>135</sup> The plumbing had probably been operating without maintenance on the original septic system until Miss Kitto had insisted upon improvements but these would have been the least possible to satisfy her. Connecting to the sewer would be less expensive than a new septic system. How swiftly the city carried out this request is not known.

The new century opened with continued financial woes over Angela College. A report to the Synod Executive Committee reviewed the situation including the loans made by Bishop Hills, the consolidation loan, the poor condition of the buildings, the inability to earn sufficient rent to cover the interest and taxes due, and then suggested that Angela College, valued at \$16,500, the Mountain District lot, and a tract of land at Hope should be purchased by the Clergy Endowment Fund.<sup>136</sup> The report did not indicate why the Clergy Fund would have any interest or willingness to assume the burdens of these mortgaged properties. The suggestion was just more hopeful optimism on the part of the

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<sup>133</sup> *Colonist*, "Synod", February 9, 1897, 6.

<sup>134</sup> ADBC, Synod Executive Committee Text 209, Minutes, Box 1, File2, Angela College, March 23, 1897, 142; April 6, 1897, 147; August 4, 1897, 152 – 153; October 5, 1897, 153.

<sup>135</sup> *Colonist*, "At City Council", Correspondence Bishop Perrin to Victoria City Council, November 16, 1897, 5.

<sup>136</sup> ADBC, Synod Executive Committee Text 209, Minutes, Box 1, File 2, January 8, 1900, Chancellor's Report – Clergy Endowment Fund/Christ Church Trust Estate loan to Angela College Report, 187-188.

Synod Executive Committee that someone else would relieve them of their problems. Prayer alone had not made Angela College an enduring success, nor would it solve financial problems caused by inept stewardship.

After Mr. Laing gave notice that his school would vacate the premises on September 1<sup>st</sup>, 1900, the Executive Committee advertised “For sale or rent – The desirable premises known as Angela College, Burdette Avenue. For particulars apply to Lindley Crease, 17 Fort Street, Victoria”.<sup>137</sup> There was no immediate sale but Mr. Laing decided to stay for a time. The financial woes stayed, too. The trustees of the Christ Church Trust Fund instructed Canon Beanlands to seek legal opinion about the liability of previous trustees of the Fund for restoring money lost through loans extended on the Angela College property. The answer was that the trustees were liable, but that it would be unwise to take proceedings against them.<sup>138</sup> The loans were ill-advised, repayment was negligible, but there was little to be gained by airing the Church’s dirty financial linen in public. The men shared the ever-enduring attitude of Anglican Church Women of

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<sup>137</sup> *Colonist*. “For Sale”, August 12, 1900, 2. Lindley Crease, a lawyer, was one of the sons of Sir Henry P.P. Crease, British Columbia Supreme Court Justice.

<http://vihistory.uvic.ca/search/censusfull.php?id=4907&year=1901>

<sup>138</sup> ADBC, Bishop Schofield Collection, Text 55, Correspondence 1900, Box 4, File 15, 4, 5, and 16, W.C. Ward, Esq., from Bodwell & Duff, December 3, 1900; Messrs. Drake, Jackson, Helmcken, Barristers from Bodwell & Duff, December 4, 1900; and B.W. Aikman, K.C. from Bodwell & Duff, February 19, 1901.

“We just do not talk about money, dear, it’s not nice.”<sup>139</sup> Mr. Laing finally moved his school to larger premises for the summer term of 1903.<sup>140</sup>

Angela College would not just go quietly away. Bishop Perrin<sup>141</sup> still wanted to re-establish a girls’ school in the buildings. He reported to Synod that when he had been in England he had spoken to several school mistresses who were interested in undertaking a girls’ school but with the condition that the diocese would take all financial responsibility. He had approached Anglican Sisterhoods, including the Sisters of Clewer, but none was interested in expanding its work to include Angela College.<sup>142</sup> As the Bishop’s address to Synod was extensively quoted in the *Colonist*, the public now knew of the financial difficulties.<sup>143</sup>

The Angela College of Music seemed to be the next tenant. Their “highly successful concert” was reported in the *Colonist* in 1904.<sup>144</sup> Their tenure, too, was short-lived as the following year L. Eaton & Co. Auctioneers advertised the sale of the furniture and effects of Angela College.<sup>145</sup> This action was followed by another attempt to sell or

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<sup>139</sup> The writer, as Dorcas Secretary for the Anglican Church Women, Diocese of British Columbia and thus a member of the executive, encountered this attitude all too frequently a century later over the sale of the Caroline Macklem Home at 1322 Rockland Avenue, Victoria. Most of the women did not want to talk about money or how we were going to pay the bills which accumulated while men of the church were handling the sale of the building. Neither sex was willing to discuss investments, or rates of interest, the whole matter of money was considered an unsuitable topic for women. As these were the church attitudes in the twenty-first century, they must have been even stronger in the late nineteenth.

<sup>140</sup> *Colonist*, April 22, 1903, 4.

<sup>141</sup> William Wilcox Perrin was the second Anglican Bishop of the Diocese of British Columbia (1893-1911) following Bishop George Hills who had been appointed in 1859 following the endowment of the see by Angela Burdett-Coutts.

<sup>142</sup> The Sisters of Clewer were an Anglican sisterhood dedicated to working with young women.

<sup>143</sup> *Colonist*, “Synod”, October 25, 1903, 8.

<sup>144</sup> *Colonist*, “Angela College Concert”, June 18, 1904, 3.

<sup>145</sup> *Colonist*, April 29, 1905, 8.

rent the establishment, this time by Pemberton & Son.<sup>146</sup> Someone in the firm must have thought the advertisement of “that commodious well-built property” was too decorous to bring results as it was followed the next day by “Can be Purchased Cheap”. This second offering suggested that the house and three lots could be “purchased at a very reasonable figure, and by a comparatively small expenditure can be made into a handsome city residence”. What an ignominious end for an institution begun with such high expectations for the Church and Empire. Six weeks later a Mr. J. Husport<sup>147</sup> asked for an option for \$6000 for part of the property. Following much discussion and advice, the Executive Committee decided to accept even though this amount would not cover the mortgages. After Mr. Husport declined to purchase, the brick building and four lots on Burdett Avenue were offered for sale for \$6000 with Synod paying its portion of the current property taxes.<sup>148</sup> The following year Pemberton and Son tried to rent the building for \$45 per month. By comparison, the same firm advertised a cottage (one and a half storey house) in good condition on nearby Scoresby Street (McClure) for \$22.75 per month and a large house and grounds on Fairfield Road for \$25 a month.<sup>149</sup> There were no takers for Angela College. George Mesher, a contractor, was reported to have bought the building late in the year with the intent of converting it into apartments.<sup>150</sup> Instead, Norman Rant

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<sup>146</sup> *Colonist*, “For Sale or Rent”, June 3, 1905, 8. J.D. Pemberton (brother of Susan Pemberton, early principal of Angela College) and his son Frederick B. Pemberton established the firm Pemberton and Son to deal in real estate, finance, and insurance. Frederick would have been half way through his forty year tenure as president of the firm at this time of Angela College problems. His daughter Philippa married Henry C. Holmes who joined the company in 1921. It then became Pemberton Holmes as it remains today.

<sup>147</sup> Mr. Husport seemed to be unknown in Victoria.

<sup>148</sup> ADBC, Synod Executive Committee Text 209, Minutes, Box 2, File 1, 125-7, July 14, 1905, Angela College and 128, August 8, 1905, Angela College.

<sup>149</sup> *Colonist*, “Pemberton & Son, Houses for Rent”, February 17, 1906, 10.

<sup>150</sup> *Colonist*, November 27, 1906, 1, and June 8, 1907, 8.

purchased the property and, with much repairing and remodeling, turned it into a private hotel.<sup>151</sup>

Bishop Perrin, in his address to Synod at St. Paul's, Nanaimo in 1907, happily reported that the diocese was practically free from debt with the sale of Angela College. He stated once again that every effort had been made to reestablish a girls' school, but the building in its present condition was totally unsuitable. Synod could not afford the large sum that would be required for repairs.<sup>152</sup> His optimism was somewhat misplaced as the Eleventh Synod the following year learned from the Treasurer's Report for the fiscal year ending May 15, 1908 that the sale of Angela College had paid off some of the loan to the Christ Church Trust Fund, but there still remained a balance of \$4000 at 6% interest.<sup>153</sup> Although that amount was a drain on Church resources it was easier to manage than the actual physical property.

The final irony was that after many years of use as a residential hotel, the Sisters of St. Ann purchased the building in 1959 as a home for aged and infirm sisters.<sup>154</sup> The institution whose bricks and mortar were meant to guide and shelter youthful Anglican girls at the start of their lives once again became a religious institution, the home of elderly Catholic nuns.<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> *Colonist*, June 18, 1907, 8. Norman Rant made his money in mining at Atlin, British Columbia.

<sup>152</sup> *Colonist*, "Address by the Bishop", August 25, 1907, 18.

<sup>153</sup> *Colonist*, "Eleventh Synod", November 18, 1908, 2.

<sup>154</sup> Valerie Green, "From refinement", *The Islander*, March 1983, 10.

<sup>155</sup> Controversy over the use of the property continues to the present day. At a public hearing on August 23, 2007, neighbours and heritage advocates objected to Cielo Properties' plan to move two houses presently fronting on McClure St. to Burdett Ave., remove a third, build three townhouse units and two condominium buildings on the site, and restore the heritage building for use "as supportive housing for nine senior single women". *Times Colonist*, August 23, 2007.

In less than fifty years Angela College declined from a praised shining jewel in the fabric of Empire to a vacant, derelict building. How this happened has been discussed above but the reasons why it happened and why it was allowed to happen were entwined with church, colonial, and provincial history. The initial concept of establishing a Church of England college for young ladies molded on the traditions of the past was unsuited to the frontier society, albeit a gilded one with a façade of gentility on the muddy streets of Victoria in the 1860s. Even not particularly religious Protestant parents might have been willing to pay for a rigorous academic education in a well-managed school under Church auspices for their daughters, but too few were willing to support an education too frivolous for life on the edge of the Pacific.<sup>156</sup> When new immigrants arrived, they wanted schools which would provide their children with a means to financial security in the future. The college did little to update its curriculum to meet parental needs and, as private schools were outside of governmental regulation, received no official pressure to change. The lack of a stable foundation and tradition associated with a long-term headmistress inhibited the development of a school society. Thus the school was without the parental, alumnae, and community support which allowed some of the other private schools to keep running in difficult financial times.

Principals and teachers came and went with almost breathtaking regularity. There were a few exceptions, Miss Pemberton and Miss Crease survived for about three and a

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[http://www.canada.com/victoriatimescolonist/news/capital\\_van\\_isl/story.html?id=6938ac](http://www.canada.com/victoriatimescolonist/news/capital_van_isl/story.html?id=6938ac). 02/05/2008. Although this does not concern Angela College as an educational institution for girls, it does add a little piece to Victoria's social history.

<sup>156</sup> See K.A. Findlay, "Introduction or 'The State of the Question(s)'", *"A Woman's Place": Art and the Role of Women in the Cultural Formation of Victoria, BC 1850s-1920s*, ed. K.A. Finlay, (Victoria: Hemlock Printers, 2004) for insight into the perceived merit of the 'accomplishments' in nineteenth century Victoria.

half years each, and Miss Dupont for twelve, but these were short terms in comparison to those at the schools which survived. Angela College was not the life's work of anyone. It was not the creation of a single woman or a group of women, but rather an entity of churchmen who found headmistresses and teachers to run it. The three longest survivors were all unmarried lay women, related to strong supporters of the Anglican Church. The shortest were all clergy wives, who were pressed into serving, probably unwillingly, as the school careened toward another staffing crisis. These wives were already burdened with unpaid parish duties, raising a family, and running their own households, and beyond conducting Sunday school classes had little experience in education. They could provide scant leadership to their teachers, as they had little idea of what they should be doing and no time to plan even if they had the ability. The teachers seemed to lack any expertise in mathematics or the sciences and did not attempt to teach them. Nothing in the curriculum would enable a girl to continue further education at the university level. Studying art or music or spending a year on languages abroad were essentially the choices if she or her parents anticipated more study. The clergy wives had great difficulty managing to pay school expenses, let alone making any extra to cover maintenance costs or any new equipment, but why should they be any more financially adept than their husbands and church leaders?

Finance played a large part in the decay. Most schools began small, and gradually improved and developed their facilities as funds permitted. Angela College was presented with a handsome edifice almost from the start. The building was always far larger than needed and was a responsibility and a liability that neither the school nor the Church could afford to maintain. Except for Miss Dupont, all the principals who were able to turn

a private school into a profitable business, promptly left Angela College and moved their schools elsewhere. The churchmen on the board seemed always to be inept at finance and unusually incompetent at managing property. Perhaps their minds were on higher things as the school was just an add-on to their regular duties. By avoiding routine maintenance costs, they allowed the premises which cost \$12,000 to build on rented land in the 1860s to deteriorate to the point where its market value with four lots had sunk to \$6000 forty years later. In comparison, an eight room weatherboard (wood siding) house on the corner of Bastion and Langley Streets with an additional brick building of thirty by fifteen feet fronting on Bastion Street was offered for sale in 1866 for \$9,500 with a \$6,000 mortgage available at 1 ½%.<sup>157</sup> In 1904, a nine room house was listed at \$3,750, a seven room house on Humboldt Street at \$3,200, and three lots in James Bay at \$1,500.<sup>158</sup> A modern house on Menzies Street was offered at \$3,250 in 1908.<sup>159</sup> Although some of the lost value of Angela College can perhaps be attributed to a decline in real estate prices, much was due to the condition of the property. The assorted loans and mortgages taken out to pay for solutions to crises, ended up costing more than prompt regular repairs would have. It was irresponsible to borrow money, even from other church sources, that the board had no hope of repaying. Although there are records in the Church archives of various financial disasters, there are none of serious discussions to increase enrolment and income by making the school more acceptable to parents. The Synod Executive Committee resorted to management by crisis time after time. Even when tenants left, the building was often left empty while the board dithered about what it should do next. The

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<sup>157</sup> *Colonist*, May 5, 1866, 2.

<sup>158</sup> *Colonist*, May 1, 1904, various pages.

<sup>159</sup> *Colonist*, August 1, 1908, 16.

same occurred when selling was inevitable. The original board probably liked the concept of running a school, if not the reality, but put no firm foundations for governance in place for their successors.

The governance structure, such as it was, compounded the other problems. No one person or group of people was ever in charge. In its time as a religious school and to some degree in later years, the management board would control what the principal could do. She lacked the authority to act completely on her own, but would have to wait unreasonable lengths of time for the board to reach decisions. As these men had very little knowledge of progressive education for girls, and were of a conservative bent by nature, they looked backward rather than forwards. They selected over-worked clergy wives as principals. Even those women with goodwill toward the job lacked experience and expertise. As the board repeated this hiring practice over and over again, this was either the type of woman they preferred or the only person they could coerce into accepting the position. Either way the school was doomed. When the special committee of the Synod Executive Council granted the lease in later years, each woman was leasing a name as well as a building so the committee stipulated the type of school she should run. A combination of day students and boarders was the usual requirement regardless of the economics involved. With little or no continuity as the establishment lurched from lessee to lessee, student retention was difficult. Financial failure was all too frequently the result.

Angela College failed because no one ever had the passion to make it succeed. The school lacked spirit, identity, continuity, and scholarship and thus became less and less attractive to parents. Finally, it just died.

## CHAPTER V *The Urban School – Norfolk House*

Norfolk House was different from the religious schools, the Anglican Angela College or Catholic St. Ann's Academy. It was the creation and passion of two women with the support of an influential parent group. This 'ownership' does as much to explain its survival, as its absence accounts for Angela College's failure. The founders, who had both taught at Norwich High School in Norfolk, established the school on the contemporary British model.<sup>1</sup> Although religion was not ignored in the curriculum, the school was independent from any particular religious body. It was a private enterprise in an urban setting, paying its own way as best it could, with none of the institutional support for operation, land, or buildings, which could be made available to the religious schools. The story of the school is an intertwining of three strands, the school itself (including governance, finance, property, and curriculum), the teachers, and the girls.

"I like a flannel shirt and liberty"<sup>2</sup> reflected the attitudes of many of the women who taught at Norfolk House and the other girls' schools in the Far West. Almost all were British, from upper middle-class families, well-educated, and looking for adventure, a new life, or any life at all in which they could support themselves. Vancouver Island, with its mild climate and reputation for Englishness attracted more than its fair share. Some returned 'home' after a few years, others stayed and became local characters. The two founders of Norfolk House and many of the parents of girls who attended the school belonged to the latter group.

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<sup>1</sup> Winfred Scott and Keith Walker, *Do Thy Best . . . An Informal History of Norfolk House School, 1913-1986*, (Victoria: Fotoprint, 2003), 1-2.

<sup>2</sup> Agnes Skrine, "A Lady's Life on a Ranche", *A Flannel Shirt and Liberty: British Emigrant Gentlewomen in the Canadian West, 1880-1914*, ed. Susan Jackel. (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1982), 100-106.

Many aspects of the early years of the school have become shrouded in mystery and acquired a folkloric quality, which masked the realities of early operation and governance. When the surviving founding Headmistress, Dora Atkins, finally moved into a nursing home, her Assistant Head of many years, Ivy Cheetham, fed almost all of the records of the first forty years into the furnace. Only the registers and mark books from 1913-1917 survived. Archivist Keith Walker concluded that they [Miss Atkins and Mrs. Cheetham] “would have considered both the accounts and the whole operation of the school to be their private concern. . . . they would . . . have considered that all the administrative papers belonged to them. When they left the papers left with them.”<sup>3</sup> Until Mr. Walker systematically acquired and organized materials for the present day school archives, legends developed to fill the gaps in knowledge. Carolyn Gossage, in writing about private schools across Canada, perpetuated the story that a group of women, including the wife of the Anglican Bishop of Victoria, wanting better schooling in the Oak Bay area, decided to import a teacher from England. Her version had Bishop Doull requesting Miss Julia McDermott to resign from Norwich High School and come to Victoria.<sup>4</sup> The available evidence negates this. John Alexander Doull was elected Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Kootenay in 1914, not of the Diocese of British Columbia [Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands]. Prior to that appointment, he was in Victoria, but as Rector of the Parish of Christ Church and Dean of the Cathedral, not Bishop.<sup>5</sup> Although he may have been acquainted with Miss McDermott during his years in England, it is highly unlikely that he was instrumental in her coming to Canada as she joined the teaching staff of Miss Gordon’s Crofton House School in Vancouver in the fall

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<sup>3</sup> Winifred Scott and Keith Walker, *Do Thy Best*, 1-2.

<sup>4</sup> Carolyn Gossage, *A Question of Privilege*, (Toronto: Peter Martin, 1977), 230.

<sup>5</sup> Alexander John Doull fonds. [British Columbia Archival Union List \(BCAUL\)](#), ADBC.

of 1912. On behalf of friends, the bishop may have encouraged her move to Victoria in the spring of 1913 to start her own school. From March 27 – April 2, 1913, she ran an advertisement in the *Victoria Colonist*:

PRIVATE SCHOOL

A school will be opened on Head St. on April 2<sup>nd</sup> by  
Miss McDermott.  
For particulars apply 911 Blanshard <sup>6</sup>

An insufficient number of pupils were attracted to this location,<sup>7</sup> but she was able to open a school in the Sunday School Room at the Cathedral. This suggests that there was no pre-formed clientele in the Oak Bay area. Once the school was established, Dora Atkins resigned her post at Norwich High School, and sailed to Montreal, on August 21, 1913, to join her friend in Victoria.<sup>8</sup> The time of this Atlantic crossing negates the romantic myth which circulated amongst generations of girls that Miss Atkins came to Canada after her fiancé had been killed during the First World War.<sup>9</sup> On September 10, 1913 these two women officially founded Norfolk House and inscribed the name on the attendance registers. The new school not only had the same initials as the one at which they had both taught, but also the same motto: ‘Do thy best and rejoice with those that do better’.<sup>10</sup>

The founders enjoyed normal lives of girls of their social class before coming to Canada.<sup>11</sup> Dora Winifred Atkins came from an educated family, being one of seven

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<sup>6</sup> Scott and Walker, *Do Thy Best*, 4.

<sup>7</sup> Head St. in Esquimalt was not a favourable location for attracting students from Oak Bay. Mrs. C.J. Brenton opened a school on Head St. in 1894, and so it is possible that there was a ‘schoolroom’ available for rent in this location.

<sup>8</sup> Scott and Walker, *Do Thy Best*, 7.

<sup>9</sup> Valentine Harlock, “Memories – The Boarding House”, NF3-4, Glenlyon-Norfolk Archives, hereafter GNA.

<sup>10</sup> Scott and Walker, *Do Thy Best*, 9.

sisters and six brothers all mainly educated at home by their father, the Headmaster of Newbury Grammar School, which some people claimed to be one of the Edward VI schools.<sup>12</sup> Dora's short experience at a boarding school did not begin on a happy note, as "through some error" she arrived a day earlier than the other children and had her first meal all alone with the entire teaching staff. "I sat in miserable silence, my tears quietly flowing into my cold potatoes."<sup>13</sup> This episode gave her empathy towards boarders and new girls throughout her career. The only one of the siblings not to graduate from Oxford or Cambridge, she received her BA-Honours and MA in Classics and her Diploma in Theory and Practice of Teaching from Durham University in December 1906. She joined the staff of Norwich High School and became good friends with Julia McDermott. As a headmaster, her father would not have been able to provide financial security in adulthood for any of his seven daughters who did not marry, but through scholarships, such as Dora's to Durham, he saw that they were well-educated.

From her arrival in Victoria in the late summer of 1913, Dora Atkins, more than Julia McDermott, shaped Norfolk House School for more than the next forty years. Personally modest, and rarely speaking of herself, she "strongly influenced the lives of hundreds and hundreds of girls through the years – passing on to them her own high idealism, her rare sense of justice, and appreciation of the beauty in the full flowering of the human mind".<sup>14</sup> These sentiments were what parents were paying for, but did they

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<sup>11</sup> Upper-middle class in southern England.

<sup>12</sup> The grammar school in Newbury was actually founded in 1466 as a chantry (privately endowed) school named St. Bartholomew's School, so is older than the King Edward VI schools begun in this king's reign. St. Bart's lost its endowment lands under Edward's reorganization of schools and came under the authority of his school commissioners.

<sup>13</sup> "Headmistress Retires", newspaper clipping", probably from *The Daily Colonist*, Scrapbooks of Eileen Learoyd, NHS Old Girls Association, F-4, GNA.

<sup>14</sup> "Headmistress Retires", GNA.

reflect the woman herself? Although she had difficulty managing school finances, she certainly spent very little money on her own needs. Margaret Izard remembered that she owned two suits, a brown one and a blue one. The girls could forecast the headmistress's mood for the day from the colour she wore as she walked to school from the boarding house.<sup>15</sup> Her generosity to others, especially families in need during the Depression years, is well documented. When Cynthia Musgrave's father went to see Miss Atkins to say that he could no longer pay the fees, she replied with, "Then just pay what you can afford".<sup>16</sup> Another situation will be discussed in the section on academics. In later years, in her will, she further showed her compassion by providing a small bequest and establishing a trust fund to provide income for Mrs. Cheetham, a long-time teacher at the school. At the discretion of her trustees additional funds could be advanced for "maintenance, comfort, medical and other services".<sup>17</sup> She provided what comforts she could to her friend and colleague of so many years.

Julia McDermott was born in 1881, in Lewisham, England, the daughter of a gentleman. She, like Dora Atkins, was well-educated, having attended Blackheath High School for ten years,<sup>18</sup> and graduated with her Oxford and Cambridge Higher School Certificate in French and German.<sup>19</sup> Instead of attending university, she studied in France and Germany before taking her teacher training at Cheltenham Ladies' College. She was one of the bright, capable women, of suitable social class, sought by Miss Beale for the

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<sup>15</sup> Scott and Walker, *Do Thy Best*, 19.

<sup>16</sup> Scott and Walker, *Do Thy Best*, 35.

<sup>17</sup> Will of Dora Winifred Atkins, NHS Society Fonds F2 – 5, GNA.

<sup>18</sup> Blackheath High School was opened by the Girls' Day School Trust (see previous chapter) in 1885. Some of these schools conducted their own preparatory programmes leading into the senior sections of the schools.

<sup>19</sup> This certificate earned at the completion of high school led to university entrance. A Canadian equivalent would be the McGill Matriculation written for many years by students in private schools in Eastern Canada.

training division of the College. In 1904, she joined the staff of Norwich High School under the leadership of Miss Gadesden, her Headmistress at Blackheath High School. She taught there, successfully until 1911. Miss Gertrude M. Wise, successor to Miss Gadesden, wrote a reference for her in anticipation of emigration:

I have great pleasure in recording the good opinion I have formed of Miss McDermott. She has been a member of the staff of this school since 1904, and for the last 3 1/2 years she has been working under me. I received an excellent report of her from my predecessor, Miss Gadesden, and I am fully able to corroborate it.

Miss McDermott is a very good disciplinarian, and an excellent teacher. She is careful and bright and much liked by her pupils, over whom she exercises a thoroughly healthy influence. She has proved herself resourceful and energetic in various departments of school life and adapts herself readily and pleasantly to varying conditions. These are characteristics which I find of great value to one who wishes, as Miss McDermott does, to work in a growing colony.

She is a thoroughly loyal colleague and member of staff. Of the part she has taken in organizing the school games, and developing the right spirit with regard to them, I cannot speak too highly.

I shall be glad to answer any questions on her behalf. Though I should be very sorry to lose Miss McDermott's services, I think her just the sort of woman who would do well in Canada.<sup>20</sup>

The reference presented Julia McDermott as the ideal schoolmistress. She had remained at the school, her first position, for seven years, establishing a record of steadfastness and reliability. In addition, she could teach and keep the girls under control. She participated in school life outside the classroom, with a positive attitude, adapting "readily and pleasantly to varying conditions". This can reasonably be interpreted to mean that she did not complain about refereeing afternoon hockey games on a muddy field in a driving rain, or coaching tennis with balls with soft spots on grass courts with soggy patches. The Headmistress' attitudes about Canada as a colony were somewhat outdated even in 1911, but probably typical of her associates. This was still the era of Empire in Britain, with a

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<sup>20</sup> Scott and Walker, *Do Thy Best*, 2.

sense of duty toward the education of ‘British’ children in ‘far-flung lands’. The closing remark that Miss McDermott “would do well” in Canada relates back to the issue of middle and upper class women, without income, needing to support themselves. She was thirty, unmarried, dependent upon her own abilities. Four years after the opening of Norfolk House, she followed another familiar pattern of teachers in the private schools on Vancouver Island, she married Frederick Forbes, a man whom she met in Canada. Motherhood a year later removed her from the school scene for a time until she returned, a widow, in 1925.

The school began with high hopes but for most of the first two decades, just keeping a roof over the school was a major undertaking. Unlike Angela College, no benefactress gave Norfolk House a purpose-built, spacious edifice, so it suffered through a series of rented houses. The first schoolroom at Christ Church Cathedral was short-lived. After Dora Atkins’ arrival in Victoria, she and Julia McDermott consulted Marjorie Guernsey Acland’s mother for advice and names of potential pupils. Marjorie thought that the two women had conducted a small school in her parents’ house, ‘Schuhuum’ at 1322 Rockland Avenue, until a suitable house was found.<sup>21</sup> The next location was in Fairfield. Diana Hammond remembered being part of a small group of girls in a house “near the bottom of Moss Street” before the First World War.<sup>22</sup> This would have been the house at 1164 Oscar Street. For many years, Moss Street, Fairfield Road, and Oscar Street

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<sup>21</sup> Marjorie Guernsey Acland to Miss A.W. Scott, March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1963, NHS Old Girls Association Fonds, F3 – 15, GNA. The Guernsey family had recently arrived in Victoria from England. 1322 Rockland Ave. was home to Arthur P. Luxton, KC, in 1901, to the Hon. James Douglas Prentice, MPP and Provincial Secretary, and his family around 1908, and to elderly ladies from 1951 for more than half a century as the Caroline Macklem Home owned and operated by the Anglican Church Women. It was in a good location to attract students.

<sup>22</sup> Diana Hammond to Mrs. Wilmot, September 30, 1984, NHS Old Girls Association Fonds F3 – 11, GNA. Alice Nash, a member of the first class 1913-14, lived on Pemberton Road. Her father, a doctor, had come to Canada in 1887, and married a BC girl.

came together at Five Points, so the house would have been a short distance west of the intersection.<sup>23</sup> The move to this property was probably in 1914, but could have been late in 1913. The next address was 1950 Granite Street, in Oak Bay. Gwyneth Lemon, who did not think she was an original pupil, but “must have been pretty near it”, remembered being at Granite Street and then at a slightly bigger house. There were two classrooms in the house, hers with eight to ten desks, and taught by Miss Atkins, and the older girls in another with Miss McDermott.<sup>24</sup> The two teachers lived upstairs and later a third classroom was added on the second floor. Miss Atkins continued to live there after Miss McDermott’s marriage<sup>25</sup> but by September, 1925, the whole house on Granite Street was used for classrooms. Miss Atkins, Miss Riach, Mrs. Forbes, as matron and housekeeper, her daughter Joan, and the boarders were housed at another rented property at 1390 St. James Street (later renamed Transit Road).<sup>26</sup> This St. James St. house had a large fairly flat lawn which could be used for sports and school gatherings.<sup>27</sup> When overcrowding again became a problem, the school rented a house at 940 Foul Bay Road.<sup>28</sup> At some point between 1927 and 1931, Miss Atkins and some boarders moved into this third house.<sup>29</sup> Renting, and maintaining, three separate houses, with the school on a shaky financial footing, was inefficient and costly.

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<sup>23</sup> This house no longer exists having been replaced along with several of its neighbours in the 1960s by low-rise apartment buildings fronting on Fairfield Road.

<sup>24</sup> Gwyneth Lemon, Notes, November 21, 1972, NHS Old Girls Association Fonds F3 – 15, GNA. A Mr. Lemon, probably an uncle, was a mill owner in Cowichan and Victoria. His family emigrated from the USA but were of Irish Protestant descent.

<sup>25</sup> Mary Carlyle Hammond-Rockingham, NF3 – 5, GNA.

<sup>26</sup> Betty Parsons, Letter to Mrs. Wilmot, February 28, 1987, NHS Old Girls Association Fonds, F3 – 15, GNA.

<sup>27</sup> Scott and Walker, *Do Thy Best*, 22.

<sup>28</sup> 940 Foul Bay Road was between Oak Bay Ave and McNeil, so was between the other two houses.

<sup>29</sup> Winifred Scott, “Boarding Houses”, NHS Association Fonds, F3 – 16, GNA.

Miss Atkins was concerned with academics and character-building, not money. One girl remembered her headmistress repeatedly forgetting to send out bills for fees.<sup>30</sup> As Keith Walker so gently phrased, “In those days it was bad manners to talk about finance,”<sup>31</sup> so she let matters slide. Unfailingly polite, she appeared to have had little business sense. Another recalled that “in the early twenties the School ran into great financial difficulties and was in danger of closing – this is when H.R. Hammond came to the rescue with financial aid”.<sup>32</sup> By 1929, although enrolment had grown to 70 girls and its academic reputation was growing, the school’s financial situation was bleak. Parents became concerned over the future of the school. Led by Harry Davis, a Victoria lawyer,<sup>33</sup> whose immediate generosity prevented bankruptcy, a group of interested parents formed a limited company to tackle the problems.<sup>34</sup> Miss Atkins sent a letter to the parents in May 1931, outlining their proposal:

to form a private company, which will take power to issue preference shares as well as common shares, the holders of the preference shares being entitled to receive out of the profits of the Company as a first charge a cumulative preferential dividend of six per cent, per annum on the capital for the time being paid up on such shares.<sup>35</sup>

This new plan moved the funding of the school from Miss Atkins’ responsibility to that of the company. Mr. Davis was not only influential in the design of the new financial

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<sup>30</sup> Monica Fraser, NHS Association Fonds, F-3 - 17, GNA.

<sup>31</sup> Scott and Walker, *Do Thy Best*, 1.

<sup>32</sup> Betty Parsons to Peggy Wilmot, February 28, 1987, NHS Old Girls Association Fonds, F-3 15, GNA. The Hammond family emigrated from England in 1900 and engaged in house-building. By 1911 they lived in what must have been a substantial building at 741 Johnson St. as it housed father, mother, 6 children, and 7 roomers employed in the building trades, presumably by John Hammond. H.R. Hammond was the eldest of these children. His daughters, Mary Carlyle and Diana, attended Norfolk House. The family gave the Hammond Cup which is still presented annually.

<sup>33</sup> Mr. Davis’ daughter, “Poppy”, a student at NHS would have been about 11 at this time.

<sup>34</sup> Mary Carlyle Hammond- Rockingham, NF3 – 5, GNA.

<sup>35</sup> Scott and Walker, “Letter to Parents”, *Do Thy Best*, 25.

structure, he served as president for the next twenty years. His group's immediate objective, once finances were stabilized, was finding a permanent home for the school.

The letter recommended the purchase of a four and a half acre site in Pemberton Woods which was being offered for sale for about \$6000. Not only was the location excellent, but Mr. Pemberton offered "to subscribe for preference shares of the proposed new company to the full extent of the purchase price of the land".<sup>36</sup> This generosity preserved capital for the construction of buildings and improvement of grounds. Owing to falling building costs, no doubt due to the advance of the Depression, Miss Atkins suggested that classrooms for 150 girls and boarding facilities for staff and 25 girls could be constructed for about \$25,000. A gymnasium would cost an additional \$2000. As \$20,000 had been pledged the previous year for a proposal for a different site, this new plan would only require an additional \$5-7000. Parents were asked to subscribe "for shares to the extent of \$500, \$200, or even \$100". As the school had paid \$2500 in rent for the buildings occupied during the 1930-1931 school year, the six per cent dividend appeared not only affordable, but economic. Unfortunately the same 'hard times' which lowered building costs also reduced parents' incomes. As insufficient money was raised to build the whole project, the boarding house and gymnasium were delayed as work went ahead on the main building with nine classrooms. The 200 preference shares were taken up by sixteen shareholders, the largest being the Estate of J.D. Pemberton with seventy-five shares [for the land purchase] and ranging down to the architect, Percy Leonard James, with one. Miss

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<sup>36</sup> These shares were registered to the Estate of J.D. Pemberton, brother of Susan Pemberton of Angela College (see Chapter 3). They would have been an investment of estate capital, but also, more importantly, an investment to aid the sale of lands through the family real estate business. An academic girls' school in the vicinity would attract buyers for house-building lots. The Pemberton residence, *Gonzales*, at 615 St. Charles' Street became the NHS boarding house from 1932-1952.

Atkins was allocated ten shares for the equipment and goodwill she gave to the company – it is improbable that she had much, if any, capital to contribute. Mrs. Cheetham and Miss Riarch were listed as having five shares each, again probably in recognition of their time and effort rather than monetary investment. Other shareholders were William C. Todd (25 shares), Ian Douglas (20 shares), Major Garrard (15 shares), Rose Davey (14 shares), Audrey Hammond (10 shares), D. James Angus (10 shares), Daisy Hooper (5 shares), E.P. Porter (2 shares), Dorothy Stanier (1 share), Phyllis Collier-Wright (1 share), M.H. Barry (1 share).<sup>37</sup> Keith Walker comments that with “her lack of business acumen it is unlikely that Miss Atkins composed the whole of the May 1931 letter herself, but it shows the professionalism of the parental group”.<sup>38</sup> The future, with new buildings and land for playing fields, seemed assured.

The classroom building on the Pemberton Woods site was a wise economic decision. As insufficient funds were raised to build a new boarding house on the property, yet another building was rented for this purpose.<sup>39</sup> In 1932, Sefton College departed from *Gonzales* at 615 St. Charles Street, and Norfolk House rented the building and grounds for \$85 a month. Built in 1885 for Joseph Despard Pemberton,<sup>40</sup> it had more than twenty rooms in over 10,000 square feet. It was large enough to house the girls who boarded, Miss Atkins, Mrs. Forbes, Mrs. Cheetham, and usually another mistress or two to help

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<sup>37</sup> The Hammonds, Porters, Collier-Wrights, Jameses, Garrards, Anguses, and Todds were NHS families and the other shareholders may have been, too.

<sup>38</sup> Scott and Walker, “Letter to Parents”, *Do Thy Best*, 25-26.

<sup>39</sup> Carolyn Gossage erroneously maintains, that after the classrooms were moved from Granite Street to the new location, “Stubbornly, Miss Atkins and Mrs. Cheetham managed the boarding residence together under increasingly difficult conditions.”

<sup>40</sup> J.D. Pemberton was the brother of Susan Pemberton, principal of Angela College 1866-1869. See Chapter III.

with supervisory duties.<sup>41</sup> The school now had sufficient classrooms, a leased boarding house that continued in use until the building was condemned in 1952, and soon built a gymnasium.

Even after the formation in 1931 of a limited company to control financial matters and establish a permanent location, Miss Atkins remained in control of the running of the school. It was not until her retirement in 1956 that a Board of Governors, composed of parents and friends of the school, incorporated the school as a society and assumed governance.<sup>42</sup>

From the beginning, a sound curriculum has been the foundation of education at Norfolk House. Academics were of prime importance. Despite the destruction of most of the early school records, recollections and contributions by students, parents, and teachers have revealed much about the school routine. When the school opened in September 1913, classes were held only in the morning from 9:30 until 12:00 with one ten minute break, to be followed by one hour to one and three-quarter hours of ‘preparation’ at home. The two teachers divided the students into two classes – the Upper and Lower Divisions; a wide age range within these classes necessitated several additional groupings. Individual progress rather than age seemed to have been the deciding factor. Although this system was a lot of work for the teachers, it was beneficial for the students. “More than one Old Girl has commented that she learned more by listening to the group above her being taught than she did from her assigned work,”<sup>43</sup> illustrating the flexibility of the approach. During the first Autumn Term, the

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<sup>41</sup> Scott and Walker, *Do Thy Best*, 29.

<sup>42</sup> “Headmistress Retires”, Scrapbooks of Eileen Learoyd, NHS Old Girls’ Association F-4, GNA.

<sup>43</sup> Scott and Walker, *Do Thy Best*, 17.

Upper Division girls studied English, Literature, Poetry, Spelling, Composition, French, German, Arithmetic, Geography, Scripture, Drawing, and Drilling [physical exercises] at various levels in a tumbling timetable.<sup>44</sup> Four subjects were assigned each day for the girls to prepare for the next class. The two women instituted a decidedly British curriculum and ordered textbooks from England. One Old Girl recalled that about 1926 the British Columbia Department of Education tried to force Miss Atkins to follow the government syllabus and use the prescribed texts.<sup>45</sup> The approved books did appear in the school, but as the private schools were beyond the Department's jurisdiction for enforcement,<sup>46</sup> the books were used at teachers' discretion. Miss Goldfinch, for instance, developed her own Social Studies workbook for the group equivalent to about grade 5 in the public system. Contents included maps and exercises for Canada, the United States, Mexico, Central America, and South America. Its pages were mimeographed in purple ink and bound into a book with a printed cover,<sup>47</sup> obviously intended for repeated usage over a span of years. In my own experience, some thirty years later, provincial regulations were only followed in a gentle sort of way. Good teaching and an enriched curriculum allowed any girls who needed to write Department of Education examinations, for transfer to the public school curriculum or to earn

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<sup>44</sup> A tumbling timetable is an organizational device in which subjects rotate through the class time slots during a specific number of days – through a Monday to Friday school week at NHS, but can be as short as a two-day cycle or as long as two weeks or more. The aim is to prevent a certain subject from always being just before lunch or last period in the day.

<sup>45</sup> Mary Carlyle Hammond-Rockingham, NF3 – 5, GNA.

<sup>46</sup> See Chapter III.

<sup>47</sup> NHS Society Fonds F2-3. A hectograph may have been used, but if gel apparatus was employed, the size of type reproduced indicates a level of skill lost in later years. More likely the school had a spirit duplicator, which was inexpensive to purchase and use. These machines were in very wide circulation in schools after their introduction in the late-nineteenth century, but have been banned in recent years due to the fumes from the methyl hydrate used for the printing.

matriculation for university entrance, to succeed with only a minimum of specific preparation.<sup>48</sup>

As enrollment increased, more classes were added, ‘independent of syllabus’ groupings not grade specific. The Upper and Lower Divisions were subdivided into A and B sections. By 1923, numbers were sufficient for Miss Atkins to add a Middle Division. Not until 1928 did the term ‘Form’ come into use. To begin with, as almost all of the girls were under 14, only Forms I to V were instituted with the appendages Lower and Upper, as well as A and B used quite fluidly to suit the enrolment and ability patterns of a particular year. In the early years most girls moved on to other schools if they planned to sit for ‘Matriculation’, but one or two girls often stayed on at NHS. These students required, and received, individual teaching with additional subjects introduced into the curriculum. For instance, Latin was taught to all of the Upper Division A by 1921.<sup>49</sup> But by 1924, Miss Atkins was ready to attempt formal high school classes.

The first secondary class started with four girls, two of whom stayed through Matriculation. One girl’s report cards from 1928 to 1931 show that she studied English Literature, English Composition, Writing, Dictation, Spelling, Scripture, History, Geography, French, Latin, Botany/Nature Study, Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry,

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<sup>48</sup> In the 1950s and 60s, and probably beyond, NHS concentrated on preparation for Department of Education exams in the month of June. The government bookstore most obligingly sold bound copies of each year’s examinations for a very reasonable price. As the people setting the exams had a particular fondness for specific questions which they repeated in rotation, it was not difficult for any girl, with reasonable intelligence, who had learned to think, and wanted to pass, to master any unknown material in a short time. Girls at NHS wrote papers in all of their examinable subjects in order to achieve matriculation. These were usually written at Victoria High School (as NHS was not an examination centre), so the full range of subjects of a large high school was potentially available. The results published in the local newspapers illustrated the success of the NHS girls despite their deviant education.

<sup>49</sup> Scott and Walker, *Do Thy Best*, 17.

Drawing, Painting, Music, and Drill (physical education). Chemistry was added in the Summer Term of 1932.<sup>50</sup> These courses would have prepared her for writing a wide range of provincial examinations. Miss Atkins was well-aware that the school's reputation for secondary education depended largely on success on these exams. She knew just as well that girls from Victoria's wealthier families were not much interested in studying. They envisioned their futures as debutantes at eighteen, perhaps finishing school or travel, and then marriage. She hoped for academic achievement.

Another student's story showed Miss Atkins' vision, understanding, and desire for academic recognition, but perhaps not immediate business acumen, in difficult economic times. In 1932, the girl was a boarder from Washington State, where her father was in the florist business and her mother gave lessons in French. As the Depression deepened, fewer and fewer families could afford the luxuries of flowers and private language lessons. When her mother secured a position teaching at Strathcona Lodge School at Shawnigan Lake, the business was sold and the family moved to Victoria. Upon being informed that the family could not afford to keep their daughter at the school, Miss Atkins initially offered to keep her as a day girl without charge until the end of the school year, and then extended free tuition to the rest of her school career. Of the twelve girls in her class in Upper IV-b (grade 9) four worked hard enough to pass the matriculation exams in three years' time, but the class above, Form IV-a, had a much bigger problem. Of the five girls, only one was likely to pass. Having faith in the girl's abilities, Miss Atkins suggested that with extra coaching in Latin and Science, she skip the next grade and join Form V in September. She stayed at the school, without

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<sup>50</sup> A student, NHS Old Girls Association Fonds, F-3 18, GNA. Although the class was small, this offering was similar to that of a small to medium-sized public high school.

fees, until she graduated. With her, the class of six had two passes on the government exams, a much better showing than one out of five would have been.<sup>51</sup> Scholarship and a girl's future were much more important to Miss Atkins than a credit on a balance sheet. The family chose to keep their daughter at Norfolk House rather than have her attend the less academic Strathcona Lodge where she would probably also have received free tuition (but not necessarily free board).<sup>52</sup> A year or so after she finished school, she gave Miss Atkins what money she could afford from her summer earnings, in appreciation for the years of free tuition. The results were not what she expected. "She [Miss Atkins] bought a painting with it and proudly displayed it as my gift to the school. I felt guilty when I heard her announcing this to visitors, as I knew that it was nothing compared to what the school had given me."<sup>53</sup> The headmistress continued her efforts to improve academic standing and in the autumn 1939 newsletter to Old Girls, she was able to report excellent Matriculation results from the previous June. "All the candidates were successful and two gained honours."<sup>54</sup> This represented solid academic success for the school.

The school did not ignore the less academically gifted. One girl remembered Mrs. Cheetham teaching her little poems and words so that she could remember how to do difficult Math problems. "Being blessed with a good memory, I passed using these gimmicks and never understood how the problems were solved."<sup>55</sup> Not everyone was going to excel, but each girl could do her best by whatever means it took.

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<sup>51</sup> Memories of Kitty (Bladen) Carson, NHS Old Girls Association Fonds, F3 – 7, GNA.

<sup>52</sup> Strathcona Lodge School was a boarding school only.

<sup>53</sup> Memories of Kitty (Bladen) Carson, GNA.

<sup>54</sup> NHS Minutes, November 23, 1939, GNA.

<sup>55</sup> NHS Old Girls Association Fonds, F3 – 10, GNA.

From a series of school examination papers from the early 1940s, since change moves slowly in schools, especially those based on the British model, it is possible to reconstruct some of the curriculum and teaching practices of the preceding fifteen to twenty years. These exams show the use of a spiral curriculum, revisiting previous learning to add greater depth and understanding, in at least some subjects. Final exams were based on the whole year's work.<sup>56</sup> The Science papers for Upper III, Lower IV, and Upper IV for 1942-1944, set by Mrs. Thompson and Mrs. Cheetham, illustrate this pedagogical method. [See Chapter V Appendix] The History exams show a looser organization. The examples given in the appendix show an almost exclusive concentration in Form III on British History, from the early Renaissance until the era of exploration and expansion. Form IV Lower B continues with British History, moving forward through the Jacobite uprisings, the industrial revolution, to London in the 1740's. Curiously, the French Revolution and Napoleon appear as part of this course. In the Fall Term of 1943, Form IV Lower, returned largely to British History and, presumably, empire, as the last question on the paper was concerned with the colonization of Australia and the development of self-government in Australia and New Zealand. The remainder of the year concentrated on Canadian History from the French explorers, to the Seven Years' War, and to the problems of government afterwards. The earlier topics, almost exclusively British, could have been the decision of the Headmistress, or may have reflected the particular interests of the teacher from her own education. The public school curriculum would have stressed British history, but the sudden change to Canadian themes following the Christmas exam in December, 1943, and continuing into Form IV Upper the following school year, probably indicated that

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<sup>56</sup> Examination Papers NHS Society Fond NF2 – 11, GNA.

some pressure was put upon the school to follow the British Columbia public school syllabus.<sup>57</sup> As the scrutiny eased, emphasis reverted. More than a decade later, English History was firmly entrenched in the equivalent of Form IV Upper (or A).<sup>58</sup> Canadian History made its appearance in Form V (Grade 11) by the 1950s, in preparation for the compulsory provincial examination in Social Studies 30.

Unlike the ‘Whole Language’ approach of the latter part of the twentieth century, the subject of English was divided into distinct parts, literature, composition, and grammar. In the early 1940s, Mrs. Cheetham seemed to have a monopoly on grammar but the teachers of the other segments varied, sometimes from term to term. The Grammar paper of December 1944 was headed Lower V, indicating either acceleration of able pupils, or, and perhaps more likely with wartime shortages, a larger grouping to conserve teacher time. As one girl found the June exam “Ug!, Ug! Horrible!”, she probably did not excel on it, and then found the paper in December to be “very hard”.<sup>59</sup> This would indicate that she was not part of the Form V class due to her abilities in grammar, but perhaps for other subjects.<sup>60</sup>

The types of questions on the exam papers indicate methodologies very like those in place at the Norwich High School, and other similar schools in Britain, in the early

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<sup>57</sup> This pressure could have come from parents or may have been connected to the school’s registration for the provincial examinations.

<sup>58</sup> Tudor and Stuart England formed the syllabus of Grade 10 History with Miss Joy Congdon, MA (Cantab), 1957-1958.

<sup>59</sup> Exam papers of a student, GNA.

<sup>60</sup> Probably the more able students from Form IV –A and the less able from Form V were taught together for grammar as well as other subjects. This would conserve teacher power and was preferable to having two levels within each class. When times improved more internal class divisions, as well as students joining other classes, were possible. For instance, in 1959-1960 eleven of the twelve students in the grade 12 class were divided into three classes for French based on achievement – two of which wrote the matric exam but the third did not (one student took matric German but not French). Math was divided into three groupings, one student at the grade 13 level, most at the grade 12, and the remainder joined the grade 11 Math class. All wrote the provincial exams at the appropriate level.

part of the twentieth century. Knowledge of facts and rote learning were certainly evaluated, but there was also evidence of testing the use of higher order thinking skills. The Form III History Paper in June, 1942, invited the pupil to “Pretend to be a pilgrim traveling to Canterbury . . .”. The Geography paper of Summer, 1943, which unlike the History paper, was concentrated on Canada, presented an interesting question as one of its choices:

Imagine you are on a trip across Canada traveling from east to west coasts – explain how you would travel, where embark and where disembark. Describe your route, the scenery you would see and where possible the industries or agriculture you might encounter. What important cities would you pass through and why were they important?

A successful answer here would have required the use of analysis, synthesis, and some evaluation. Unfortunately, the other choices on the paper required less brain power – questions about the production and transportation of grain, and manufacturing in eastern North America required only rote learning. Miss Atkins was not in the business of breaking new pedagogical ground, but rather, with providing a solid academic education in a style which was both familiar and comfortable for parents and teachers. The curriculum may have been ‘traditional’, but it served this goal.

Although its philosophy was based on Christian principles, and the school maintained mild associations with the Anglican Church, religious attitudes were inclusive rather than exclusive to any particular denomination. “One would have expected the daughter of a long line of ordained ministers to have insisted that the school day start with some form of religious service. In practice, this was restricted to reciting the Lord’s

Prayer”,<sup>61</sup> and did not even include the short Bible reading which was the rule in the public school system. Lengthier morning ‘Prayers’ came much later. Scripture classes taught by Miss Atkins concentrated on Bible study and biblical history. Exams from the Upper III and IV Forms from the early 1940s required either answers to questions directly from the Bible or summaries of incidents or parables. The Scripture exam papers consisted of one-third of a sheet of paper with the questions typed on a ditto master and run off or simply typed with carbon papers.<sup>62</sup> Frugality was clearly evident, but religion was considered important as Anglican Confirmation classes were conducted at the school for those girls whose parents wished them to participate. Girls who attended these sessions through the 1920s until 1931, remembered the lessons taught by Archdeacon Laycock. In addition to giving religious instruction, he took them on “many expeditions; one was climbing Mount Arrowsmith [Vancouver Island]. We must have camped for two nights – 4 or 5 of us.”<sup>63</sup> One student noted that there were ten girls in the class, including five boarders from the Far East.

Unlike the several Headmistresses of Angela College, Miss Atkins did not lay stress on the acquisition of the ‘accomplishments’ during the school day. Drawing, painting, and music, probably singing, formed the repertoire of the Arts. Social graces would be learned at home, or at the boarding house, good manners were sufficient for classroom time. She did, though, take full advantage of Norfolk House being a city school. Pat Porter recalled her “making every effort to get us to cultural things. I remember going to see Pavlova at the Royal [Theatre], and Gilbert and Sullivan operas;

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<sup>61</sup> Scott and Walker, *Do Thy Best*, 20.

<sup>62</sup> The duplicating machine mentioned earlier was undoubtedly still in use..

<sup>63</sup> Diana Hammond to Miss Scott, 21/11/1972, NHS Old Girls Association Fonds, F-3 15, GNA.

Martin Harvey used to bring plays and concerts. We always took part in the Music Festivals and things.”<sup>64</sup> These activities would help form the girls into interesting people rather than the ‘painted dolls’ of the eighteenth and early and mid-nineteenth schools for young ladies in Britain.

The school sometimes staged its own entertainments with a particular theme. The 1934 event was titled “Garden Masque” with songs from Edward German’s “Merrie England”. The stage was set:

The village is in fete for May Day. There is an undercurrent of excitement as the villagers have heard that Queen Elizabeth who is at a country house nearby intends to pay one of her famous surprise visits, accompanied only by her host, the Earl of Leicester. Music is played. The May Queen and her attendants enter and group themselves around the May Pole.

Opening Chorus – Sing a Down

Entrance of the Queen and Earl of Leicester<sup>65</sup>

The programme continued with English songs and dances, including a maypole dance from Elizabethan times. Teachers, probably led by Mrs. Cheetham with her theatrical experience, must have invested a great deal of time and effort in this production. The choice of content would have been comfortingly familiar to those parents who were recent immigrants from Britain and reassuring to those without a British public school upbringing that they were doing their best to help their daughters move upwards in society with the ‘right’ experiences. Such a production was maintaining ethnic boundaries for some, while removing them for others. For some girls, singing, dancing, and role-playing were undoubtedly perceived as more fun than rhythmic exercises of their usual gymnastic demonstrations but just as energetic.

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<sup>64</sup> Scott and Walker, *Do Thy Best*, 20.

<sup>65</sup> P.E. Teachers Workbook, NHS Society Fonds – Staff, F-2, GNA. This book was compiled by the physical education teachers as a record for continuity of what had been accomplished and as a resource for future classes.

Until the development of the Pemberton Woods property, organized athletics had posed a problem. The gardens of the rented house on Granite Street were adequate for outdoor play at break times<sup>66</sup> but unsuitable for proper games. Other solutions were found. Stadacona Park was used for rounders. Parents who lived reasonably close to the school loaned their tennis courts and grounds. One family erected two posts in a flat area of their garden for netball. Badminton was played at a private club.<sup>67</sup> Drill took place on a large wooden deck in the United Church basement. “There were no competitive matches with other schools”.<sup>68</sup> These early arrangements may have contributed to Norfolk House being much less of a “swing those hockey sticks” type of school than the others which survived on Vancouver Island.

By 1931, an extensive programme of exercises – Drill – formed part of the curriculum. The Teachers Workbook for Physical Education gives tables of exercises – arm, lateral, foot, head, abdominal, leg, balance, posture, and dances – for each age group. The table for young boys in the school (indicating the presence of at least some) contains more active exercises.<sup>69</sup> The workbook refers to remedial exercises for special conditions such as knock knees, lumber spine, kyphosis, and later, constipation, showing concern for individual needs, (similar to Miss Buss’ remedial programme at North London Collegiate). As with the British girls’ schools, Swedish routines formed the basis of the syllabus. Detailed instructions were included for The Programme of Advanced Gymnastics performed by the Stockholm YMCA Team during a tour of

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<sup>66</sup> Break was called recess in the public school system.

<sup>67</sup> This practice continued into the 1960s with the girls walking briskly in a ‘crocodile’ to the facility on Cadboro Bay Road after completing afternoon classes. More information about crocodiles is included in the later section on the boarding houses.

<sup>68</sup> Scott and Walker, *Do Thy Best*, 19.

<sup>69</sup> Boys were accepted for kindergarten and primary classes for many years. As University School did not usually accept pupils under 8, boys often went to one of the girls’ schools first.

Great Britain in 1933. Exercises were balanced by classes in traditional folk dancing (see above). Parents ‘enjoyed’ athletic and dance displays. The 1938 programme was typical:

O Canada

1. March - Seniors
2. Animal Exercises – Grades 1&2
3. Imaginative Exercises – Grades 3&4
4. Apparatus – Grades 1&2
5. Folk Dances
  1. Tantoli (Swedish) – Grades 5&6
  2. Shoemaker (Danish) – Grades 3&4
  3. Polka Sextur (Danish) – Grades 5&6
  4. Clap Dance (Swedish) – Grades 3&4
  5. Merry Merry Milkmaids (English) Grades 7-9
6. Apparatus – Grades 3-6
7. Rhythmical Exercises – Grades 7, 8, 9
8. Swedish Exercises – Grades 5&6
9. Rhythmical Exercises – Grades 10-12
10. Apparatus – Grades 7-12 <sup>70</sup>

The workbook contained directions for each part of the programme. Scandinavian influence was obvious in both the exercises and the folk dances performed. By this time, the term ‘grade’ was sometimes replacing the earlier designation of ‘form’, at least in athletic activities.

Other athletics activities became popular. A school sports day was held annually from the early years. Photographs in the archives show young students, boys as well as girls, in an egg and spoon race, and slightly older girls in a potato race. Girls competed for a challenge cup in tennis at various private courts from 1928 onwards. The move to the Pemberton Woods property, with space for playing fields and, after 1933, a gymnasium, allowed for the development of competitive games. The school was divided

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<sup>70</sup> P.E. Teachers Workbook.

into three houses, Caister, Wymondham, and Walsingham, named after ancient villages in Norfolk, which competed in various sports. An archival photograph depicts the “First XI Hockey Team” of 1935, so by then Norfolk House must have been having matches against other schools. Entries in House Diaries reveal that Miss Atkins finally allowed the ‘unladylike’ game of basketball to be played by the mid-1930s.<sup>71</sup> Undoubtedly influenced by her friendship with Julia McDermott (Mrs. Forbes), and her ideas of propriety, she much preferred the more elegant postures of tennis on the two new courts and badminton in the gym, or club.

With the classroom firmly centred on academics, athletics entrenched, and some deference to religion, what was the hidden curriculum? Girls remembered that in the early thirties that they were frequently warned not to behave in any way which would bring disrepute to the school. As full outdoor uniform<sup>72</sup> was required when travelling to and from school and on school outings, the girls was easily identified in the community and expected to uphold the reputation of the school. “Rules were strict, rules ensuring that we stand when grown ups entered or answered them politely when they addressed us or rush to open the door for them when they were leaving the room.” These were the norms of good manners expected of the girls both at school and at home. What they did not receive, according one girl’s recollections, was any instruction in treating the handicapped with empathy or consideration. While she was at Norfolk House, there were five teachers with disabilities, “one with a cleft palate, one a shortened arm, one was deaf, one had no chin, and one a deformed eye”. She remembered the girls laughing at their expense, and

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<sup>71</sup> Scott and Walker, *Do Thy Best*, 30-34. Miss Atkins thought the game of basketball to be rough and ungraceful. She much preferred excercises, gymnastics, and racket sports to team sports such as basketball and field hockey which could lead to contact.

<sup>72</sup> School uniform is described later.

making them the butt of jokes behind their backs.<sup>73</sup> Sympathy and compassion for less fortunate others were apparently not being learned by the girls at that time. Abigail Day in a letter to the school, in 1978, had different, and more complimentary, memories. She recalled the dedication she had written in the school magazine,

Norfolk has been [based] on solid ideals that have remained unchanged in times when everything is changing. Despite the many new people and new ideas that have tried to mold and shape Norfolk's character, it is the original aims of the school that have molded theirs. This is why a Norfolk girl is always a Norfolk girl, for it is not the people that make Norfolk, but Norfolk that makes the people. Because of this, because of the past, we dedicate this magazine, with confidence and pride – to the Future.<sup>74</sup>

Miss Atkins and Mrs. Cheetham would have found Abigail's recollections very satisfying. Such was the reputation that they wanted to earn for their school. Perhaps they were unaware of the other behaviours, Miss Atkins and Mrs. Cheetham were too busy to notice them.

By 1932, parental expectations could be satisfied. The financial situation was under control. Classrooms were consolidated in one new, well-equipped building, with a gymnasium soon to follow. A spacious boarding house, in a prime residential neighbourhood, within a fifteen minute walk from the school, was leased and occupied. Matriculation results were steadily improving. Enrolment was growing. The school was established.

Although Miss Atkins and Miss McDermott were well-qualified in teaching, few of the teachers they hired had any formal professional training. The products of the reformed girls' schools, universities in Britain or the Continent, they were well-educated. They

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<sup>73</sup> Memories of Kitty (Bladen) Carson, GNA.

<sup>74</sup> Abigail Day to Old Girls' Association, October 4, 1978, NHS Old Girls Association Fonds F3 – 11, GNA.

worked hard, for long hours, especially those living in the boarding house, with supervision of the girls in addition to their teaching load, and were remembered by students and parents for the initiative and effort they put into teaching well. These women embodied the English ‘ladies’ whom parents wanted their daughters to become.

One Old Girl’s remembrances echo those of many girls. Miss Spence, the French mistress, held French tea parties to improve oral skills. Mothers vied with each other to send the best sandwiches, cakes, and tarts. A Geography mistress, Miss Whaley, took the girls out into the Pemberton Woods to build African huts to make the lesson come alive. Miss Riach’s Botany class on the functions of the parts of the flower was the closest they ever came to sex education.<sup>75</sup> Despite Miss Riach’s blushing embarrassment, the girls received competent, resourceful teaching, in a nurturing environment. Small classes, without serious behaviour problems,<sup>76</sup> permitted scope for both formal entertaining and building bush huts. Both activities could provide, and doubtless did for some, useful skills for later life.

The most notable character of all the teaching staff for thirty years was Ivy Cheetham. She was another of those British women who, needing to support herself and her young son by a more reliable means than on the stage, came to Canada to teach. Cynthia Musgrave described her first encounter, “I had been there just a few months. I went to school one day and there was this new teacher. Somebody with an extraordinary

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<sup>75</sup> Memories of Pamela van der Esch-Mitchell, NHS Old Girls Association Fonds F-3 – 10, GNA.

<sup>76</sup> Girls who could or would not adapt to the school’s expectations would have been simply “not invited to return” in the manner of most private schools. Naughtiness could be tolerated but not disrespect for others. Due to the burning of school records, no specific evidence of Miss Atkins’ decisions remains and girls who were encouraged to leave were not likely to write of their behaviour for inclusion in the archives. As this was the practice in effect in the 1950s at NHS and at other reputable private schools, it’s fairly safe to infer that Miss Atkins followed it. Even in times of low enrolment, Norfolk House did not accept girls with serious behaviour problems.

fuzzy head of hair put her head around the door and shot out some questions when there wasn't anybody in sight. I wondered who on earth she was.”<sup>77</sup> Nonie Guthrie established some dates. She was sure Mrs. Cheetham was at Norfolk House before 1927, as Nonie went to Strathcona Lodge School in that year, and had been taught by her at both schools. “Probably Mrs. Cheetham went to N.H.S. when St. George's [St George's School for Girls on Rockland Avenue]<sup>78</sup> folded, say 1926-7, and came to Strathcona for one year only, 1927-28.”<sup>79</sup> Carolyn Gossage included a brief description of Mrs. Cheetham in her book, but was confused about the chronology of her posts.<sup>80</sup> Miss Scott's account concurs with Nonie Guthrie's, but the Guthrie letter would have been available to her.<sup>81</sup> Mrs. Cheetham returned to Victoria and Norfolk House for the 1928-29 school year and remained a fixture on campus for the next three decades.

Mrs. Cheetham was not only an eccentric but also a versatile teacher. Nonie Guthrie remembered her as “the finest teacher of English grammar that I ever had – though she was game to try anything, including Greek dancing!”<sup>82</sup> Ten years later, she was teaching Mathematics and Chemistry. One student recorded more than just her teaching. She remembered her “rushing up to Oak Bay Ave. [a ten minute walk from the school] to catch the streetcar going to town. Under her arm she had the staffroom teapot instead of her purse! She returned huffing and puffing to tell us about it.” Until an old burner replaced the old coal furnace in the late 1950s, classrooms remained at a healthy, brisk

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<sup>77</sup> Scott and Walker, *Do Thy Best*, 22.

<sup>78</sup> The school building is now a large apartment house and the stables became Langham Court Theatre.

<sup>79</sup> Ione Guthrie to Keith Walker, Epiphany 1991, NHS Old Girls Association Fonds, GNA.

<sup>80</sup> Gossage, *A Question*, 231. Ms Gossage establishes her first at Strathcona Lodge, then at St. George's, and on to Norfolk House. This sequence was not possible as Minna Gildea was teaching at St. George's when it amalgamated with St. Margaret's School, taught at the latter, and then started Strathcona Lodge

<sup>81</sup> Scott and Walker, *Do Thy Best*, 22.

<sup>82</sup> Guthrie to Keith Walker.

temperature for much of the year. Mrs. Cheetham would enter the classroom with her books under one arm and her Airedale, Peter, under the other. She would establish him on his little Persian rug beside the radiator before she began the lesson. Later, she would sit at her desk, feet on the radiator, revealing her latest in pantaloons or other forms of warm underwear,<sup>83</sup> while the girls concentrated on their work.

The financial situation Mrs. Cheetham faced was typical of many of her class. She may have been a widow, but, as a husband was never spoken of, it was more likely that he had ‘gone off’. As she had no private means for the support of herself and her son, she depended entirely upon what she earned. Following her mother’s death in 1939, a half share of the estate, amounting to £3000 came to her, but she did not actually receive the money until after the end of World War II.<sup>84</sup> She lived at the boarding houses for years, keeping her expenses low. After she retired, she received no pension from the school, as none were provided in her time, nor did she belong to any private pension plan. The former colleagues and long-term friends lived together until declining health forced Miss Atkins to enter a nursing home. In Mrs. Cheetham’s later years, she relied upon the bequests in Miss Atkins’ will.<sup>85</sup> Ivy Cheetham’s life was fulfilling, but not prosperous.<sup>86</sup>

Many of the girls in the early decades were either born in Britain or the daughters of recent immigrants. As more and more younger sons and well-educated, but less prosperous, members of the middle and upper classes had found “you cannot go where you please, or have what you please; you cannot join in amusements that are really

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<sup>83</sup> Valentine Harlock, “Thoughts and Quotes from Old Girls”, NF3 – 4, GNA.

<sup>84</sup> Codicil to the Will of Mrs. Rose Florence Watkin, July 16, 1939, NHS Society Fonds F2 – 6, GNA.

<sup>85</sup> Will of Dora Winifred Atkins, NHS Society Fonds F2 – 5, GNA.

<sup>86</sup> Her son may have been killed in World War II as her granddaughter, Kitty Ann (born 1941 or 1942), grew up with an aunt and at the school with her. Her mother was employed elsewhere.

amusing, because every form of sport is expensive; you cannot accept pleasant invitations, because you cannot return them”,<sup>87</sup> they were attracted to Vancouver Island or the Gulf Islands. There, they heard, the same income would allow a family to live well with all the riding, hunting, and fishing the husband could desire. After four years of ‘adventure’ during World War I men who found it difficult to ‘settle down’ with few prospects in Britain, were as attracted to the West Coast as those who came prior to the war. Many of those who had come as single men early in the century and returned to Europe to fight for the Mother Country and survived, now returned with wives and often young families.<sup>88</sup> With class distinctions less finely tuned than they were ‘back home’, the notable division was between the educated and the uneducated rather than specific parentage or land-holdings. Lifestyle and class depended upon the level of refinement these people were willing to maintain. Sons of earls could live in squalor, and merge into the labouring class, and thus by ‘going native’ lose their inherited status. The educated group was particularly aware of the value of education, and speaking correctly, for their children. Hence they sought British-type schools.<sup>89</sup> Others from Britain, elsewhere in Canada, and the United States sought to ‘live British’, or at least have their children do so, and become part of their society. One of the early students at Norfolk House came to Victoria from Winnipeg with her young, widowed mother, her sister, and three orphaned cousins. Her mother proceeded to enrol the five girls at Norfolk House and St.

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<sup>87</sup> Skrine, “A Lady’s Life”, *Flannel Shirt*, 107.

<sup>88</sup> Eric C. Powell with Winifred E. Legg and Douglas in 1919.

<sup>89</sup> Jean Barman, “Ethnicity in the pursuit of Status: British Middle and Upper-Class Emigration to British Columbia in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries”, *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, XVIII-1, 1986, 34-36; “Growing Up British in British Columbia: the Vernon Preparatory School 1914-1946”, *Schooling and Society in Twentieth Century British Columbia*, ed. J. Donald Wilson, David C. Jones, (Calgary: Detselig Enterprises, 1980), 126; and much of *Growing Up British in British Columbia*, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1984).

Margaret's.<sup>90</sup> Another mother thought her daughter's behaviour "too loud and aggressive", her speech "too American", and her achievement in school too low in the eighth grade, so, on the advice of a friend, she investigated private schools in Victoria. Using money from a legacy, she enrolled her daughter in Norfolk House as a boarder. The girl settled into the school and *Gonzales*, the boarding house, quite quickly, and, by the time she went home for the Christmas holidays, she had achieved "a soft voiced English accent, polite and considerate behaviour, and a report card with high marks." Her mother was delighted with the results of her investment.<sup>91</sup> A private school in Victoria offered an aura of gentility, to those not born into the upper classes.

Miss Atkins had long understood the advantages and prestige of having proper boarding facilities for girls whose parents wanted them to have a British education. The rented house at 1052 Amphion had housed a few girls when required, but this had been, at best, a temporary solution. Several factors led Miss Atkins to make the decision to expand in 1925 including Julia McDermott Forbes' need to earn a living. Another impetus came from much farther afield. When Chiang Kai-shek took over control of the rebel armies in China, the British Government advised families to evacuate their children. As Victoria was much closer than Britain, demand rose for boarding schools. The solution to these needs was the leased house at 1390 St. James' Street.<sup>92</sup> The girls received good care and supervision from a former teacher and Julia Forbes and her daughter gained a virtually free home.

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<sup>90</sup> Visit with Mary Cunningham, NF3 – 5, GNA.

<sup>91</sup> Memories of Kitty (Bladen) Carson, GNA.

<sup>92</sup> Scott and Walker, *Do Thy Best*, 20-21.

The lives of the girls who were boarders were much closer to those of their cousins ‘back home’ than to those of Canadian girls in the public schools. A teacher recalled the familiar routine. When the girls left the boarding house, or the school went on an outing, they walked in a ‘crocodile’, two by two with the smallest at the front following the teacher and the oldest girls bringing up in the rear. At twelve-thirty, those going to the boarding house for ‘hot lunch’ assembled in their ‘croc’. They returned in the same manner by two o’clock for afternoon classes. Chatting with partners was permitted as long as the line was orderly. Junior girls would return to the boarding house in mid-afternoon for outdoor playtime, seniors would stay at school for organized games. ‘Prep’ commenced in the late afternoon and continued until shortly before suppertime.<sup>93</sup> Two senior girls, in rotation, would set the tables, but the meal was supervised by a resident teacher seated at each table. After supper there was more study time for the seniors and playtime for the juniors, until eight o’clock. After the younger girls were hustled off to their dorms, the older girls had an hour’s free time in the playroom. They, too, went to bed early with lights out by nine thirty.<sup>94</sup> Used to a luxurious lifestyle in a warm climate where they were not required to do anything for themselves, the girls from the Orient found boarding school a ‘dreadful experience’. Pat Porter recalled one of the Tayler girls telling her of Mrs. Forbes coming into the dorm and saying, “Oh Anita, aren’t you dressed yet?” Anita just held up her arms to have her nightgown removed. Some could not tie their own shoe laces.<sup>95</sup> Living in a draughty house and walking to school in a Victoria winter was harsh reality, very different from that of such places as Shanghai.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> ‘Prep’ or preparation was always the term used for out-of-class work, never ‘homework’.

<sup>94</sup> Scrapbooks – Clare Hill Maunsell, NHS Old Girls Association, F-4, GNA.

<sup>95</sup> Scott and Walker, *Do Thy Best*, 21-22.

Icy temperatures in the boarding house was a recurring theme in girls' diaries and memoirs. One recalled *Gonzales* as "a large rambling icy cold house with big verandahs overlooking the extensive gardens".<sup>96</sup> Toni Graeme<sup>97</sup> was not as complimentary, she remembered two years "with not a drop of warm, let alone hot water" with Mrs. Cheetham heating up one kettle of water at a time for a bath. "It must have been one of the longest tubs in Victoria with only about two inches of 'warm' water in it. And why she had to sit and monitor older girls having a bath was beyond me. As if any of us could drown in a few cups of water."<sup>98</sup> Perhaps Mrs. Cheetham was more worried about hypothermia as she was far too busy to have had any more sinister motive.

There were good experiences, too. Valentine Harlock<sup>99</sup> referred to her time at Norfolk House in the 1930s as "wonderful years for those of us who were fortunate enough to have the opportunity of a private school education. We made good friends and these friendships have lasted through the years".<sup>100</sup> The boarders walked all over Victoria, to beaches and harbour, Mt. Tolmie, Mt. Douglas, in their 'crocodile'. They sang lustily as they walked, with "Tavern in the Town" a favourite.<sup>101</sup> Nor was social life neglected, as a full calendar of parties and private dances filled the Christmas and spring

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<sup>96</sup> Valentine Harlock to Keith Walker, December 1<sup>st</sup>, 1992, NF3 – 4, GNA.

<sup>97</sup> Toni Graeme was the daughter of a Vancouver family sufficiently prosperous to send her to NHS as a boarder. She later studied journalism, lived, and worked in the North. Her best known book is *Women who lived and loved north of 60*. The survival skills learning in living at *Gonzales* served her well in coping with the privations of a cold, pioneer society.

<sup>98</sup> Toni Graeme, NHS Old Girls Association Fonds F3 – 20, GNA.

<sup>99</sup> Valentine Harlock's father was a marine engineer. Walter Hancock was born in the USA but his wife was born in England. They probably lived at 1231 Fort Street, on the south side between Linden and Moss at one time – this was an area of large houses on the edge of the Rockland district- and later at 162 Robertson St. (which may have been waterfront property at the time, as house numbering with even numbers on the west side, odd on the east, was not always consistent in the Fairfield/Oak Bay border area). The family must have enjoyed a comfortable income even during the Depression to be able to belong to the Uplands Golf Club and host a large party there for their daughter..

<sup>100</sup> Valentine Harlock to Keith Walker.

<sup>101</sup> Memories of Kitty (Bladen) Carson, GNA.

seasons. These were held in such places as the Empress Hotel Ballroom, the Royal Victoria Yacht Club, the Victoria and Uplands Golf Clubs, and private homes.<sup>102</sup> Parents were generous towards this aspect of their children's lives. A bill, in the archives, for a party given by Mrs. Harlock for Valentine at the Uplands Golf Club on May 4<sup>th</sup>, 1935, totaled \$76.65 for 100 guests.<sup>103</sup> This would have been a large discretionary expenditure for parents in 1935. Having 100 guests suggests that not only the wealthy schoolmates and their brothers were invited.

The wearing of 'school uniform' began in 1926. From then on, girls were required to wear a navy blue tunic on drill days for classes as well as physical activities. A photograph taken in front of the house on Amphion Street, shows a group of older girls with half wearing long-sleeved dresses in various styles, and the rest in school uniform. Pictures of younger children, taken in 1926, and including the kindergarten class, show a greater proportion wearing tunics, shirts, and ties. Young boys in the primary grades mostly wore shirts, ties, and short pants.<sup>104</sup> By the end of the decade full uniform became compulsory. A navy blue gym tunic, with house ribbon (red for Caister, purple for Walsingham, gold for Wymondham) on the left side of the front yoke, was worn over a long-sleeved white blouse or shirt with a green school tie. Black or navy bloomers, underneath, ensured modesty. Socks were ankle or knee length, with dark stockings<sup>105</sup> as an option. Outdoor clothing consisted of a green blazer and tam with school crests. A blue Burberry<sup>106</sup> and a navy sweater were added in colder weather. A Panama hat replaced the tam in summer term and a felt hat was worn by boarders on Sundays. Footwear consisted

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<sup>102</sup> Valentine Harlock, to Keith Walker.

<sup>103</sup> Scott and Walker, *Do Thy Best*, 33.

<sup>104</sup> Scott and Walker, *Do Thy Best*, 19-24.

<sup>105</sup> Opaque, usually wool or lisle.

<sup>106</sup> Trench-style raincoat.

of black Oxfords (polished and laces tied) for outdoors, tennis shoes (whitened with “It”)<sup>107</sup> for drill, and Packard or ballet slippers for indoors. There was no separate clothing for drill or games. Tunics were stuffed into bloomers or removed for rigorous indoor activities, whereas the whole uniform was worn for playing hockey. W&J Wilson’s on Government Street at Trounce Alley stocked the uniform components and badges. Girls wore all the garments at the same time when the boarding house or classroom was cold.<sup>108</sup>

After graduation, both girls from wealthy families and those who had received Miss Atkins’ assistance, continued to support their school. The Old Girls Association was flourishing by the 1930s. An early set of minutes included plans for providing tea on Sports Day and holding a series of entertainments to raise money to buy equipment for the new gym. The first of these was to be a bridge party held at the boarding house.<sup>109</sup> An entry from the meeting of March 6<sup>th</sup>, 1935, reported on a hockey match between a team of Old Girls and the school team. The school won 3-1.<sup>110</sup> This was followed by a tennis match later in the year. Mrs. Cheetham augmented the Old Girls Team on this occasion. Unfortunately, rain ended the match.<sup>111</sup> That fall, the women once again subjected themselves to the terror of school girls wielding hockey sticks, and although reinforced by an NHS student, lost the match 4-0. Miss Atkins provided tea for the battered survivors.<sup>112</sup> The minutes of November 14, 1937 reported on a “delightful badminton party” followed by refreshments at the boarding house, a tea held in the Empress Hotel

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<sup>107</sup> “It” was liquid white shoe polish.

<sup>108</sup> Jo Ellis, Toni Graeme, NHS Old Girls Association Fonds, F-3, 20, GNA..

<sup>109</sup> NHS Minutes, undated, but, by context in the Minute Book, after April 30, 1933 and probably September 17, 1934, GNA.

<sup>110</sup> NHS Minutes, March 6, 1935. GNA.

<sup>111</sup> NHS Minutes, June 8, 1935, GNA.

<sup>112</sup> NHS Minutes, November 27, 1935, GNA.

lounge during Easter Week, the annual dance in June, the tea on Sports Day. The dance was a great success with one hundred people enjoying the music of the Len Acres Orchestra.<sup>113</sup> Sufficient money was raised to pay in full for the gymnasium equipment.<sup>114</sup> About twenty members attended each social gathering for luncheons and teas. As the names of attendees largely differed from event to event, a much greater number continued to support their old school. By the late 1930s, the occasions became less athletic and more adjusted to the lifestyle of young matrons in Victoria.

The Country Fair held by the Old Girls Association on November 21, 1938 was the outstanding event of that school year. In addition to decorated stalls offering items for sale, contests and games provided entertainment. Later in the afternoon, a group of Old Girls presented a one act play, "Meet Me at the Tearoom". Appropriately, tea was served at the conclusion of the play. The event raised \$40, which was sufficient to purchase a microscope for the school.<sup>115</sup> A note in the Minutes of October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1939, concerned a discussion about knitting for the soldiers. The final decision was not to participate as a group as all the members belonged to other organizations which were contributing to the war effort. What is interesting is that despite their involvement in other charitable activities, the women continued to put considerable effort into making improvements to their old school. This reflects Abigail Day's<sup>116</sup> comment, "This is why a Norfolk girl is

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<sup>113</sup> The Len Acres Orchestra was a popular group for dances in Victoria in the 1930s, 40s, and 50s.

<sup>114</sup> NHS Minutes, November 14, 1937, GNA.

<sup>115</sup> NHS Minutes, November 21, 1938 and October 2, 1939, GNA.

<sup>116</sup> Abigail is probably part of the Day family who emigrated from Ireland to Canada via South Africa in 1891. Robert Day's income came from real estate. The Day family home was at 1606 Rockland Ave., just east of St. Charles St. and very close to the Pemberton home and later NHS boarding house at *Gonzales*.

always a Norfolk girl, for it is not the people that make Norfolk, but Norfolk that makes the people.”<sup>117</sup>

Not all the Old Girls contented themselves with being wives and mothers in the gentle pace of Victoria society.<sup>118</sup> A newsletter in 1939 reported other achievements. These included Peggy Frank’s obtaining the position of Instructor of Occupational Therapy at McGill University<sup>119</sup>, Jean Mayhew winning the John L. Todd gold medal for individual gymnastics at Macdonald College (McGill),<sup>120</sup> Phyllis Cowan<sup>121</sup> and Kitty Bladen completing their BAs and teacher training at the University of British Columbia and then obtaining teaching positions in the province. Nora Colquhoun earned her BA and social service training at the same institution. Sylvia Collier-Wright was games and drill instructress at York House School in Vancouver. The arts were represented by Amy Preminic having two pictures in the Canadian National Exhibition, and Joyce Marriott winning a prize in a national poetry competition judged by John Masefield,<sup>122</sup> probably the Governor General’s Poetry Award which she won in 1941.<sup>123</sup> Although these girls were not entering careers in Mathematics and the Sciences, teaching and social work were helping, caring jobs, and amongst the most respectable, and responsible, professions open to women in 1939. There seems to have been no flocking toward nursing at that time. The

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<sup>117</sup> Abigail Day, October 4, 1978, NHS Old Girls Association Fonds F3 – 11, GNA. Abigail’s father was Rector’s Warden at the Reformed Episcopal Church of Our Lord.

<sup>118</sup> As any records which Miss Atkins may have kept left the school with her and were destroyed, statistical evidence of graduates going on to careers is not available, but I have pieced together anecdotal accounts of the achievements of a cross-section of Old Girls from archival sources.

<sup>119</sup> Peggy Frank’s father was a veterinary surgeon in Victoria, BC.

<sup>120</sup> Jean Mayhew was the daughter of Robert Mayhew who bought the Sidney Rubber Roofing Co. Ltd. in 1912, was first elected to the House of Commons in 1937 (by-election), became parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Finance from 1945 to 1948, Minister of Fisheries from 1948 to 1952, and then Canadian Ambassador to Japan from 1952 -1954. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert\\_Wellington\\_Mayhew](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Wellington_Mayhew) .

<sup>121</sup> Phyllis Cowan’s and Sylvia Collier-Wright’s families were probably in the construction business.

<sup>122</sup> NHS Minutes, November 23, 1939, GNA.

<sup>123</sup> [http://www.library.ubc.ca/spcoll/AZ/PDF/M/Marriott\\_Anne.pdf](http://www.library.ubc.ca/spcoll/AZ/PDF/M/Marriott_Anne.pdf) . She also won the Woman’s Canadian Club Literary Award in 1943.

societal turmoil of the war years and the necessity of a greater number of nurses had not yet begun.

Anecdotal material in the archives preserves achievements from other years. As many of these sources were written some years later, they emphasized successes rather than difficult times. Joan Willsher became a modernist landscape painter of renown, with works from a fifty year career hanging in such public collections as Cadillac Fairview Corporation, CN Hotels, Department of External Affairs, Deutsche Bank, Granite Club (Toronto), Gulf Oil Company, Shell Oil Canada, University of Toronto, and in many private collections.<sup>124</sup> Myfanwy (Spencer) Pavelic received international acknowledgment with her official portrait of Pierre Trudeau being, perhaps, her best known work in Canada.<sup>125</sup> Others qualified in diverse fields. Betty (Slater) Parsons trained as a nurse at the old St. Joseph's Hospital.<sup>126</sup> Over a period of more than thirty years teaching pre-natal classes, she estimated that she taught more than 20,000 women how to relax. After she retired, some of that group contributed to a present for her – a trip around the world.<sup>127</sup> Although starting her career in 1951 “at the lowest clerical level” in Dr. Hugh Keenleyside's department at BC Hydro, Iva (Lisicka) Lester earned her master's degree in Accounting from New York University and entered the Accounts

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<sup>124</sup> Joan Willsher-Martel, “Retrospective 1950-2000”, NHS Old Girls Association Fonds F3 - 21, GNA.

<sup>125</sup> Diana Hammond to NHS Old Girls Association, “Eminent Old Girls”, September 30, 1984, Old Girls Fonds F3 – 11, GNA. Myfanwy was the daughter of David Spencer of the retail empire in B.C., later bought out by T. Eaton Co. The old Spencer family home on Moss Street, between Rockland and Fort St. was given to the city in 1951 to become the Victoria Art Gallery. Myfanwy left the art scene in New York City after her marriage in 1948 to her second husband, Nikola Pavelic, son of a former prime minister of Yugoslavia, and moved back to Victoria.

<sup>126</sup> Betty Slater was born in Pakistan but grew up in British Columbia. When her family decided that they could not afford to send her to England to study singing, she took nurses' training instead. Doubtless, her family viewed this as a more practical career.

<sup>127</sup> Betty Parsons to Mrs. Wilmot, February 28, 1987, NHS Old Girls Fonds F3 – 15, GNA.

Division. She retired as Chief of the division's "largest and most vital section",<sup>128</sup> a notable achievement for a woman even in the post-war years.

Not all after-graduation experiences were as successful. One girl<sup>129</sup> with degree and teaching certificate accepted a position teaching grades 7, 8, and 9 on James Island. The pupils at the school were the offspring of the eight hundred men working at the dynamite factory on the island. She says of herself, "I was a raw beginner in those days, very shy and uncertain about how to plan lessons and control classes . . . my tentative approach and inexperience were soon exploited to the fullest. My timid requests for assistance were greeted with 'Give them a good dressing down!'" Her life at Norfolk House, in small classes of girls, who, if not studious, were accustomed to being managed by mistresses and prefects, in no way prepared her for controlling a tightly-knit group of boys and girls in a multi-level classroom, not just in a company town, but on a company island. Even during her few weeks of practice teaching, she probably never even saw a class such as awaited her on James Island. Her experience with 'a good dressing down' would have been a steely look from Miss Atkins. Such was no preparation for metaphorically 'taking strips of hide off adolescent boys' backs'. As she, a quiet, well-mannered private school girl, was not at all the type of teacher the principal wanted, or needed, to have in his school, he provided no support. Consequently, she was forced to resign at Christmas. Fortunately, the teacher who was hired to replace her needed to backfill her job in

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<sup>128</sup> Iva Lester, May 9, 1990, NHS Old Girls Association Fonds F3 – 11, GNA. Iva Lisicka came to NHS from Czechoslovakia via Liverpool as one of the ten or more original 'evacuees' from Britain who were there for the duration of the war. It is unknown if her fees were ever paid. As a member of Form VI in 1942-43, she would have been unable to go home after graduation, so needed to find employment to support herself.

<sup>129</sup> This girl started at NHS as a boarder from a comfortable middle class family in the USA and, due to the Depression, became part of a family in dire financial straits in Victoria so she needed to earn her own living.

Barriere, on the mainland. She moved on to that school, and having learned from her experience, spoke to the Secretary of the School Board at the “first hint of discipline problems with the older boys”, and retained control.<sup>130</sup> Her difficulties on James Island do illustrate the consequences of leaving the sheltered life not only of Norfolk House, but also of upper middle class society in Victoria, and entering the ‘real’, working-class world. On the other hand, although she had no experiences to help with the realities she faced, she did summon up the resolution and determination to continue teaching.

Most of the Norfolk girls came from upper middle class families, some were very wealthy, others made considerable financial sacrifice to have their daughters at the school.<sup>131</sup> The professions, law, medicine, engineering, the military (officers’ daughters), and the Church were always well-represented, along with higher-end shopkeepers,<sup>132</sup> owners of larger retail outlets, fathers in the building trades (both house and ship),<sup>133</sup> and real estate. The vast majority of parents were well-educated, born in Britain or the first generation born in Canada, and belonged to the upper social circles in Victoria due to education or wealth. There were others, like Joe Garner, a semi-literate younger son of a large family who preempted land on Salt spring Island, who made money out of logging in the Cowichan Valley, bought an estate-like property with a large house overlooking Quamichan Lake, and sent his daughters to Queen Margaret’s and Norfolk House.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> Memories of a student, GNA.

<sup>131</sup> One case is discussed earlier in this chapter and another was resolved by a father paying for his third daughter’s education by providing apples and other produce from his farm. As girls were unlikely to write to the school after Miss Atkins’ retirement about their families’ earlier financial difficulties, most cases went undocumented. Part of Miss Atkins’ financial problems was no doubt due to her reputation of being very understanding about others’ difficulties.

<sup>132</sup> Such as Montague Bridgman’s china shop on Government Street.

<sup>133</sup> Harold Husband owned VMD, one of the larger shipyards in Victoria in the War Years.

<sup>134</sup> After retiring from logging in his 70s, Garner decided that he wanted to write. Education had been good for his daughters so wouldn’t do him any harm. He hired a teacher to improve his reading and writing skills

The girls all grew up in middle class and upper middle class neighbourhoods. Boarders came from overseas, mainly Asia, like the Tayler girls, daughters of a British family in Shanghai, or the evacuees from Europe during the War Years, like Iva Lisicka; from the United States; or from upcountry on Vancouver Island and the mainland. Because of the limited size of the boarding houses, the majority of students were always day girls. The Pemberton Woods campus was well-situated for girls using public transit. With a ten minute walk, girls could catch a streetcar on Oak Bay Avenue and travel either westward to the city or eastward to Oak Bay. A further brisk five minute walk up Richmond Road gave access to the Fort Street/Cadboro Bay Road streetcars. Most travelled away from the city to Oak Bay, the Uplands, or Cadboro Bay. Those living in the Rockland area walked or rode their bicycles to school, those from Fairfield did likewise or walked south on Richmond Road to catch the streetcar on Fairfield Road, which travelled westward to Cook Street and then north to Fort Street.<sup>135</sup> Some, of course, were taken to school and picked up by a parent or household servant.

These twentieth century parents were not descendants of the old Hudson's Bay Company or early settler families who had enrolled their daughters in Angela College before the schism in the Church, or even the next generation of Miss Dupont's time, who sent their daughters to school to perfect the accomplishments. From 1913 to 1945 and after parents wanted, increasingly, for their daughters to be able to 'do something' after they finished school. The question is, for what life were girls from schools such as

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and proceeded to become an author. To overcome lack of interest from the conventional publishing world, he established his own company, Cinnibar Press, to produce his books, and then flogged them, very successfully, at fall fairs and community gatherings around British Columbia. He represented an entrepreneurial class of private school parent.

<sup>135</sup> <http://vihistory.uvic.ca/content/maps/imapbasic.php?map=vicstreetcar1936>

Norfolk House, prepared? Were they well-prepared? Were their parents satisfied? Did these girls succeed because of or despite their British-style schooling? Matriculation gave access to Victoria College and usually its parent body, the University of British Columbia, for any girl who wished to attend. MacRae-Miller found that a number of the graduates of St. Margaret's School in Victoria during the late 1940s "described their sense that the sole mission of the School was to get them through their academic matriculation without regard for the standard they achieved, rather than to provide them with any direction or useful skills." One responded with, "their whole idea in life was to get you through and make sure you got your matriculation" and whatever you did afterwards "was nothing to do with them".<sup>136</sup> In contrast, Miss Atkins sought academic recognition for the school in the provincial examinations and was proud of the results by 1939. The demand for higher order thinking skills as well as rote learning on school examinations and further subdivision of already small classes made a considerable number of options available to each girl at her ability level. Parents who envisioned academic futures for their daughters, probably chose Norfolk House over the other private schools in Victoria. As a number enrolled multiple offspring, they must have been at least reasonably satisfied. As to the girls themselves, those who contributed their reminiscences praised the school for what it had done for them and their appreciation for British-style education in the Far West. The unhappy would not have responded.

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<sup>136</sup> Alison Elizabeth MacRae-Miller, "Discourse and Agency at Saint Margaret's School in Victoria, British Columbia, Between 1930 and 1950", M.A. Thesis, University of Victoria, 2003, 77.

## CHAPTER VI *Queen Margaret's – The Country School*

Queen Margaret's School in Duncan epitomizes the free enterprise girls' country school in some ways but is unique amongst girls' schools in Canada in many others. Its founders strove to build the ideal school based on their own experiences, their ideas of 'what ought to be', and the reality of necessity. To them, the development of character outweighed both academics and the traditional 'accomplishments'. The continued existence of the school nearly ninety years later attests to the fortitude, endurance, and survival instincts of two women who turned the necessity of earning a living into their life's work. Much of the history of the school was gathered together by the school's History Committee to commemorate the first fifty years. Almost all who contributed to the published volume<sup>1</sup> had had positive experience at the school. Those who hated the place probably did not respond to requests for memories as their recollections do not exist in the archives.

Unlike the founders of Norfolk House in Victoria, Norah Denny and Dorothy Geoghegan had not known each other in Britain, but first met in Duncan through Girl Guide interests. They shared similar upper middle class country lifestyles, professional family backgrounds, and values. Dorothy Geoghegan had a stronger link to Canada than Miss Denny. Her maternal grandparents had lived in Ottawa where her grandfather was a civil servant. Upon the death of his wife, he moved his young family back to Dublin, and died shortly thereafter, leaving his two children to be adopted by members of

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<sup>1</sup> Norah C. and others, *Beyond All Dreams*, (Duncan, British Columbia: New Rapier Press, 1975).

the family. Dorothy's mother was raised by her cousin, Mrs. Joseph Kirk, in Dublin.<sup>2</sup> Her father was born in Dublin, one of sixteen children of a prominent solicitor, of the same social class as the Kirks. He was educated at the well-known Boys School in Stephen's Green, studied medicine at Trinity College, and became a surgeon in the Royal Navy. He retired to Lee-on-the-Solvent on the south coast of England. He first sent his daughter to a small day school, and when she was twelve to Uplands at St. Leonard's-on-the-Sea as a boarder. Dorothy was an eager participant in its renowned athletic programme. In 1911, her father went to Vancouver Island to visit an old shipmate living in Glenora, outside of Duncan. He soon cabled his wife instructing her to sell the house in England, pack, and come to Canada, as he had bought land and was having a house built in the Cowichan Valley. Instead of Sixth Form at Uplands, Dorothy attended Duncan High School (across the road from the permanent home of Queen Margaret's) for a year, 1912-13, Victoria College for two years, and then transferred to the University of British Columbia receiving her degree in 1917. That September she opened a small school in Duncan with a Miss Young, but unfortunately this elderly woman died the following year and the school closed.<sup>3</sup>

Norah Denny's father was born in County Kerry, Ireland, the youngest child of an Anglican clergyman who fathered seven sons and four daughters. Her grandfather, who farmed a large amount of property in addition to his clerical duties, appears to have been a

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<sup>2</sup> Joseph Kirk, a Fellow of the Hibernian Society, was a noted sculptor. Some of his many statues are on the campus of Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland.

<sup>3</sup> Dorothy Geoghegan, MS-1337, Box 11, File 7, BC Archives, Queen Margaret's School, (hereafter BCA-QMS), 1-3.

man of considerable means. Norah's father attended the same boarding school in Dublin as Mr. Geoghegan and then also trained as a physician and surgeon at Trinity College. Her mother came from a very old Irish family. Shortly after their marriage, they, like Mr. Geoghegan, left Ireland but for a country practice with farming as a sideline in Lincolnshire, England. Norah was the eldest of a family of four boys and two girls. She was taught by governesses until she was ten, and then went daily by train to Lincoln High School fourteen miles away. When her headmistress became head of Queen Margaret's, the new Woodward School at Scarborough, her parents sent her and her sister Iris there as boarders for a time but sadly, they had to leave Queen Margaret's because "there were four boys to be educated and it was not considered so important for girls."<sup>4</sup> Norah and Iris returned home to continue their education with the family governess and take part in pre-World War I village life.<sup>5</sup> When war broke out in 1914, she worked for some months as a V.A.D.<sup>6</sup> assistant and then joined the Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service (Reserve). After working at field hospitals in England and France, she was appointed as Home Sister at the hospital at Boulogne.<sup>7</sup> As she was not a registered nurse (Sister) this attested to her abilities to assume leadership and responsibility.

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<sup>4</sup> Norah Denny, Box 11, File 7, NCD, 1-4, *BCA-QMS*.

<sup>5</sup> Despite the boys' education being considered more important, it was Norah, not one of the boys, who supported her eldest brother and his family, and later her sister, and eventually her mother at the school in Duncan.

<sup>6</sup> Voluntary Aid Detachment, a nursing organization operating in Britain and the Empire during World War I and World War II.

<sup>7</sup> Denny, Box 11, File 7, NCD, 4, *BCA-QMS*.

After she was demobilized in the spring of 1919, Norah faced the problem of what to do next. The old village life with its tennis matches, hockey games, riding, picnics, and dancing was gone forever. Her eldest brother, who had moved to Vancouver Island in 1912, returned there again after the war giving her a contact.<sup>8</sup> With no idea what they would do, but with plenty of energy and resourcefulness, Norah and two friends arrived in the Cowichan Valley. The other girls were appalled at the suggestion that they start a school for young children, but Norah responded with “What fun that would be!” She started out in the garage of their rented house but moved to a two-roomed shack on College Street in Duncan by September 1920, using one half as the schoolroom and living in the other. To earn sufficient income, she did housework, gardening, and looked after children for twenty-five cents an hour in addition to being a schoolmarm. She did not spend all her time working, as she won the Hayward Cup for Ladies Singles at the South Cowichan Lawn Tennis Club.<sup>9</sup> Although Norah lacked the university and teacher training qualifications of some of the other school founders on Vancouver Island, she came from the right upper middle class professional background, had experienced both the reformed day and boarding school models in Britain, developed her strong leadership abilities, learned nursing skills during the war, and was accustomed to country life, all attributes which equipped her and made her acceptable to parents as head of a country girls’ school.

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<sup>8</sup> Once the school was established, this brother helped by coaching sports, teaching horsemanship, and doing maintenance chores. He moved onto the property when accommodation was available and remained there for the rest of his life. Miss Denny looked after him, not the other way around.

<sup>9</sup> Denny, Box 11, File 7, NCD 5, *BCA-QMS*.

These two remarkable women came together to form their life-long partnership through the Girl Guide movement. By 1915 Dorothy Geoghegan was working with Guides in Duncan and rose to be Captain of the First Cowichan Guides. Hearing that a new-comer from England had worked with Guides, and as she was planning to return to England in January 1920, she went to talk to Miss Denny at her little school on College Street about taking over the Guide company. Although Miss Geoghegan began teaching in England, she soon returned to Canada as her mother became ill. In December of 1920, she was teaching in her little school on Festubert Street and Norah at hers on the other side of town. Together they were running the Guide company. The following month due to the death of one of Norah's housekeeping clients, a large house, Holmesdale, became available for rent. The two women began making plans for opening a school together and in March 1921 inserted the following announcement in *The Cowichan Leader*, the local weekly newspaper:

Miss Denny and Miss Dorothy Geoghegan B.A. beg to announce that they will open on April 4<sup>th</sup> next a Boarding and Day School for Girls, with a Preparatory Class for boys under ten, at Holmesdale, Duncan, which is being refitted for the purpose. Terms on application. Phone . . .<sup>10</sup>

This advertisement brought more success than Julia McDermott's in the *Daily Colonist* in the previous decade. Sylvia (Marlow) Genge, who had attended school in the cottage with Miss Denny and then moved to Festubert Street with Miss Geoghegan, entered the new

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<sup>10</sup> Denny, Box 11, File 7, Holmesdale and NCD, *BCA-QMS*.

school at Holmesdale, where, she remembered there were two classrooms, one junior and one senior and a single boarder for the first term.<sup>11</sup> By September 1921 there were twenty-six children of whom seven were boarders,<sup>12</sup> a third teacher, a cook, and a housekeeper. When Sylvia Marlow returned to the school in September 1922 after a year up-country, she found more girls, fourteen boarders, an extra classroom, school uniform, and a rough playing field for hockey on a newly acquired piece of land on the corner of Gibbins Road and the Island Highway.<sup>13</sup>

The two headmistresses chose the school symbols with care. The school colours were green for service, red for courage, and a narrow strip of gold for perfection. The motto was “Servite Fortiter – Serve Ye Bravely”. Their choice of hymn, “Soldiers of Christ, arise”<sup>14</sup>, was perhaps unusually militant for a girls’ school, but was a suitable metaphor for the strength and endurance of the two women and the school which they created. The ‘well-fought day’ was the attitude to life which they embodied and endeavoured to instill in the girls. Their choice of school flower was in sharp contrast to the hymn. The buttercup represented the shining gold of perfection but also the innocence and simplicity of children.<sup>15</sup> This flower also had the advantage of growing wild on the school grounds, so could be procured in abundance for state occasions for no cost.

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<sup>11</sup> Sylvia Marlow (Genge), *Dreams*, 251-252.

<sup>12</sup> *Victoria Daily Times*, September 6, 1921, Box 11, File 7, quoted in *BCA-QMS*.

<sup>13</sup> Marlow, *Dreams*, 252.

<sup>14</sup> See Chapter V Appendix.

<sup>15</sup> Denny, Box11, File 7, *BCA-QMS*.

The Coat of Arms combined elements from both of the Heads' own schools. The Cross and the Crown came from Queen Margaret's, Scarborough, and the Lamp and Chain from Uplands, the Sword was from the school hymn. Officially the crest was lozenge-shaped with "Vert on a cross gules colised or between; in the four quarters consecutively, a two-flamed pendant lamp, a mullet, a chain of three links, and a sword all argent, a crown of the third,"<sup>16</sup> surrounded by the school name and motto. It has decorated the blazers and berets, school exercise books, and china used by thousands of girls. These symbols worked together as part of the hidden curriculum of the school.

From its beginnings until April 1954, the school was privately owned by Miss Denny and Miss Geoghegan. When they started the school they had no money at all. At first, unable to borrow money from the banks in Duncan, they had to rely on private sources such as Miss Geoghegan's father, friends in England, and fees paid by parents. Any amount they borrowed had to be paid back with interest. Unlike Miss Atkins, of Norfolk House School in Victoria, who was apt to forget to send out bills, Miss Denny kept careful accounts of income and records of payments. A typical account issued on September 1<sup>st</sup>, 1934 read:

L. A-----

For board 1 <sup>st</sup> ½ term	70	[\$70.00]
Tuition	17.50	
Doctor – for term	2	[2.00]

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<sup>16</sup> Denny, Box 11, File 7, "Our Coat of Arms", *BCA-QMS*.

Dancing 1 <sup>st</sup> ½ term	3	[3.00]
Insurance for year	1	[1.00]
Total	93.50 <sup>17</sup>	[\$93.50]

leaving no doubt about the monies due. The Misses Denny and Geoghegan bought most equipment and furniture for the school second-hand, or like the first pianos, on the installment plan. They lived at the school and ate in the dining hall, but never drew a salary for themselves. A joint account paid all school expenses and what little they needed personally. This practice continued until they formed a non-profit Trust Society in April, 1954 to ensure the future of the school. In fact, when the newly formed Board of Governors (in 1954) suggested paying them \$250 a month each, they refused this amount as being too high and suggested \$100 a month each would be just fine. <sup>18</sup> They continued to live at the school and dine with staff and students and to have simple personal needs.

As enrolment increased, Miss Denny's records showed decades of continuous building projects, paid for mostly from fees and money raised by the staff and students. After the first term in rented Holmesdale, the women realized that they needed a permanent home for the school. Unable to secure a long-term lease on the house, they spent the summer searching for property despite having no money. Finally they found a plot of about six acres with a four-roomed cottage, an old barn, and a number of chicken

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<sup>17</sup> Box 10, File 2, *BCA-QMS*,.

<sup>18</sup> Denny and Geoghegan, Box 11, Files 7, Buildings and File 8, Finance, *BCA-QMS*.

houses of various sizes in the present location on the corner of the Old Island Highway and Gibbins Road. On August 11, 1921, they made a down payment of \$100 with money borrowed from Dr. Geoghegan. When school opened in September, they had a piece of land within walking distance for games and a cottage in which to house staff.<sup>19</sup> A friend in England invested £1000 in the school venture which led to the first building project. An 18 x 12 foot shack was constructed at Holmesdale for an extra classroom with the understanding that it would be moved up the road to the new location. This building had a long and varied career – first as the senior schoolroom at Holmesdale, then as the junior classroom at the new property, a lunchroom, the school sanitarium (with 6 beds), two bedrooms for school staff, a house for Mr. and Mrs. H.A.M. Denny with the addition of a verandah,<sup>20</sup> Brownie hut, workshop, store room, and finally a games hut.<sup>21</sup> By 1927, the school had established its credit at a local bank and so was able to raise loans from time to time.<sup>22</sup>

Building the chapel in the early 1930's was typical of the construction projects. Architect Archdeacon Laycock, who drew up an elaborate and expensive plan, was more than aghast when Miss Denny told him happily that the school had \$36.00 in the building fund. Mr. Carlton Stone suggested building with logs as an alternative, offered to donate the logs, and built a corner at his Hillcrest Mill to show what it would look like. Mr.

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<sup>19</sup> Denny, *Dreams*, 24.

<sup>20</sup> H.A. Maynard Denny, the eldest of Norah Denny's four brothers, lived and 'helped out' at the school but did not have any outside employment. When he married and had a family, the school supported his wife and daughters too.

<sup>21</sup> Denny, *Dreams*, 27-30.

<sup>22</sup> Denny, Box 11, File 7, Buildings, *BCA-QMS*.

James, a local architect, created working plans for \$20.00. Two estimates were procured for the construction, William Bros. at \$804.00 and Mr. O.C. Brown at \$754.00. The Heads chose Mr. Brown, who had already done much building for the school. The girls demolished the big old barn on the chosen site during games periods in the Summer Term. Once the logs began to arrive in July, Miss Geoghegan hammered in the first spike, and construction began.<sup>23</sup>

Small amounts of money and gifts in kind began to come in from parents, Old Girls, and friends. One of the first donations came from Queen Margaret's School, Scarborough, a cheque for £4 5s 8p from the proceeds of their chapel collection. The girls earned money doing odd jobs in the community, organized a bazaar which made \$216.00, and put on entertainments at the school for another \$75.56. Mrs. Denny sent a cross and Mrs. Maclachlan, the mother of a student, a pair of candlesticks from England. Mr. Bischlager, the chaplain, gave an old harmonium and a piece of medieval glass which he had found outside a cathedral in France during the First World War. It was incorporated into the centre of the window with the crest.<sup>24</sup> Local businesses donated materials and sometimes even labour. In August, 1933, Miss Denny noted that she paid Mr. Brown \$740.00, leaving \$14.00 on contract, \$8.00 for cement, and \$15.00 for diagonals on the roof, showing her meticulous record keeping. By November 1933 the chapel was built

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<sup>23</sup> Denny, Box 11, File 6, Notes on History, *BCA-QMS*.

<sup>24</sup> Denny, Box 11, File 6, Notes on History, *BCA-QMS*.

and paid for.<sup>25</sup> The financially impossible had been managed. It was all the more remarkable because of the Depression!

Final enhancements were added in the spring for the dedication on June 9<sup>th</sup>, 1934 by Bishop Schofield.<sup>26</sup> In May Miss Denny organized an expedition to the Malahat<sup>27</sup> to cut arbutus branches for the altar rails. As there was no seating, and no surplus money, Miss Denny noted that on June 4<sup>th</sup> they peeled maple and alder trees which Mr. Denny cut into rounds to support planks.<sup>28</sup> The planks, which were initially rented, were later purchased and the rustic seating became permanent. The sturdy log chapel has sheltered generations of girls for morning prayers for over seventy years.

The School Farm became an important part of the school community especially during the war years. The first entry related to the agricultural pursuits was the purchase of two cows, Patsy and Jean, at a sale in Cobble Hill in September 1938. Initially stabled with the horses<sup>29</sup> they provided fresh milk for the boarders. By 1940, Mr. Richardson, a former jockey who had ridden in the Grand National, joined the school to look after the animals. He milked the cows, learned on the job, and helped to build up the Ayrshire herd which gained national recognition. Early in 1940 Miss Denny realized the need for greater self-sufficiency for the school's food supply to ensure availability and to keep

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<sup>25</sup> Denny, Box 11, File 7, The Chapel, *BCA-QMS*.

<sup>26</sup> Bishop Schofield was the Anglican Bishop of the Diocese of British Columbia.

<sup>27</sup> The Malahat is a mountain at the south end of the Cowichan Valley which is traversed by road and rail links to Victoria.

<sup>28</sup> Denny, Box 11, File 6, Notes on History, *BCA-QMS*.

<sup>29</sup> The horses will be discussed later in the section on the equestrian programme.

costs as low as possible. She purchased a piece of land with a small cottage and outbuildings up Gibbins Road from the school under the Soldier's Settlement provisions from her service in the First World War. This allowed the school to pay for it in installments over a number of years. Mr. and Mrs. Richardson moved into the cottage to run the farm. Miss Denny wrote that the first summer at the school farm set the pattern for years to come.<sup>30</sup> The existing fruit trees were augmented with new ones. Fruit was gathered and preserved, windfall apples were turned into applesauce. A deep freeze unit was built at the school and filled with produce for the winter. Miss Geoghegan spent most of her summer working in the hayfields and picking fruit and vegetables with help from the boarders. By 1942 the school was harvesting peas, beans, cabbages, cauliflowers, carrots, corn, potatoes, raspberries, blackberries, apples, plums, and pears from the farm, as well as unlimited eggs and fresh milk. While other people in the Cowichan Valley were growing Victory Gardens to show support for their family and friends in Britain, QMS was growing theirs for survival. That year the headmistresses bought another farm on the other side of Gibbins Road. This land came with a substantial farmhouse and an enormous old barn. The barn was refloored, whitewashed,<sup>31</sup> and brought up to date, a two-roomed dairy was built, and a root house was dug into a hill. The farm was such a peaceful place compared to the problems and hard work at the school itself, that the heads named it Innisfree after W.B. Yeats' poem 'The Lake Isle of Innisfree'. In order to

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<sup>30</sup> Miss Denny kept notebooks on various topics in which she described notable events, costs, and the like. She used these to assist her in writing sections of *Beyond All Dreams*. These are now amongst the records BCA-QMS.

<sup>31</sup> Whitewash was a solution of quicklime (calcium oxide) painted onto the interior walls of farm buildings to whiten and sanitize.

increase the self-sufficiency of the school even further, they rented a piece of land at the bottom of Hospital Hill <sup>32</sup> for growing potatoes. Mr. Denny drove the tractor and staff and students planted and later harvested enough to feed the school for the winter. Having the farm enabled the school to provide a healthy diet all year, and plenty of outdoor activity during the summer for boarders remaining at the school. By the time that the war was over and the produce no longer so desperately needed, the farm had become so much a part of the school that Miss Geoghegan and Miss Denny continued to operate it until they retired.<sup>33</sup>

School life was not all outdoor adventure and hard work, there were academics, too. But, unlike the balanced attitude of the head of Norfolk House, Miss Denny and Miss Geoghegan placed far more importance on character building than academics. As one Old Girl happily reminisced, “Actually I don’t think Q.M.S. taught me very much academically, but there were many things I learned there.”<sup>34</sup> The usual subjects of a British girls’ school were certainly taught, by a staff with varied qualifications. Girls wrote the provincial examinations, but this did not mean that the British Columbia Department of Education curriculum was strictly adhered to. Most of the teachers would not have much, if any, familiarity with it not having been educated in the public school system. Like the other private schools, Queen Margaret’s was largely ignored by governmental authority and direction. Miss Geoghegan certainly did her best teaching

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<sup>32</sup> This area, off Jubilee Street, was known locally as Jap Land. It was available for rent after the internment of the Japanese market gardeners who had previously cultivated it.

<sup>33</sup> Denny, *Dreams*, 135-137 and Denny, Box 2, Files 12 & 13, *BCA-QMS*.

<sup>34</sup> Dawn Murray (Ruthven), *Dreams*, 296.

English, Latin, and the musical arts, but the school did not consider academic prowess as part of the criteria for admission or continuance at the school. Mary Turner excelled at English but failed dismally at Latin with the same teacher. Miss Geoghegan and Virgil managed to get her through the government exam.<sup>35</sup> Another student remembered always being at the bottom of her class as her education had been practically nil until she entered the school. “I came to Q.M.S. trying to do High School work on a Kindergarten foundation! But never mind, the companionship was grand.”<sup>36</sup> Most girls, though, who stayed through the Sixth Form managed at least to pass the provincial exams. The inclusive nature of the school judged honesty, integrity, and inner strength to achieve the “well-fought day” of the school hymn as more important than academics.

In a pattern similar to Norfolk House, the school began with two divisions loosely based on age, soon expanded to three, and when numbers permitted adopted the British system of forms rather than grades. Form numbering ranged from I (the lowest) to VI (the school leaving class) with further division into A, B, and C (denoting achievement level rather than streaming by academic ability)<sup>37</sup> when enrolment and teacher availability warranted. The Roll Book for the years 1939-43, a large bound book carefully inscribed with attendance for each student, shows promotion and demotion from term to term and even during the term, not just at the end of the school year in June.<sup>38</sup> In contrast, the

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<sup>35</sup> Mary Turner (Dyson), *Dreams*, 306-307.

<sup>36</sup> Peggy Pressey, *Dreams*, 236.

<sup>37</sup> Form I was consistently the equivalent of grades 1 and 2, but sometimes divided in Form I B for the first grade and IA for the second. Form IV consistently encompassed C, B, and A during these years.

<sup>38</sup> Roll Book 1939-43, Box 8, File 1, *BCA-QMS*.

public schools in Duncan retained a rigid age/grade correlation.<sup>39</sup> Retention and recruitment at QMS were high even during the troubled war years. Of the ten girls and two boys in Form I (no A or B) during the Summer Term of 1939, five moved on to Form IIA and were joined by a new girl, three remained in Form I (but one advanced later in the school year), one family with three young children at the school left the district, and one boy went to another school in the area. All five from Form IIA moved on to IIIB and were joined by four new girls. Nine from VA moved on to become eight in Form VI with the loss of one boarder. This pattern remained consistent in the records examined through the Summer Term 1943. A note in the Roll Book indicated that two girls left Form VI at the end of the Easter Term in 1943 to join the RCAF (Women's Division), again showing meticulous record-keeping.

Boarders were accepted at any age, presumably depending on family need. During the Summer Term of 1939 there was one boarder in Form I, but by the Summer Term in 1941 there were five boarders in the primary class and twenty-five aged twelve and under. Although the school did not usually accept boys as boarders, during the Summer Term of 1943 Miss Denny accommodated a brother and sister in Form IB. She must have found some corner to set up a bed for him.<sup>40</sup> The number of boarders in the middle and upper levels is understandable, but this number of younger ones brought tremendous responsibility. When there was need, Miss Denny and Miss Geoghegan never shirked

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<sup>39</sup> Between 1947 and 1954 only 4 children (2 from the same family, all known to each other, all with vocal parents) were advanced ahead of their age group into the next grade in the public elementary schools.

<sup>40</sup> Roll Book 1939-43 Box 8, File 1, *BCA-QMS*.

what they saw as their duty.<sup>41</sup> Dormitories expanded into attics and any odd corners of the multiple buildings where beds could be set up. The purchase of an additional farm provided more staff accommodation and released space in the main buildings. In contrast, Angela College was rarely able to fill its spacious bedrooms and the number of boarders at Norfolk House was restricted by the size of the rented 'Gonzales' with nowhere to expand.

Despite the rough and tumble of everyday life at QMS, the accomplishments were not entirely absent from the curriculum. Theatre was always important, from the annual Shakespeare competitions with each class staging a scene from the play which they had studied, to entries in the Drama Festivals in Duncan, sometimes four or five plays in a year, to fund-raising events for school projects. "Ali Baba" and other entertainments helped to pay for the school's swimming pool and chapel. Choral speech and individual presentations were entered into Music Festivals in Victoria, Duncan, and Nanaimo with considerable success.<sup>42</sup> School choirs, especially the chapel choir, were an integral part of the school. Beyond these activities, opportunities for learning the social graces were somewhat limited. Wilda Lane (Booth) remembered two distinct types of parties for

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<sup>41</sup> Some of these young boarders would have been from up-country but more would have been there to get them out of danger or an unsuitable place for children to be. These included such families as the Turner sisters who arrived at the school from the Far East in April 1940 and remained there for six years. The eldest was about twelve and the other two were younger. From time to time Miss Denny took in orphans who were brought to her attention. None would have been from Children's Aid. Children's Aid did place children in foster homes in Duncan and paid a pittance. One woman in the 1940s took in 7 or 8 children to make ends meet as she cared for an invalid husband with severe war injuries and several children of her own. She grew a very large garden and people, possibly including Miss Denny, were good about giving her extra fruit and vegetables. If Children's Aid used a school, it would most likely have been St. Ann's Tzouhalem – less expensive than QMS and more conventional.

<sup>42</sup> Denny, Box 11, File 7, *BCA-QMS*.

which the girls wore white dresses with green sashes: the fun ones held at Christmas for the ‘old people’ of Duncan and those with (or as she put it, ‘against’) Shawnigan Lake Boys’ School. “Most of us hadn’t mastered too many boy-girl social graces, and had it not been for the dresses and sashes we could have been at a hockey match.”<sup>43</sup> Curtsies, dance steps, and polite conversation were much less important life skills than at Angela College or Norfolk House.

The ‘hidden curriculum’, all-pervasive and not so much hidden in this school, rather than academics or the accomplishments attracted parents to Queen Margaret’s. The base of this curriculum was always character. Miss E. Martin, who came from Lincoln, England to teach at the school in September, 1926, described the girls as the nicest that she had ever known. Nearly fifty years later, she wrote: “Since those days I have taught in several schools but Q.M.S. is the only one that stressed character training. At Q.M.S. there is always an idea of service, of learning to be a person who will have something to give to the community to which they belong.”<sup>44</sup>

Students learned that ‘doing’ was always better than ‘sitting on the fence’. Service to others and a sense of responsibility to those less fortunate were always essential elements of the spirit of the school. In early years, the students collected dimes for the Armenians, supported a young Greek boy who was a victim of the First World War through the Save the Children Fund, and then a little boy in Liverpool and later his

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<sup>43</sup> Wilda Lane (Booth), *Dreams*, 320.

<sup>44</sup> E. Martin, Box 11, File 7, Former Staff, *BCA-QMS* and *Dreams*, 196-197.

brother. During the Depression donations of food, clothing, and money were sent to needy families in the Peace River District.<sup>45</sup> Then there was the war effort, summed up by many in the one word, **Salvage**.<sup>46</sup> In the forefront of service to others were Miss Denny and Miss Geoghegan providing “a vivid demonstration of how women could be strong, independent, and self-assured. We were confronted with a constant demonstration that we were all capable of certain achievement, all capable of service, and all capable of realizing ourselves as complete individuals.”<sup>47</sup> What better lesson could girls learn.

Miss Denny did not rely on example alone, she filled her speeches at school events with specific references to character-building. On the first day of the Easter Term in 1928 she challenged the assembled school with “for life is a battle, an adventure, a quest”.<sup>48</sup> The unwavering theme grew even stronger in the war years. The girls returned after Christmas, 1939, to be greeted with: “Shall we, here at QMS, see what we can do to develop something more of strength and self-discipline, so that, when the time comes, we shall have something worthwhile to give to our country”. Having served in field hospitals in France, she knew only too well what could lie ahead and continued: “If we are to build for Canada it must be on a strong foundation, and the foundation we can begin to lay now is character”.<sup>49</sup> At the Carol Service on December 14<sup>th</sup>, 1943, she told assembled students and parents: “It is not namby pamby sentimentality that we must develop, but something

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<sup>45</sup> Denny, Box 11, File 7, *Servite Fortier: Serve Ye Bravely, BCA-QMS*.

<sup>46</sup> This topic will be discussed later under Girl Guides.

<sup>47</sup> Ann Du Moulin, *Dreams*, 265-266.

<sup>48</sup> Denny, Box 3, File 1, *BCA-QMS*.

<sup>49</sup> Denny, Box 4, File 2, *Speeches, BCA-QMS*.

strong, ready to fight against the easy wrong on the side of the difficult right.”<sup>50</sup> As the school struggled through the war years, she reminded the girls of their responsibility for the future. “We must fit ourselves to give service in the reconstruction of that better world. From the life of this school must go forth a strong spirit of service.”<sup>51</sup> School opened on September 13<sup>th</sup>, 1944 with the reminder: “there shall go out from here in the years to come girls imbued with a strong sense of responsibility, with strength of character, unselfish and courteous, ready and able to give service to their generation.”<sup>52</sup> Her use of the emphatic ‘shall’ in place of the ‘will’ of the future tense was deliberate.

For boarders, learning to look after themselves and live with others led to independence as part of character-building. The three Turner girls found even buying their own toothpaste far different from their sheltered life with their parents in the Far East.<sup>53</sup> Newly acquired self-reliance not only enabled them accept their situation and retain pleasant memories of the school which was their only home from 1940 to the end of the war, but also to help others. Ann Truesdale commented: “there were the many friends whose parents were interned and thinking back I realize now how we all pulled together to help them through those difficult times, and how good it was for us.”<sup>54</sup> From early days, QMS had accepted daughters of British families posted to Asia. As a large number of Indian Army officers and civil service personnel from the colonies as well

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<sup>50</sup> Denny, Box 4, File 8, *BCA-QMS*.

<sup>51</sup> Denny, Box 4, File 3, *BCA-QMS*.

<sup>52</sup> Denny, Box 4, File 15, *BCA-QMS*.

<sup>53</sup> Lois Turner, *Dreams*, 292.

<sup>54</sup> Ann Truesdale (Springfield), *Dreams*, 281-282.

those who had worked in British trading ports in the Far East retired to the Cowichan Valley rather than returning to England (their pensions went farther and the climate was warmer) there were local contacts for recommendations for British-type schools.<sup>55</sup> From 1939 until the fall of Singapore the number of boarders from the Far East further increased as families made every effort to get their children to safety. After the Japanese invasions of the British colonies, remaining British civilians were interned in Japanese camps and the military were POWs, all with virtually no contact with the outside world until the end of the war. A few girls from Britain were sent to the school, or brought by a parent or relative, to get them away from the dangers in Europe. All of these, from Asia and Britain, were the girls and parents to whom Ann Truesdale was referring. She remembered such aspects of school life long after Latin verbs and proofs for theorems in Geometry were forgotten.

At Queen Margaret's the Girl Guide movement reinforced character and the hidden curriculum and essentially took the place the accomplishments held in nineteenth century schools. Norah Denny first encountered Scouting in 1911 when her youngest brother wanted to join the group starting up in their country village. As her father was very busy he asked her to look into it. After reading *Scouting for Boys*, she became enthused and within a short time became the village scout master. After girls gate-crashed the boys' rally at the Crystal Palace, she was determined to have Girl Guides in the village.

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<sup>55</sup> Three generations of the Rice family retired from the Indian Army to an enclave on the Herd Road near Maple Bay. Greta Rice not only attended QMS but returned later to teach. See Chapter II for more information about British settlement in the Cowichan Valley.

Although one local woman of importance worried that it would ‘educate girls out of their station’, she agreed to be a sponsor and the group flourished.<sup>56</sup> As mentioned earlier, Miss Denny and Miss Geoghegan first met in Duncan over affairs of the First Cowichan Company. From 1921 until early in 1931 Q.M.S. girls belonged to this company which met at the Guide Hall down Cairnsmore Street from the school. The two Heads were Captains with Miss Winifred Dawson-Thomas as Lieutenant. Miss Denny also served as District and later Division Commissioner. By 1931 work at the school took so much time that the two turned over the First Cowichan to Miss Dawson-Thomas and started the First Duncan (Queen Margaret’s School) Company. The Second Duncan was added at the school five years later.<sup>57</sup> Through the years, Guides at the school earned many badges and new skills, held camps in the woods beyond the hockey field, played games, and had fun. But, their ‘Shining Hour’ came with World War II.

The war effort and the dangers were taken very seriously at the school. Miss Denny, with close experience with the fighting in her nursing days, stressed safety. Led by the Guides, the school practised evacuation. Girls who learned Morse Code<sup>58</sup> were able to empty the school in two and a half minutes by tapping out short commands. From the operations centre in the Lower School, stretcher parties were dispatched to collect ‘gruesome bodies’ and bring them to the first aid station, manned by more Guides. When

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<sup>56</sup> Denny, Box 1, File 4, *BCA-QMS*.

<sup>57</sup> Denny, Box 11, File 7, Guides, *BCA-QMS*.

<sup>58</sup> This was potentially a tool for illicit communications between these girls but as many of the staff were proficient, it had limited usefulness for unauthorized purposes.

Lady Baden-Powell (Founder and Chief Guide) visited the school during the Second World War she was proud and impressed with the Guiding work.<sup>59</sup>

The Guides worked diligently to contribute funds to the war effort. Miss Denny set targets: a parachute at \$500, a drop-keel sailing dinghy at \$675, a Bren gun at \$400, a donation to the Prisoner of War Fund \$100, to West Coast Defence \$500, to the Guide International Service \$500, and \$1500 for six assault boats. The school received a photograph of one boat with the school's name on it.<sup>60</sup> The girls earned the money rather than just collecting donations. Mary Turner (Dyson) remembered setting out with Dawn Murray on their first jobs for the parachute fund. They mowed and raked a large lawn and trimmed flower beds for \$1.50, remarking: "It was fun!"<sup>61</sup>

Then there was salvage. This continuing task may not have marked the school's 'finest hour' but it was certainly its 'finest service'. The First and Second Duncan (Queen Margaret's School) Companies, to which most of the girls belonged, began by collecting paper and soon added other materials. They sorted the paper and tied it into bundles which they loaded into Mr. Bazett's truck, and delivered to the dock in Cowichan Bay in the late afternoon on weekends.<sup>62</sup> In those days the girls were allowed to sit in the back of the truck on top of the load. Throughout the war years the school rarely shipped less than

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<sup>59</sup> Murray, *Dreams*, 296-297.

<sup>60</sup> Denny, Box 11, File 7, Salvage, and Box 12, File 1, *BCA-QMS*.

<sup>61</sup> Mary Turner, *Dreams*, 300.

<sup>62</sup> Alfred Bazett, owner of Maple Bay Garage, Maple Bay, BC and a QMS parent.

a ton a week earning \$1,000 a year. Cheque stubs from the Sidney Roofing and Paper Company from three weeks in February/March 1941 were typical of this effort:

Feb 24, 1941

1 ton waste paper	8.00	
1 ton news	10.00	18.00
Less Freight & Cartage	2.60 [ton]	5.20
Total		12.80
4035 lbs Waste Paper @	8.00	16.14
Less Freight & Cartage @	2.60	5.24
Total		10.90
2365 lbs Waste delivered March 15 @	8.00	9.46
Freight & Cartage @	2.60	3.07
		6.39
Freight deducted March 11 <sup>th</sup> : Read	\$10.40	
Should be	9.71	.69
Total		7.08 <sup>63</sup>

This represented a mountain of paper and a lot of money for girls to earn and contribute week after week and year after year in the 1940s, long before recycling became fashionable in the 1970's. Rosemary Bridgman (Penn), a boarder in the war years, wrote "When my family recently, rather unctuously, showed me how to recycle paper [from one

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<sup>63</sup> Box 12, File 1, War Work *BCA-QMS*. Scraggly format as per original invoices.

household] they were rather mystified by my reaction.”<sup>64</sup> Most of the girls really were not aware that some parents and community members were critical of the project as they went up and down the streets of Duncan collecting newspapers, magazines, and scrap paper at every house, but Miss Denny faced the issue in her usual forthright manner in a Speech Day Address:

I am aware that sometimes there is a good deal of criticism over the fact that we continue to do this salvage work. Some parents have expressed a wish that their children shall not do this work, and we have respected their wishes. But I consider that those who do continue with the work year after year are making a fine contribution to Canada's war effort, besides making a fine contribution to their own character-building. It is a matter on which I feel strongly.<sup>65</sup>

The work continued unabated until the end of the war with the Head always setting the example. She curtailed her own use of paper. In the 1920s and 30s she wrote the final copies of her speeches for school occasions in exercise books. By the Carol Service at Christmas 1942, she was using slips of paper cut off the bottoms of previously used sheets with the largest being about 8 1/2" by 3 1/2". By Harvest Thanksgiving the following year, the pieces of paper had become even smaller.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Rosemary Bridgman (Penn), *Dreams*, 299-300.

<sup>65</sup> Norah Denny, "Extracts from Memorable Speech Day Addresses", *The Green Years: A Lighthearted Anthology about Queen Margaret's School 1921-1963*, Vancouver Branch, Q.M.S. Parents' Association, 1964, 18.

<sup>66</sup> Box 4, File 8, *BCA-QMS*.

Sorting and bundling newspapers, magazines, and various other types of paper, even when damp, were positively pleasant tasks compared with dealing with some of the items collected. Rags were profitable, but mountains needed to be sorted and the buttons removed to make a bale. Metal was important for the war effort, silver paper was rolled into balls, and other types compressed as much as possible. Years later the writer's father still had vivid memories of spending many of his wartime Saturdays at QMS taking the ends off unwashed tin cans and flattening the cylinders.<sup>67</sup> Beer and pop bottles were always saleable, others less so with tomato ketchup bottles presenting a challenge until Miss Denny found a market for the glass for stucco. And then there was fat. Miss Denny made a note on February 12, 1943 that the school had sent away four hundred pounds of it. An additional amount was boiled with lye and made into soap which was put into parcels sent overseas or given to the Red Cross for their parcels. Even Miss Denny admitted that the collected bones were an 'unpleasant item' but they were profitable.<sup>68</sup>

The girls participated with enthusiasm. Rita Flight at the school from the Far East for the duration of the war, logged a record number of 900 hours of salvage work, Peta Denny (Miss Denny's niece) 800 hours, Sheila Flight 700, Mary Turner 620 hours,<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Eric C. Powell, Maple Bay BC, a QMS parent.

<sup>68</sup> Denny, Box 11, File 7, Salvage, *BCA-QMS*.

<sup>69</sup> Denny, Box 11, File 7, Salvage, *BCA-QMS* and *Dreams*, 95-98.

and so on. This war work was especially important for the girls from overseas who had little or no contact with their parents, as it enabled them to contribute too.

The local public high school in Duncan gathered salvageable materials too, but not on the same scale. Unlike their counterparts at QMS who scoured the town, students at Duncan High School were encouraged to bring items from home. When sufficient was collected, they carried it down the hill to the bins in downtown Duncan. They did not go from house to house collecting nor did they transport their haul beyond the bins in order to sell to raise money for the war effort.<sup>70</sup>

In addition to salvage, the staff and girls at QMS had to attend to the needs of the school community in times of shortages. They worked hard physically to provide the basic necessities. Thanks to the produce of the school farms no one ever went hungry, even when certain purchased commodities were unattainable. The food may have been plain by home standards, but everybody ate the same meals, together. The girls managed much of the physical labour, but the adult staff worked along with them. Rosemary Bridgman still has a memory flash of felling trees when the wood supply gave out for the furnaces:

I can still see myself clad in Guide tunic (surely the coldest garment invented), an Indian sweater, and a pair of gumboots, hacking at a tree like a beaver, and being carefully instructed how I was to fell the tree onto a marker placed specifically by Miss Geoghegan. It was terrific fun. I suppose

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<sup>70</sup> Dorothy Bonsall, Duncan, BC, a student at Duncan High School 1941-1947. High school began with grade 7 at that time.

it was character building. I've never had occasion to make soap or fell a tree again but I'd try.<sup>71</sup>

This sums up the attitude of most of the girls. The objective was to build character in each individual, not break it down. There must have been some who hated everything about the school and the war effort, but their opinions have not survived.

Athletics were always an integral part of the school programme in wartime and peace. Both the heads, having enjoyed physical activity during their own time at school promoted exercise and sportsmanship, but not always in the same manner as more affluent city schools. There were the usual cups for swimming, tennis, and riding but surmounting all else was the position of hockey. Mr. Denny made the first sticks from tree branches so that the game could begin. The condition of the hockey field itself was always a matter of great concern. Ann Galloway, who was at the school from 1930 until 1935, described the hockey field as a "geological phenomenon" which managed to regurgitate rocks continuously from some unknown source. "We were sure that we had thrown every last one in our day" and yet they continued to reappear for generations of girls to remove. She added the interesting detail that they learned their psalms for Scripture class as they threw rocks. "To this day the words 'Like as the hart desireth the water brooks/ So thirsteth my soul after Thee oh God' brings to mind a picture of a head

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<sup>71</sup> Rosemary Bridgman, *Dreams*, 299-300.

down bottom up green clad figure hurling rocks off that field.”<sup>72</sup> Miss Denny would have viewed this dual activity as good use of time and in no way sacrilegious. Draining the field before a match was another ‘popular’ activity. Moireen Hilton remembered making holes with a crowbar to get rid of the water after picking up stones.<sup>73</sup> Sylvia Marlow had been part of the bucket brigade for which Mr. Denny made a pump and filled the buckets for the girls to carry away.<sup>74</sup> Ann Breton added the detail of using an enormous rock filled roller to smooth the field before matches against other schools. She credited the school’s success not to the condition of the field but to the good coaching they received from Miss Geoghegan, Miss Denny, Miss Pettigrew, Miss Rae, Miss Williams, and Mr. Denny.<sup>75</sup> It was an honour to be chosen for the First Eleven, the school’s top team, and girls played hard to retain their positions on it. Lois Turner put in extra effort:

how pleased I was to be chosen the goalie of the Q.M.S. First Eleven. I would spend hours in the library reading through British hockey magazines, then putting suggestions into practice later on the field. I loved seeing our forwards running towards me, and the thrill of fencing off Joe Havelick’s or Margie Powell’s ball, to name a few – Pat Cowan had a strong hit too, along with Kay Hyde-Lay and Dawn Murray, who were to be watched. It was good practice, good fun.”<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Ann Galloway (Horsfield), *Dreams*, 269.

<sup>73</sup> Moireen Hilton (Allen), *Dreams*, 261.

<sup>74</sup> Sylvia Marlow, *Dreams*, 253.

<sup>75</sup> Ann Breton (Jackson), *Dreams*, 260-261.

<sup>76</sup> Lois Turner, *Dreams*, 293.

This excitement was just for practice. What chance of winning could other schools, without a single hockey magazine in their libraries, possibly achieve.

The extensive equestrian programme never quite rivaled hockey for enthusiasm but was unique amongst the girls' schools in Canada. Only Bethany Hills School in Ontario has developed a similar, if less extensive, programme. When Miss Denny and Miss Geoghegan bought the property on the corner of Gibbins Road, an old barn on it was put to use stabling a few ponies that day children rode to school. Soon the school purchased three ponies and Mr. Denny, an experienced horseman, began giving lessons. When a Mr. Stewart who had opened a riding school in Duncan in 1934 decamped, the school bought his barn and moved it to the site of the present stables. By the mid-1930s QMS students were competing in local horse shows. The stables grew along with the school buildings.<sup>77</sup> Miss Denny credited riding with giving the impetus to some new girls to adjust to and accept the school environment.<sup>78</sup>

Not all physical activity was outdoors. The school built a serviceable gym [still standing and in use for drama in the 2000s] with a modest amount of equipment donated by mothers. Ann Galloway tolerated floor exercises and even the parallel bars, but she loathed the leather indoor horse. She hated “all those athletic types who could do the HORSE leapings and bouncings so neatly” while she planned how she could just run

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<sup>77</sup> The first two cows were added to the horses in the stables in 1938, as mentioned earlier, before the purchase of the first farm.

<sup>78</sup> Denny Box 11, File 8, Riding, *BCA-QMS*.

around “the beast” or escape from the gym.<sup>79</sup> This is the same girl who cheerfully hurled rocks and learned psalms at the same time. Hockey had its own mystique.

Religion<sup>80</sup> pervaded the school to a far greater extent than holy writ learned whilst hurling rocks. On the first morning in 1921, fourteen girls and boys lined up Morning Prayers and learned:

‘What so ever Thy hand findeth to do, do it with Thy might’ and the response, ‘That God in all things may be glorified. Show Thy servants Thy work and their children Thy glory; and the Glorious Majesty of the Lord our God be upon us. Prosper Thou the work of our hands upon us, O prosper Thou our handiwork.’

This set the spiritual tone of the school.<sup>81</sup> Morning Prayers with the student body gathered together, grace at meals, and Bible study were accepted along with eating, sleeping, learning, and playing together as normal parts of school life and spirit.<sup>82</sup> One girl remembered singing “Lord behold us with Thy blessing, once again assembled here” with great fervor at the beginning of term and “Lord dismiss us with Thy blessing”<sup>83</sup> with equal enthusiasm at the end except for members of the Sixth Form who would be weeping openly at the closing of their final term. Although the chapel was consecrated as Anglican, everyone participated in the services. It was distinctly the school chapel rather

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<sup>79</sup> Galloway, *Dreams*, 269-270.

<sup>80</sup> Religion in the school is discussed here in the section about curriculum as it is an integral part of the school programme, rather than as a part of the one-time construction of the chapel in the building section.

<sup>81</sup> Denny, Box 11, File 7, *Beyond Our Dreams, BCA –QMS*.

<sup>82</sup> Rosemary Bradley-Dyne, *Dreams*, 225.

<sup>83</sup> Rev. H.J. Buckoll, 1843, Parts 1 and 2 of Hymn 469, *The Book of Common Praise: Being the Hymn Book of The Church of England in Canada*, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, undated).

than a building belonging to any particular denomination. Usually a member of the local clergy was appointed as school chaplain, but the boarders attended Sunday services at local Anglican churches<sup>84</sup> or others places of worship by arrangement. The school was built on faith, but an all-encompassing one, rather than a strictly Anglican. Although school registers did not list religion for each girl, almost all would have been Christian, mainly Protestant. There would have been some Catholics, even though the Sisters of St. Ann conducted a school for non-aboriginal children at Tzouhalem and there was a choice of urban Catholic boarding schools, as some parents would have chosen the British-style country school. From the records, it is impossible to ascertain what other faiths were represented. Although Miss Denny and Miss Geoghegan were Anglican, it would not have befit their characters to exclude girls of other religions.

Through the years, an interesting group of women came to teach at the school. Those who could summon up sufficient stamina and endurance, and did not quickly marry a local man, often stayed for years and years. When the school started out at Holmesdale with two classrooms, the juniors were taught by Miss Denny and seniors by Miss Geoghegan. In September 1922, an extra classroom was added and Mrs. Patterson, Miss Compton, and Mrs. Gibson joined the staff on at least a part time basis. A year later at the new school campus, Mrs. Patterson taught the junior, Miss Cotterill the middle, and Miss Geoghegan the upper classes.<sup>85</sup> Miss Denny did not seem to be teaching but rather was occupied with running the school including the kitchen. Miss Geoghegan was a

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<sup>84</sup> St. John's, Duncan and St. Mary's, Somenos.

<sup>85</sup> Marlow, *Dreams*, 252.

mainstay in the classroom for well over forty years. Miss Denny recalled particularly her contribution to music at the school, “we had many gifted music teachers who have come and gone, but Miss Geoghegan was always there.” In early years she gave piano and violin lessons, conducted singing classes, and trained the Chapel Choir. She played for Danish dancing and the Naas March, trained the singers for nativity plays and school musicals, and led the singing at Girl Guide campfires.<sup>86</sup> Patsy Codville remembered her English classes, not the boring grammar ones, but those in which she made poetry come alive.<sup>87</sup> Miss Geoghegan was a gifted teacher.

The other teachers through the years were mostly young women hired in England who were willing to come to some unknown place in Canada because they needed jobs. They were offered living accommodation at the school, in quarters spartan even by British standards, and meager salaries. They were expected to serve the school with the same devotion and resourcefulness as the two founders. The reflections of the youngest Miss Greenwood summed up those expectations:

My sister and I came to Canada in 1929 to be bridesmaids at the wedding of my eldest sister, Mary, who had been for two years on the staff at Q.M.S. My second sister was to succeed Mary as art mistress and Lower School teacher but I was to return to England. However Miss Denny offered me the post of Matron and as I was fond of children and had had experiences of the common childhood illnesses, I accepted. These were some of the qualifications I soon discovered I needed to have.

1. Shingling: the roof over the Head’s study had to be reshingled.

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<sup>86</sup> Denny, Box 11, File 7, Music, *BCA-QMS*.

<sup>87</sup> Patsy Codville, *Dreams*, 285

2. Interior decorating: cubicle furniture had to be repainted every summer, each cubicle having matching colour.
3. Swimming: School outings were often at sea. A trip one holiday in Mr. Bromilow's launch, camping on the beach.
4. Hikes: Guide hikes up the mountains, Sicker, Prevost or by rivers, Riverbottom, 'Far distant Oxus'.
5. Riding: Horses from time to time to be fed, groomed and exercised by Matron in off duty hours.
6. Hockey! I taught all Lower School to play. All under eight years. Most of these players eventually played for the School.
7. Tennis: Helped to coach tennis.
8. Fire fighting: A spark from a fire lit a tree and underbrush on the bank along Gibbins Road. Matron climbed the tree and eventually put out the fire with dribbles of water from a bucket chain across the playing field.
9. Packing and unpacking boarders' clothes.
10. Skating: Wonderful skating on Somenos Lake day after day.
11. Brown Owl.<sup>88</sup>

Such was the work of a matron! Packing and unpacking boarders' clothes would be the only item from the list which would be part of a regular matron's duties. The familiar pattern at the school did not change much through the years. When an old girl, Audrey Mutter, was working as an assistant matron in the 1940s, she was called upon to accompany Miss Geoghegan on a search for a new-born calf in the woods at Innisfree Farm.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> Isabella Greenwood, Box 11, File 8, Reflections of a Matron, *BCA-QMS* and *Dreams*, 197-199.

<sup>89</sup> Denny, "The Farm", *The Green Years*, 25.

The Greenwood sisters themselves presented another familiar pattern. Mary came out from England to teach art at the school and within two years met and agreed to marry a man she had met in the Cowichan Valley. A second sister, Lavinia, was willing to teach, so Miss Denny signed her up, as by now she 'knew the family'. When she met Isabella, the young and energetic third sister, Miss Denny judged her to be quite capable of taking part in all aspects of school life. Shingling roofs, painting, fire fighting, feeding horses, and coaching were all tasks which needed to be done, so the title 'Matron' certainly did not preclude anyone with a capable pair of hands. The youngest Miss Greenwood continued at the school until she volunteered for war service, and returned after the war to teach Gym and Games until 1963. She was one of those upper middle class young women who had received a good education but really had nothing serious to do with their lives. Instead of returning immediately to England, she stayed to have an adventure for the rest of her life. This pattern of teaching for a year or two and then marrying repeated itself so often that QMS was viewed as a prime source of prospective wives by the British bachelors in the Valley. The young men strolling along beside the railway station in Duncan when the new crop of teachers from England was due to arrive were mentioned in Chapter III.<sup>90</sup> Those, like Isabella Greenwood, who did not marry often stayed at the school for the rest of their lives.

Some of the new teachers were well-qualified academically, others less so, but survival depended upon adaptability and ingenuity. Miss E.N. Martin came fresh from

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<sup>90</sup> Eric C. Powell, Maple Bay, BC.

Girton College in England, with M.A. in her hand. She thought the girls were ‘hopeless savages’ but she could teach so they learned a love of Shakespeare from her.<sup>91</sup> The day Miss Spurgin arrived from Britain; she was promptly put to work sweeping water out of the basement of the old school.<sup>92</sup> Miss Robinson finally located her new headmistresses entertaining the piano tuner for tea in the kitchen. When she and Chris Townsend were taken to Goravagh where they were to live, they were forced to enter through a window as the door only opened from the inside. Later, when a window fell out into their hands as they tried to open it, they dissolved into giggles over the contrast to Havergal College in Toronto where they had taught the previous year.<sup>93</sup> When Mrs. K.B. Schilling began in 1936, the teaching staff was housed in ‘Canmore’, on the other side of what was then the Island Highway, which meant dodging hurtling logging trucks as well as boys on bicycles on their way to the Grammar School. She remembered the school still being in the Do-It-Yourself stage during the ten years she taught there. Mr. Denny took care of the electrical and other ‘technical’ jobs, but the teachers and girls accomplished most of the rest of the maintenance.<sup>94</sup> The Heads certainly did their share of the work. Greta Rice recalled a young music teacher, “nicely dressed with hat and gloves”, arriving from Vancouver for an interview. When she asked to see the Headmistress, she was told, “I’m sorry but Miss Denny is excavating the basement”. Then she requested Miss Geoghegan, only to be told,

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<sup>91</sup> Bradley-Dyne, *Dreams*, 223-224.

<sup>92</sup> Grace Solly, *Dreams*, 295.

<sup>93</sup> Miss Robinson, Box 11, File 8, Former Staff , *BCA-QMS* and *Dreams*, 207-209. Havergal College is a large, fashionable, very urban girls’ school on Avenue Road in Toronto.

<sup>94</sup> Mrs. K.B. Schilling, Box 11, File 8, Queen Margaret’s in the Second World War Years , *BCA-QMS* and *Dreams*, 199-200.

“Oh, she is cutting down trees for the new stable site.”<sup>95</sup> There is no word on whether the woman beat a hasty retreat for the safety of Vancouver or remained to join the fray.

During the war years, the school was desperate for teachers. The supply from England, the mainstay of the teaching staff, was virtually cut off, and some of the stalwarts, like Miss Greenwood, volunteered for war service. Old Girls such as Greta Rice were recruited for the classrooms. Grace Solly, who had hated school, returned as staff and discovered enjoyment and fun mixed with the hard work and discouragements of school life.<sup>96</sup> Shelagh Weaver had attended the school in the late 1920s while living with an aunt in Cowichan Station until her guardian came upon her chopping wood and promptly took her back to Victoria to live with his family and attend Oak Bay High School. Later, as a young mother with a husband overseas in the Air Force in 1942 and fond memories of the school, she went to see if Miss Denny would take her four year old daughter as a boarder so that she could work in the shipyards. On finding out that the Old Girl had taught in North China, Miss Denny convinced her that Q.M.S. was her War Job and put her in charge of Forms II A & B and Form III B (grades three, four, and five) all in one classroom as well as some of the coaching. While she supervised girls doing their prep she struggled to learn what she was going to teach next day; she had not been hired for her “scholastic abilities”. She respected Miss Denny and Miss Geoghegan for having “a tremendous load to carry” and setting “a wonderful example of selflessness and

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<sup>95</sup> Greta Rice, *Dreams*, 265.

<sup>96</sup> Grace Solly, *Dreams*, 295.

kindness”. “Even when we ran out of sawdust <sup>97</sup> and the pipes froze in Canmore, <sup>98</sup> Miss Denny wondered why we complained and on looking back, it was minor.” Financially, the job was not very remunerative as after board for the two of them was deducted she received \$15.00 a month and every third weekend off, but she and her young daughter were able to stay together. <sup>99</sup>

Other women in the Cowichan Valley were well qualified to teach but, unlike Mrs. Weaver, felt that their ‘War Jobs’ were at home looking after home and family. The writer’s mother <sup>100</sup> was one of these, with teaching credentials from Cambridge University and fifteen years experience as a British governess, ‘with only the best families’. She was a thoroughly undomesticated woman who would have been far happier working at the school with a housekeeper to manage the home front, but she thought that it was beneath her to consider joining the rigorous life at the school. Although she and Miss Denny came from the same social class in England, her step-daughter attended the school, and her husband had been friends with the Denny family for years, she was very aware that the other woman lacked a university education, and thus in her mind the qualifications for running a school. Perhaps, too, she was daunted by the sheer magnitude of the tasks Miss Denny and Miss Geoghegan faced. Few of the educated married

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<sup>97</sup> Sawdust was a common fuel on the Island before the popularity of oil furnaces in the 1950s. It was loaded into large hoppers which gravity fed into the fire boxes of stoves and furnaces.

<sup>98</sup> Staff residence.

<sup>99</sup> Shelagh Weaver, Box 11, File 8, Former Staff, *BCA-QMS* and *Dreams*, 202-204. Kerry Weaver is listed in Form IB in the Roll Book for the Easter Term, 1943.

<sup>100</sup> Constance Powell, Maple Bay, BC.

women, widows of missionaries, clergy wives, former entrepreneurs of dame schools, came forward, so Miss Denny and her faithful retainers made do with anyone who could be scrounged. The spirit of the school, and character building, continued even if academics languished.

The girls and the little boys who attended Queen Margaret's during the school's first twenty-five years came for a variety of reasons. Some were the children of upper middle class British immigrants, and, like Jean Barman's boys at Vernon Prep School, were learning to grow up British at the edge of the Empire. A school photograph in 1930 shows that the school was composed of about seventy-five girls and fourteen boys,<sup>101</sup> a matron in nursing uniform, and seven teachers. Except for the very Canadian telephone poles in the background, it could be an English school. The girls were neatly attired in tunics with girdles<sup>102</sup> worn low as was the fashion at the time, long-sleeved shirts, and ties. Almost everyone had short, straight bobbed hair. The boys were wearing short pants, long-sleeved shirts, ties, knee socks, and black oxfords. All but two had the traditional British schoolboy hairstyle, cut about the same length from the top of the crown, with the sides and back closely trimmed. Girls and boys were all Caucasian children with fair skins. Except for the introduction of ties in house colours and striped school ties to replace the red ones everyone wore in the early years, the uniform remained the same for the first twenty-five years and beyond. Outwardly, everyone looked British.

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<sup>101</sup> Two of them were the writer's older brothers, Bill and John Powell.

<sup>102</sup> Narrow sashes tied to contain the box pleats of the tunics.

The boys were always local, except for the one boarder previously noted, as there were no residential facilities for them. Years later Miss Denny remembered a procession of little boys having their first experiences in schooling, long before they became “business men, lawyers, soldiers, sailors, university professors”, loggers, and carpenters, as always “losing their rubbers, cutting their knees, and tearing their clothes”. She attempted to teach them the elements of rugby before they went on to other schools where they would be expected to know at least the rudiments of the game.<sup>103</sup> She also taught the writer’s middle brother to knit, at age four, so that he would be busy even when he could not keep up with the Form I classwork assigned to his brother and those two to three years older than he was. Although most of the boys left the school by about age eight, some maintained their associations with the school for decades. These two brothers are on the honour roll in the chapel for war service and returned to participate in the Remembrance Day services at the school into their eighties.

Some girls, then as now, were sent to boarding school because they were thought to be ‘unmanageable’ at home. Anne Proctor was dispatched as a boarder after her visiting English aunt spent the summer declaring that “SOMETHING MUST be done about THAT CHILD”. Although Anne considered “most classroom occupations completely unnecessary evils”, she thoroughly enjoyed outside activities and school life from the start.<sup>104</sup> Mr. and Mrs. Montague Bridgman, owners of an exclusive china shop on Government Street in Victoria, chose Queen Margaret’s for their eldest daughter’s

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<sup>103</sup> Denny, *BCA-QMS*, Box 11, File 8, Boys, *BCA-QMS*.

<sup>104</sup> Anne Proctor, *Dreams*, 247-248.

final years of schooling and sent their other daughters in later years. They told Rosemary that they were moving her from a private day school (Norfolk House) to boarding school so she would learn manners. Thirty-five years later she still wondered why she “had to be snatched up from my reasonably well-mannered home, and deposited with twenty girls whose nightly race at the supper table was to see how many slices of home-made doorstops <sup>105</sup> they could demolish at one sitting, was a mystery”<sup>106</sup> all in the name of learning manners.

Girls came from the Cowichan Valley, from Victoria and Vancouver, up-country, and increasingly from farther away including the Far East (as mentioned earlier) and, as war approached, from England. Even before wartime some girls stayed at the school away from their parents for years at a time. Anne Moore (Spring) remembered coming “to Q.M.S., a rather bewildered small girl, peeping out of my cubicle window watching my Mother board the bus, the last time I was to see her for five years”.<sup>107</sup> For parents stationed in Asia, sending their daughters to schools in British Columbia, with direct steamship service from major ports in the East, was often preferable to England. As war drew closer, a little town called Duncan on Vancouver Island seemed very safe. Sheila and Rita Flight, aged ten and eleven, were left at Queen Margaret’s when their parents returned to Malaya in 1939. For months after the fall of Singapore, they did not know if their parents were dead or alive and did not see them again until their final year of school.

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<sup>105</sup> Bread made in the school kitchen and cut into thick slices with a bread knife.

<sup>106</sup> Rosemary Bridgman, *Dreams*, 299.

<sup>107</sup> Anne Moore, *Dreams*, 254.

Rita paid a great tribute to her headmistress in writing “if Miss Denny ever had any qualms at the prospect of being landed indefinitely with two homeless, parentless children she certainly never showed them.”<sup>108</sup> In adulthood they realized how fortunate they had been. They were not the only ones. The three Turner girls, Lois, Mary, and Anne, arrived in April 1940. Mary wrote, “Perhaps my association with Queen Margaret’s has been closer than some, but then it was home to me for nearly six years. I grew up there, I learned the responsibilities of facing the challenges ahead.”<sup>109</sup>

Miss Denny became de facto parent to a number of these girls. She was responsible for all aspects of their lives. Immunization certificates in the archives for diphtheria and various childhood diseases issued by Dr. McHaffie’s office gave Queen Margaret’s School as the permanent residence for several girls.<sup>110</sup> The Head made every effort to ascertain the whereabouts and safety of the parents of these girls. The following responses showed the determination of her inquiries to ease the uncertainty they faced.

In reply to your letter of the 4<sup>th</sup> of July I am directed by Viscount Cranborne to say that he regrets that no information has been received in this office regarding Mr. & Mrs. T.R. Binnie.

2. Lord Cranborne deeply sympathises with their daughter in her anxiety and desires me to explain that when hostilities in Malaya began the Governor was asked to notify to the Colonial office by telegram any European Casualties among the civil population and the local defence forces; but owing to the conditions prevailing before the fall of Singapore, the list may not be complete. No such notification regarding Mr. and Mrs. Binnie was received here up to the 13 February, ie two days before the fall of Singapore.

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<sup>108</sup> Rita Flight, *Dreams*, 289.

<sup>109</sup> Mary Turner, *Dreams*, 306.

<sup>110</sup> *BCA-QMS*, Box 10, File 2.

3. Several thousands of women and children were evacuated from Singapore before the Japanese occupation, but a complete record of their names is not available. The women who were evacuated were requested to inform their relatives direct by cable on arrival at their destination.<sup>111</sup>

Doreen Binnie had received no word from her mother at the time of Miss Denny's inquiry. Although this was no doubt a standard letter with the specific details filled in, it shows the tenacity of Miss Denny in making her requests and the acceptance of her position, though a non-relative, to receive information. Further in the file is a newspaper clipping dated in ink, July 1942:

Word was received in Duncan last week that the mother of Doreen Binnie, a pupil at Queen Margaret's School, Duncan, had lost her life in a ship sinking, believed to have been somewhere in the Pacific. Doreen's father is a prisoner at Singapore. . . .

A few weeks ago Rita and Sheila Flight, also pupils at the school, got word that their mother was safe in England. Their father is a prisoner at Singapore.<sup>112</sup>

Another letter contained a form asking for information about W.F. Flight, including his date of birth, date of passport, date of departure from Canada to assist in locating him in the prisons in Singapore.<sup>113</sup> Miss Denny's total acceptance of her full responsibility for the 'orphan' girls earned her great respect and support in the Cowichan district.

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<sup>111</sup> S.J. Cole, Colonial Office, Enquiries & Casualties Department to Miss N.C. Denny, July 1942, *BCA-QMS*, Box 10, File 2, *BCA-QMS*.

<sup>112</sup> Box 10, File 2, *BCA-QMS*. This clipping has no header but is likely from one of the Victoria daily newspapers, *The Daily Colonist* or *Victoria Daily Times*. It is unlikely to be from the local Duncan weekly, *The Cowichan Leader*, as that paper published on green newsprint at that time. Some clippings in the files have retained a greenish tint but this one has not.

<sup>113</sup> Mrs. H.P. Plumtre, Director, Red Cross Inquiry Bureau to Miss N.C. Denny, July 31, 1942, Box 10, File 2, *BCA-QMS*.

Of course, no fees could be paid for these girls left at the school for the duration of the war, but Miss Denny managed, as she always did. More vegetables could always be planted and more cows milked. The boarders received support not only from the heads and staff but also from each other. When Dawn Murray arrived at QMS she was the youngest boarder that year at age seven. Her first night sleeping in Canmore she was crying in her bed when Ann Truesdale asked, “What are you crying for?”<sup>114</sup> The slightly older girl wanted Dawn to know that she was not alone, they were all in the same situation and had each other to depend upon. The school community learned the strength in working together.

In their daily existence, the girls also learned many life skills through the school routine. For boarders school was a fairly contained society, so they had to learn to respect authority, earn respect, and get along with each other. Girls made their own beds and tidied their own cubicles every day. Messiness earned ‘order marks’. Any boarder who acquired ten by the end of the week went to bed right after Saturday supper. Anne Breton remembered getting plenty of sleep between Saturday and Sunday.<sup>115</sup> There was fun in the boarding houses, too. Patsy Codville wrote of one bedtime game in which the participants jumped along on their bathmats from the washroom to their cubicles, carrying jugs of wash water, without touching the floor. Sloshing through the slopped

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<sup>114</sup> Dawn Murray, *Dreams*, 297.

<sup>115</sup> Anne Breton, *Dreams*, 260.

water only added to the fun.<sup>116</sup> Ann Truesdale recalled always holding the door open for her elders and wondering if there would ever be someone smaller than she was.<sup>117</sup>

Rosemary Bradley-Dyne recalled Miss Denny rather than the matrons taking care of childhood illnesses. As the eldest child of six and a wartime nurse, the headmistress had more experience than young matrons such as Isabella Greenwood. One night when Rosemary B-D awoke “chilled and horribly ill”, Miss Denny wrapped her in blankets and held her in front of the kitchen range. She also remarked “Spots, sniffles and all the unpleasant symptoms of ill health were profoundly distasteful to Miss Geoghegan who, while not lacking in sympathy took an aloof and academic view of such affairs.”<sup>118</sup> The Heads had their own areas of expertise. Except for occasional epidemics of flu or childhood diseases, the girls must have been a healthy group with home-grown food, abundant fresh air indoors and out, outdoor exercise, and for some lots of sleep on Saturday nights.

Food was an important part of life. Meals were plainer than most girls experienced at home, and perhaps different, but the food students and staff ate together was plentiful and wholesome. Between cooks and other assorted helpers Miss Denny would hold forth in the kitchen and produce her old standbys. Treacle on breakfast porridge must have been a new experience for some. ‘Fish eyes and glue’ (tapioca pudding) appears at all

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<sup>116</sup> Patsy Codville, *Dreams*, 286.

<sup>117</sup> Ann Truesdale, *Dreams*, 281.

<sup>118</sup> Rosemary Bradley-Dyne, *Dreams*, 223.

too regular intervals on every boarding school table despite almost universal loathing, and QMS was no exception. Even worse than that was the barrel of dehydrated powdered custard which Miss Denny acquired at a very good price. There were other dishes for which the girls begged for seconds and thirds. Ground beef with onions and gravy was a favourite. Apple, treacle, and rice puddings were greeted with enthusiasm. In wartime when the Cowichan Bakery was unable to deliver bread daily, Miss Denny taught five or six girls who supplied the school with loaves to be sliced at doorstep thickness.<sup>119</sup> Butter came from the farm and jam from Miss Denny's efforts in the school kitchen. From early days boarders had small garden plots where they could grow flowers, herbs, and vegetables. Molly Mackenzie had first-hand experience with the "sump pump and slosh flood control method" learning the value of 'United we stand, divided we fall' from working on the bucket brigade.<sup>120</sup> Anne Breton viewed it as a privilege to get up at 6 am on a summer morning to weed her garden and work on 'Gug's' or 'Denny's'. The rewards were large cups of tea laced with ample milk and sugar and slabs of homemade bread covered in butter and brown sugar. Molly, Anne, and Elizabeth Rigby working together captured the gardening prize in their years at school.<sup>121</sup> Gardening became increasingly important in war years as a source of food as well as a healthy outdoor activity.

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<sup>119</sup> Mary Turner, *Dreams*, 305.

<sup>120</sup> Molly Mackenzie, *The Link*, 1972, QMS-BCA and *Dreams*, 231.

<sup>121</sup> Anne Jackson, *Dreams*, 258.

Although it may not have been evident in many school activities, Miss Denny was always concerned with safety. The boarders were convinced that her favourite time for fire drills was in the cold grey dawn. As she and Miss Geoghegan were both great believers in realism, they would place buckets of smoldering leaves at strategic sites to give off clouds of real smoke. Anne Proctor remarked: “We got so that we anticipated being yanked out of bed even if Mr. Denny passed through the building smoking his pipe”.<sup>122</sup> By 1942 the heads faced the possibility of enemy attack becoming as real a danger as fire. They consulted various authorities but found the advice “Scatter the children in the woods!” to be wanting. So they cashed in their life insurance policies and called for tenders for building an air raid shelter. Richardson and I’Anson won the contract. To keep costs down, the students and staff dug the hole for it into the bank below Gibbins Road with garden spades, shovels, trowels, forks, buckets, and wheelbarrows. Miss Denny pronounced the reinforced concrete structure to be ‘splendid’.<sup>123</sup> Although the boarders fortunately never had to rush to the shelter in the middle of the night as Japanese bombers droned overhead, it was there, for everyone’s safety, just in case. The Heads were very aware that they were solely responsible for girls whose parents were ‘overseas’. After the war, the structure served as a very useful changing room for the swimming pool.

The boarders were not captives at the school. Whenever possible, they walked to church, to facilities off campus, to events in the community, and in the early years to the

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<sup>122</sup> Anne Proctor, *Dreams*, 249

<sup>123</sup> Denny, *Dreams*, 34-35.

Guide Hall on Cairnsmore Street. The girls were distinctive in their school uniforms or white dresses with green sashes walking in the traditional crocodile. Local students from Duncan Elementary and High Schools across the road would call out “Denny bums, Denny bums, sitting on a fence, trying to make a dollar out of fifteen cents”<sup>124</sup> as they passed by. Such was Miss Denny’s reputation for thrift. Other outings were in the old grey bus or on Mr. Bromilow’s<sup>125</sup> boat to one of the smaller islands. Hikes up Mounts Tzouhalem and Prevost led by younger members of the staff were popular weekend and summer activities. The girls would go for the day with sandwiches and bottles of pop in their haversacks.<sup>126</sup> Life for boarders was simple and wholesome. Molly Mackenzie remembered no problems with smoking or drugs during her time as a boarder in the 1920s. There was, however, a strange and unhygienic custom involving student medications. Parents would send a note to the school and the Matron would order the requested remedy and see that the prescribed dose was taken. The recipient then rushed to the washroom and transferred it mouth to mouth with the ‘trader’ in exchange for a lump of sugar, a piece of tuck, or doing lines<sup>127</sup>. Keplers<sup>128</sup> apparently sold for the highest price, whereas cod liver oil was hard to exchange for anything.<sup>129</sup> Use of cosmetics was not a problem either, perhaps because of QMS being a country school. Molly Mackenzie recalled that one girl who powdered her nose once was

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<sup>124</sup> Sylvia Marlow, *Dreams*, 253 and Anne Breton, *Dreams*, 259.

<sup>125</sup> Billy Bromilow, owner of a boat works and marina in Bird’s Eye Cove, Maple Bay, BC.

<sup>126</sup> Margaret Mackenzie, *Dreams*, 257.

<sup>127</sup> Copying a passage or repeatedly writing out a sentence for punishment for some misdemeanor.

<sup>128</sup> A malt extract medication used as a dietary supplement and an aid to digestion.

<sup>129</sup> Molly Mackenzie, *The Link*, and *Dreams*, 230.

ostracized by all the other girls and under suspicion for the rest of her school life. It seemed that “cosmetics came under the heading of sex, and you simply did not talk about it”.<sup>130</sup> This ‘silence’ was a difference between the city school, Norfolk House, and the country school, Queen Margaret’s. At Norfolk House money was never discussed, but social life with the opposite sex was acceptable; at Queen Margaret’s money and the acquisition thereof could be talked about openly, but anything sexual was taboo. This represented a contrast in the life style of the schools and in the attitudes of the Heads which continued for many years.

Girls closely bonded at school often remained friends for the rest of their lives. Fifteen former students attended the first official gathering of Old Girls on June 11th, 1927. With usual school efficiency the group formed the Overseas Old Margaretian Association, drew up a constitution, and designed an Old Girls’ blazer. The object of the group was “to be a bond of fellowship between former members of the School and to help them carry out the School ideals of loyalty, self-discipline, and service”.<sup>131</sup> The association has met regularly ever since. But what did the girls accomplish in their lives?

Rosemary Bradley-Dyne wrote:

I wonder if N.C.D. and Gug realized on that April Day in 1921 that they were to create a legend that is told in distant places around the world where Canadians have won universal respect. A highly ranking woman officer in wartime spoke of that little school on Vancouver Island that produces such a high percentage of leadership material. The daughters of Queen Margaret are a steady influence

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<sup>130</sup> Molly Mackenzie, *The Link*, and *Dreams*, 231.

<sup>131</sup> Denny, *Dreams*, 46.

in places where strength and understanding rather than wheat and gold have been the greatest need and in the universities where a will to learn and a desire to keep the peace are the hallmark of their worth.<sup>132</sup>

Was it all legend? No, many rose to positions of leadership and service in their adult lives. Some, such as Patsy Codville and Rosemary Bridgman have served on the Board of Governors of the school. Many became wives and mothers but had successful careers for at least parts of their adult lives. Frances Matterson was Matron in King's Daughters Hospital in Duncan prior to her marriage.<sup>133</sup> Rosemary Bridgman Penn taught school and became vice-head of Norfolk House after her children grew up.<sup>134</sup> Margie Powell nursed before her children were born and again after her eighth (she learned the meaning of fortitude) started school. Others were convinced to return to QMS to teach. Old Margaretians scattered about the globe and filled positions of service to others.

Perhaps even more telling of the lessons learned at QMS is what these women's daughters have grown up to do with their lives. One is a professor and author on environmental issues who ran for a seat in the House of Commons in the 2008 federal election.<sup>135</sup> Another, with her husband, owns and operates a four year accredited degree-granting college in Merida, Mexico, and her daughter is a graduate student at a

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<sup>132</sup> Rosemary Bradley-Dyne, *Dreams*, 225-226. Rosemary entered the school in 1922 as one of the first boarders.

<sup>133</sup> In her 80s, Frances and her husband still cultivate a large vegetable garden so that they can supply fresh produce to the needy at their local food bank. They now employ a gardener to help them with the heavy work which is hard for them to manage.

<sup>134</sup> Scott and Walker, *Do Thy Best*, 105.

<sup>135</sup> Briony Penn.

university in British Columbia.<sup>136</sup> Those of the next generation have carried forth the ideals of Miss Denny and Miss Geoghegan even if they did not attend the school themselves.

Veronica Strong-Boag in *The New Day Recalled: Lives of Girls and Women in English Canada, 1919-1929* refers to Queen Margaret's as an "elite institution".<sup>137</sup> The school could be perhaps considered elitist in the sense of producing leaders, having tennis courts, riding stables, a swimming pool, and drawing its student body mainly but not exclusively from upper middle class families of British ethnicity but not really in the lifestyle of the school community. Girls were not admitted to the school on the basis of academic achievement, or even potential, athletic ability, nor parental wealth or status. Even before the salvage years, it is difficult to imagine how tearing down an old barn and chicken houses, digging a very large hole for a swimming pool, or a basement for a new addition,<sup>138</sup> hurling rocks off the hockey field, washing in a basin with a jug of water could be considered elitist for young ladies. They were part of survival for the school. The heads were very much 'ladies' but also were quite prepared to tackle whatever physical work was necessary. Whereas girls at Norfolk House might be put to work weeding the flower beds and raspberry patch under the supervision of a mistress,

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<sup>136</sup> Joanna van der Gracht de Rosado.

<sup>137</sup> Veronica Strong-Boag, *The New Day Recalled: Lives of Girls and Women in English Canada, 1919-1939*, (Markham, Ontario: Penguin Books, 1988), 10. Strong-Boag cites Thomas A. McMaster, "A Study of Private Schools in Canada", M.Ed. thesis, University of Manitoba, 1940 as her source.

<sup>138</sup> Ina Horn, *Dreams*, 312. When a group of girls overheard a conversation between the Heads which they thought was about switching from socks to black stockings, they were aghast. Once they learned what it was really about, they were quite happy to dig out a basement.

or at least a prefect, their counterparts at QMS were cutting down trees, pitching hay, and digging out mounds of dirt alongside their Heads. Although many of the activities would be considered far too dangerous for school girls in the twenty-first century, no one was seriously injured – they were taught not only how a task should be done, but also responsibility towards themselves and others. Two remarkable women founded and ran a school that was certainly unique but not elite, adjusting to circumstances, reality, and necessity to enable their enterprise to survive and prosper. And survive it has, nearly ninety years later.

## CHAPTER VII *Conclusion*

In nineteenth-century Britain parents chose the type of schooling they wanted for their daughters for a variety of reasons, which rarely, until the last two or three decades, led to advanced studies or careers. Girls' education followed fashion. Until the advent of the 'reformed' schools in Britain, the female academies tended to be small, short-lived, disorganized, ill-housed, ill-taught, and distinctly unscholarly. Their founding, governance, financing, buildings and grounds, heads and teachers, students, parents, and succession plans, if they existed at all, fluctuated to meet the demands of the moment. Ethnic preservation was not relevant, as all were British, but upward social mobility, non-academic ambitions of the parents, and prestige certainly were. Parents of middle and upper class girls did not even consider the existing charity schools established by the churches as an option. They sought out boarding schools which secreted their daughters until they were ready to burst forth into society and catch a man with wealth, prominence, or even more desirable a title. Not for girls were the long traditions of the 'great public schools' for boys.<sup>1</sup>

These residential schools sprang up in Britain to fulfill not only the rising aspirations of the middle class, but also their founders', usually women, need to have a source of income. Finance was simple, the fees charged covered the expenses and left some profit for the founder. Governance was whatever she decided that she should do to meet her own needs and parental demands. If the woman's house was not sufficiently large to accommodate ten to fifteen boarding students, she rented the most impressive-looking house she could afford. If it had gardens suitable for gentle exercise, they were a bonus. An academic curriculum simply did not exist in most of these schools where one woman taught what she knew to a group of girls of assorted ages and abilities regardless of its suitability. The 'accomplishments' were a high priority as they could easily be demonstrated to doting parents who were convinced that a façade of gentility was all their daughters needed to attract propertied husbands. Despite the lack of serious academics,

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<sup>1</sup> Charterhouse School, Eton College, Harrow School, Merchant Taylors' School, Rugby School, Westminster School, and Winchester College are the 'great public schools'. Some of these schools began admitting girls in the last decades of the twentieth century.

these schools were the forerunners of the British-type private venture schools which flourished in the United Kingdom and throughout the Empire, including Vancouver Island, from the late nineteenth century and onward into the twenty-first. The residential schools for young ladies did not suddenly die, but just faded in popularity until only a very few survived the First World War.

The mid-point of the nineteenth century marked the beginning of reform in female education. Schools developed on the Miss Beale and Miss Buss models sprang up in Britain and abroad in answer to changing parental demand. Governance was usually by one woman, but boards convened as companies began opening several schools; finances stabilized as schools grew larger; accommodations were in grander, and often even more unsuitable, old houses. The biggest change was in the curriculum and teaching methods. Once the newly formed women's colleges began offering university level courses and permitting aspiring and practicing teachers and governesses to write London University examinations, qualifications entered the educational sphere. As places in higher education became available to women, the 'reformed' schools made passing university entrance exams the standard to reach. This increased the demand for academically trained teachers far beyond the immediate capacity of the universities to fulfill. In-house training programmes developed at Cheltenham Ladies' College and other institutions to ease the shortage. Teaching was becoming a vocation with qualifications and standards. By the end of the nineteenth century girls were achieving levels of education that enabled them to have fulfilling and well-paying careers if they so desired.

As the West Coast of Canada was settled much later than Eastern Canada, immigrants from Britain and the United States arrived with educational expectations for their children far different from the French convent and ladies' college models popular in Ontario, Quebec, and the Maritimes. Initially, schools on Vancouver Island were divided along class and religious lines. The Protestant schools for lower class children became non-sectarian, under colonial and later provincial government authority, whereas the Catholics retained their own schools as private institutions receiving no government support. Other private schools catered to the children of immigrants of some substance. These operated outside of government supervision and control for a hundred years.

Whereas several of the boys' schools offered academic programmes taught by graduates of British universities, the numerous girls' schools in the early years specialized in froth. As immigration increased academic private schools developed and remained popular with parents in Victoria even after urban public schools were plentiful and free. There were several reasons for this occurrence. Fees at the private schools were low compared to wages.<sup>2</sup> Classes were usually smaller<sup>3</sup> and supposedly 'select' with fewer behaviour problems. Teachers, certainly in the boys' schools, were better educated. Familiarity, being more like the schools they knew 'back home', was a factor. Prestige and conformance with the parents' friends and relations often contributed to the decision. Sometimes, a private school could be in a more convenient location to the family home. For parents of girls, a decisive factor often was that private schools were usually single-sex<sup>4</sup> whereas in the public schools the sexes could mix on the school grounds even when classes were segregated. Boarding facilities could be important for rural parents in choosing a school.

The education acts passed by the colonial and later provincial legislators in British Columbia were intended to make education as equal and accessible to all children as funds would allow. In reality this goal was impossible to reach outside of Victoria and Nanaimo. Parents in rural areas, living essentially on the perimeter of civilization, had few local choices beyond the one-roomed school, with its untrained, inexperienced teacher in an inadequate building not even meeting basic needs. Those with some means sought out private boarding schools. Affluent urban parents, including members of the public school boards, sent their children to private schools in even greater numbers. The wife of John Jessop, the first Superintendent of Education in the province, ran her own private school. Middle class British immigrants perceived the free public and high schools as charity schools for working-class children.

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<sup>2</sup> Fees per child were 5-10% of an artisan's monthly wage and a smaller percentage of a businessman's or professional's income. In 1884, the Canadian Pacific Railway was paying overseers \$125 a month, carpenters \$85 a month, masons \$60-85 a month, and labourers \$42-60 a month. *Colonist*, August 31, 1884.

<sup>3</sup> Classes were smaller in the girls' schools and most of the boys'. A notable exception was John Jessop's Central School when he conducted it as a private school. Even before he dismissed his assistants, classes were as large or larger than in the public schools. This may have been a major reason why he lost students.

<sup>4</sup> Sometimes there would be a separate class for small boys.

In the last decade of the nineteenth century and before and after the First World War, a new breed of settlers emerged in British Columbia as immigration increased from Britain and colonies and trading stations in Asia. Among their numbers were middle-class men and women, with some means but not sufficient to live in the style they wished in England, intent on recreating English society on the shores<sup>5</sup> of Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands. They were well-educated, perhaps not in one of the old great public schools, but a newer one giving solid academic programme to the sons and daughters of the affluent middle-class. These immigrants included some who wanted to open their own schools to satisfy the needs of their fellow newcomers. Girls' schools were especially important. Whereas family finances might be stretched almost to breaking point to send boys away to school, the girls were kept closer to home. Yet they, too, required the security of an academic education in case they needed to be self-supporting later in their lives. Parents and the entrepreneurial teachers found each other and the private, academic school tradition became established and enduring on Vancouver Island.

Decades before the 'reformed' academic schools reached Vancouver Island, two types of girls' schools developed in Victoria. One was the small venture school, specializing in froth, so prevalent in England prior to the 1870s.<sup>6</sup> Some schoolmarms stayed in business for a year or two, others for decades. These schools were well-patronized by the newly prosperous early settlers seeking a veneer of gentility for their daughters. Later schools, such as the one run by the Misses Kitto, with well-trained teachers, began to offer more serious academics.<sup>7</sup> The other type was the larger religious schools conducted by the Catholic and Anglican Churches. Both the Catholic St. Ann's and the Anglican Angela College, at various times, conducted a select school for their wealthier clientele on the main campus and another school at a separate location for lower-class and coloured children. Class distinctions were strictly observed. Despite this division, St. Ann's Academy with its dedicated teachers, support from the motherhouse in

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<sup>5</sup> British settlers preferred waterfront property as it provided easy transportation by private boat as well as splendid recreational opportunities.

<sup>6</sup> See Chapter IV Appendix for the opening dates of a number of these schools.

<sup>7</sup> The Kitto sisters trained to be teachers at Cheltenham Ladies' College before the family immigrated to Canada.

Lachine, Quebec, and the foresight to adjust to changing conditions was able to offer well-respected education for over a century, Angela College was not.

This paper concentrates on three examples of girls' schools on Vancouver Island whose foundations came directly from Britain. The first is the religious school, Angela College founded in 1860, the second is the urban school, Norfolk House founded in 1913, and the third is the country school, Queen Margaret's founded in 1921. They have factors in common but vast differences in other areas.

Each school was opened to cater to middle and upper class British girls. Some of the girls were born in British Columbia, others in the British Isles, and, for Queen Margaret's and Norfolk House, in colonies and trading stations in Asia. There were always some American girls amongst the boarders but very few from Eastern Canada. The heads and teachers were British born, except for a few associated with Angela College. After these similarities, factors diverge. The inspiration for Angela College originated with Bishop Hills and a group of staunch male Anglicans who liked the concept but had no idea how to run a girls' school. Their ideas, outmoded before the school opened its door, were pressed upon a succession of women, usually clergy wives, whom they hired to conduct the college. Nor was the need for a religious girls' school ever as strong among the parishioners as the churchmen thought it should be. In contrast, Miss Atkins and Miss McDermott, founders of Norfolk House, were well-educated, well-trained, and had experience in the operation of a girls' school from their years of teaching at Norwich High School before they opened their school in Victoria. They had worked with a successful model and sought to replicate it. As two single women they started the school to support themselves. Miss Denny and Miss Geoghegan began small schools in Duncan before combining to found Queen Margaret's. They had not known each other in Britain but shared similar experiences in 'reformed' schools. They, too, needed to earn their livings. These four women hoped to secure their financial futures by founding schools, the principals of Angela College during its time as a religious school did not. Whereas Angela College received considerable start-up support from the Church, the other two schools had no financial backing.

Schools founded by a small group of women with a clear vision of the education they wanted to offer appealed to like-minded parents and thus had a greater chance of success. In contrast, Bishop Hills' vision for Angela College was more as a jewel in his mitre than a scholarly institution filling a need in colonial Victoria. A group of devout men with a shining concept but lacking in knowledge or experience in female education, and with no personal stake in its survival, were not competent to found a successful school.<sup>8</sup>

Style of governance affects the quality of any school, public or private. As the founders of Norfolk House and Queen Margaret's owned their schools, they had complete control. After Miss McDermott married, Miss Atkins had sole charge of Norfolk House. Even when the board formed to organize finance, the men handled the money but left the running of the school to her. The fact that parents rallied to ease her distress showed their support of her governance. The two heads at Queen Margaret's treated the school as their private fiefdom with themselves as benevolent dictators. They earned great respect from girls, parents, and much of the community for the way in which they conducted their school. Not so for the many principals of Angela College. During the years as a religious school these women were hired by the Special Committee of the Diocesan Synod to carry out the day to day running of the school under the supervision of the committee. As these men had many other, often more pressing, Church needs to attend to, decisions about the school were often haphazard and slow in coming. As the men were ignorant of changes in female education, the school was unable to satisfy the societal needs of students and parents as Victoria itself grew and matured. The legion of clergy wives who moved through the headship did not have sufficient experience to provide counsel to the committee, nor would they have dared as the Bishop had full control over their husbands' careers. Even after the buildings were rented to a string of private venture schools, the terms of the leases constricted usage of the campus and school name. No principal was ever able to rely on just her own best judgment. Norfolk House and Queen Margaret's survived largely because they were entities conceived by individuals whose livelihoods were dependent upon running a successful enterprise. Upper middle class parents saw

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<sup>8</sup> Most if not all of the men on the committee in charge of Angela College would have attended endowed public schools in Britain and then gone on to Oxford or Cambridge University.

these heads as guardians of ethnic preservation. They were the right sort of people running the right sort of school for their daughters – heads and parents understood playing the game of a private school. Nouveau riche parents saw the heads as English ladies of the class they wished their daughters to become, and so chose the schools and their leadership as part of upward social mobility, to them the schools probably appeared elitist. Those doing the governing needed to be responsible for and have a personal stake in the outcome of the school over a lengthy period of time. These factors allowed traditions of academics and school culture to grow roots and thrive.

The finances of a private school wavered between pesky nuisances and outright disasters. Norfolk House and Angela College veered too often to the point of complete disaster. The situation at Norfolk House was salvaged by parents who organized a board to take charge of the money aspects. Miss Atkins was so ‘not good with money’, that removing the whole troublesome matter from her responsibility was the best solution. She belonged to that class and those generations of English women who firmly believed that it ‘was not nice to talk about money’. Principals at Angela College had a different strategy, when finances became too difficult to cope with they finished their contracts or did not renew their leases and just walked away from the school leaving the Church to pick up the debt. The only successful principal was Miss Dupont who after twelve years was able to retire and live comfortably in Victoria society. She along with Miss Pemberton and Miss Crease, the next most successful ones, were not clergy wives nor had children to care for, so were able to devote more time and energy to the school. Miss Denny tended to practical matters like money so Queen Margaret’s veered toward the pesky nuisance side of the scale. She and Miss Geoghegan started the school with no money, or to look at the matter more positively, with no debt. They borrowed as little money as possible, used it wisely, and paid it back as quickly as possible. Miss Denny kept scrupulous records of all income and expenses, and used one bank account for the school and any personal expenditures that she and Miss Geoghegan made. Not shy about talking about money, she made the needs of the school clear. The girls knew all about raising money whether it was to build the swimming pool, the chapel, or to contribute to the war effort. Perhaps most of all Norah Denny knew how to scrounge, be frugal, and make do with what she had. After

all, she had no grand edifice to live up to, no style she had to maintain, and her parents did not expect it from a country school.

The differences in initial funding were most evident in buildings and grounds of the schools. The three schools all began in rented houses of varying sizes. Angela College's original location was in a leased house of some considerable size and stature on Rae Street (now Courtney east of Douglas) close to Christ Church Cathedral.<sup>9</sup> It was sufficiently large for the school to grow within the same building for the first seven years. Neighbouring families were prepared to take in girls who needed to board before the school moved into its new, imposing building. Norfolk House spent twenty years in modest rented houses in Fairfield and then in Oak Bay. As accommodation became overcrowded, an additional house was leased, until the school was in three buildings several blocks apart. Queen Margaret's began in what was probably the grandest building in the school's history, a house named Holmesdale. There the similarities between the three end.

Parents preferred schools to have a permanent home. The Bishop, as a result of his fundraising, was able to present the Ladies' College (renamed Angela College) with a magnificent edifice on rented ground across the road from the cathedral but no endowment to ensure its operating or maintenance costs. The building was always far larger than the school required. Instead of being an asset it soon became a costly liability. After the land was purchased, ending the expense of ground rent, neither the Church nor the school could afford taxes and upkeep without going into debt.<sup>10</sup> Even the grounds, transformed into gardens rather than playing fields with a patch of grass and a few bushes for landscaping, increased the expense. Several headmistresses moved their existing schools into the college building in the private venture years and out again at the expiration of their leases. One unfortunate clergy wife still sank into debt even after her rent payments were forgiven. Despite the difficulties and expenses, Angela College's founders, Bishop Hills and the Church, wanted the school to continue. Sporadic searches were conducted for years to find an Anglican teaching sisterhood willing to take over the

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<sup>9</sup> Formerly the residence of Chief Justice Cameron.

<sup>10</sup> Private schools were not exempt from property taxes in British Columbia until the 1950s. Once rent was charged for Angela College, it was no longer charitable church property and thus property taxes applied.

buildings, management, and finances of the school. Even as late as September 1903 the Synod Executive Committee requested the Bishop yet again to attempt to establish a girls' school in the vacant building and continued to hold out hope that an English teaching order would feel inspired to take on the debt until the property was finally sold in 1907.

Norfolk House, when it built on the Pemberton Woods site, curtailed its original plans and constructed what it could afford, a purpose built classroom block. A gymnasium soon followed and a few modest additions were constructed though the years. The buildings were simple, rectangular wooden structures, stained dark brown with minimalist tudor-style decoration on the upper level. Inside, the décor was wood paneling, wood floors, and plain plastered walls. Nothing appeared ostentatious; the style was in keeping with the demure nature of the school. Parents were satisfied with the aura of permanence. Upkeep costs and operating expenses were minimal compared to the rented houses. Boarders were housed in another rented house for the next twenty years as funds were not available for building a dormitory block on campus. A playing field, areas for younger children, and tennis courts were developed, and the rest of the land left in woods requiring little or no upkeep.

After a few months at Holmesdale, Miss Denny and Miss Geoghegan realized that they needed a piece of land of their own. With the loan from Dr. Geoghegan they purchased the present site of Queen Margaret's, which came with a small cottage, an old barn, and some derelict chicken houses. From this very modest start the two women began a building programme which continued into the twenty-first century. With additions added to the original cottage, attics renovated for occupation, basements dug below existing buildings, the structure grew in an organic sort of way to house the increasing number of boarders and day girls. The founders kept their expectations modest and economical, provided their own sweat labour (and that of the girls), and met their financial obligations. The only unifying architectural factor was that the buildings, except for the chapel, were painted dark green with white trim around the windows. The heads of Queen Margaret's were content with the ramshackle buildings. They had the advantage of having Mr. Denny on site to deal in his own sort of way with mechanical things. He was not expert but he was free. The rest of the maintenance could be accomplished by the staff

and girls. Nor did they have any qualms about using child labour to maintain the playing field, tennis courts, and stables. They were able over the years to build a gym, develop the facilities for the equestrian programme, purchase the school farms, build the chapel, and numerous additions to the school buildings as they could afford them. Prospective parents who did not flee, aghast, at their first look at the structures, accepted what was there. Buildings did not matter, it was the atmosphere which was important. After all, it was a country school and could not be expected to have an urban image.

What went on inside the buildings was the biggest difference between the three schools. The curriculum adopted by Angela College was nearing the end of its era when the school opened. The original parents through to the end of Miss Crease's headship in 1874 may have been reasonably satisfied with the 'accomplishments' but did not remain with the school after the schism in the church. Miss Dupont, as she built up the school into a well-paying enterprise, was able to hire better qualified teachers and add substance to the arts-related subjects. As the Misses Kitto, well-educated and well-trained in the 'reformed' school model, preferred teaching a rigorous fine arts programme<sup>11</sup> to small classes, they moved back to their former premises on Belcher Street after the expiry of their one-year lease. There was not sufficient demand for their curriculum to warrant the larger premises at Angela College. Miss Atkins and thus Norfolk House stressed academics from its founding. They took priority over games and other school activities. Parents who foresaw university in their daughters' futures chose the school, perhaps in response to the conditions they saw or feared in the public schools. They were prepared to pay to have smaller classes, few behaviour problems, and British teachers. The school presented ethnic preservation for British immigrants who expected their daughters to 'grow up British'. The curriculum was just what they knew 'back home' because it was from back there, transplanted as closely as possible from Norwich High School. Even the major textbooks were ordered from England, simply augmented by those from the provincial book repository. As the girls wrote the official government examinations, regardless of what they had studied for nine months of the school year, they achieved standards which would enable them to enter university or other training without enduring

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<sup>11</sup> Not all teachers trained in the 'reformed' school model wanted to teach Math or Science. The teaching methods were equally applicable to scholarship in all subjects.

the rough and tumble of the public high school.<sup>12</sup> Parents striving for upward social mobility followed the lead of those they saw as the establishment families and sought an academic education for their daughters, too. As Norfolk House was an urban school in a capital city with a large military contingent, girls were expected to acquire social graces and polish along with their scholarly studies. This aspect was certainly less stressed than at Angela College, but existed all the same.

This social side of the curriculum did not exist at Queen Margaret's. Duncan did not offer the same social opportunities as Victoria nor were the headmistresses interested in how neatly the girls could curtsy unless it was for a part in a play or some other fundraising event. QMS was a country school and did not attempt to be anything else. Miss Geoghegan did her best to organize and supervise academics but they never had the high priority that they had at Norfolk House. The curriculum was basically English because that was what the two heads knew. The girls wrote the provincial examinations to gain credentials and some passed and some did not. It didn't really matter which occurred, being a good person was held far more important than being a good scholar. Bright girls managed to do well with small classes and, except during the war years, competent teachers, and go on to university. They had learned to be resourceful, so could pick up knowledge that they had missed along the way if and when they needed it. Those less gifted were helped along and encouraged, and the heads always managed to find something that they were good at. Classroom studies were augmented by games (chiefly field hockey but also tennis and swimming), the riding programme, Girl Guides, and numerous outdoor pursuits for a well-rounded curriculum. English parents sent their daughters to the school because they understood and respected Miss Denny's emphasis on character. Their girls would learn about leadership, honesty, responsibility, and hard work

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<sup>12</sup> During the time period of this paper, high schools had specific catchment areas and charged fees to students from another area. Within Greater Victoria there would have been vast differences between the quality of teaching and learning at the various high schools. This situation still exists, see [http://www.fraserinstitute.org/commerce.web/product\\_files/70BCESC09COMP.pdf](http://www.fraserinstitute.org/commerce.web/product_files/70BCESC09COMP.pdf) Public high schools in resource-based communities such as Duncan, Chemainus, and Lake Cowichan would have had little to offer career-oriented girls beyond domestic science and commercial courses. Chemainus High School still had the reputation of being a 'rough school' when my sister-in-law was vice-principal there in the 1970s.

even if they were a bit fuzzy about geometry theorems. Others enrolled their daughters because they were not doing well academically, and class standing really made no difference at QMS. For parents abroad, the school offered a British education in a very safe environment.

The headmistress, above all else, establishes the reputation of a private school. One of the major obstacles to the success of Angela College was the lack of a dominant figure. Although Miss Dupont lasted for twelve years, that was a short term for a headmistress. There was no one woman to nurture loyalty to the school from generation to generation. A synod committee could not establish long-lasting ties in the world of private schools. The procession of clergy wives had no ownership of the school, nor were their livelihoods tied to its success. It is doubtful if any of them had a vision or dream for the school but most probably resented being coerced into an impossible situation. There is no indication of any of them having the charisma or strength of character to impress parents. The only principal referred to in personal reminiscences was Susan Pemberton. She had the advantage of being active and well-known in Victoria society as her brother's hostess for years before she accepted the position.<sup>13</sup> For Miss Atkins, Miss Denny, and Miss Geoghegan running their schools was their career. Quite literally, their lives depended upon a successful venture. Miss Atkins had been trained to be a schoolmistress, had experience in a large school, and assumed her role with a sound foundation of knowledge on which to build. Her own school was an obvious step in her career. Miss Geoghegan was university educated but Miss Denny was not. Although each ran a small school in Duncan as a source of income, the founding of Queen Margaret's was the result of fortunate circumstances. Having no personal money, they each needed to secure a future, and a school seemed to them to be a fun way. Once they made the decision, they planned very carefully as they intended QMS to be long-lasting. They knew they needed symbols, traditions, and a strong purpose – and that was building character. Miss Denny, although lacking formal paper qualifications, knew much about leadership. Being English ladies of the upper middle class stood them in good stead whether dealing with students, parents, local tradesmen, or bank managers, but did not deter them from digging basements,

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<sup>13</sup> Her brother was Joseph Despard Pemberton.

cutting down trees, or sorting rags if the job needed to be done. Both women had a great deal of common sense. Miss Atkins was just as much a lady, but was more genteel in her approach to life. Being trained in the profession she did not perform the physical labour that the heads of QMS just accepted as coming with the job. She, too, had stamina and endurance, but lacked talent for managing money.

Teachers in all three schools came largely from Britain or from British families. Parents were paying for an English education and so expected the genuine article in the classroom. Angela College had clergy wives, sisters, daughters, and nieces teaching as well as in the principal's office. Sometimes the husband of the head taught the more academic subjects. These men, much better educated than the women, usually taught in the boys' Collegiate School as well, so simple time restraints would have motivated them to teach much the same material to the girls. Teachers came and went with the same frequency as the heads allowing for little continuity at the school. Nor were they treated with respect by the management as shown by Bishop Hills' Christmas letter to the teachers in 1874. Norfolk House, in contrast, had good retention rates. Miss Atkins expected mistresses to be scholarly and teach several subjects. Although one or two always lived at the boarding house with Miss Atkins and Mrs. Cheetham, most were able to live in the community and continue at the school even if they were married. Miss Denny provided low pay and spartan accommodation for the teaching staff. The lifestyle kept a number at the school for the rest of their lives but some soon met a young bachelor in the Cowichan Valley and married, necessitating recruiting a constant new supply from England. Young and eager, from 'reformed' schools in Britain, they understood how the game was to be played.

Students at all three schools did not need to be academically gifted to be admitted or 'invited to return'. Academics were not much of an issue at Angela College. Almost every girl received a prize at year end, even if it was for effort or attendance. Norfolk House accepted 'the right sort of girl' whether or not she was scholastically inclined.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> 'The right sort of girl' was one who was positive, truthful, willing to participate in school activities, and try her best. Norfolk House was never interested in reforming juvenile delinquents in the making, no matter how rich or powerful their parents might be. Selection was on personal characteristics, not wealth or class. In a sense, this is elitist, but it's what any school, public or private, given the choice, wants to do. Public

The school motto, “Do thy best and rejoice with those that do better”, was lived by long before it was carved into the wooden mantle at the bottom of the staircase in the original classroom building at Pemberton Woods. Although Miss Atkins worked hard to raise the academic standard of her school, she was well aware that some of her girls were not able to or not interested in mastering their studies. Miss Denny was far less concerned about progress in the classroom – she left worrying about scholarly things to Miss Geoghegan. Classes were held because that was what a school was supposed to do but were kept in perspective with other areas of endeavour which were considered just as important. As QMS always had a large proportion of boarders, the girls lived a lifestyle, it was their home and teachers and other girls were their family. During the war years it was the only home that some of them knew, it was their permanent address.

The war years at QMS intensified the spirit which had been growing for years as the girls worked together as a community even more than they had before. They worked hard, physically, to see that there was food to put on the table, wood for the furnaces, maintenance chores carried out, a contribution to the war effort made, and enjoyed the comradeship. Day girls thought they were missing out when they had to go home at night. It was their school and they could not shirk their duty especially as the heads and teachers worked even harder than they did.

Parents, who resided in Canada, were immigrants themselves, or were only one generation removed. At Angela College, although many of the girls were born in British Columbia, almost all of the parents were not. They came to live in frontier conditions but sought civilizing influences for their daughters. Although the established Hudson’s Bay Company and colonial/provincial administrative families left with Rev. Cridge, many of those who patronized the college after the schism in the Anglican Church were seeking entry into the higher social circles in Victoria. These families wanted to be part of the new elite. To them, the school buildings presented a more prestigious outward appearance than the girls’ schools conducted in private houses. Their quest was not ethnic preservation, but ambition for upward social mobility so that they could become part of that class

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schools with low enrolments more-or-less have to accept whoever comes in the door, but those with high enrolments ‘have their ways’ of moving on those they do not want, even today.

which was secure in its status. The parents who chose Norfolk House were comfortable in their upper middle class status and were probably less ambitious for upward social mobility than those who chose the flashier girls' schools. They, if not their daughters, understood the advantages of an academic education. Miss Atkins often figured largely in parental choice. Families appreciated what she was accomplishing and were willing to commit time and money to support her and the school. Out-of-town parents approved of her close supervision of boarders and her efforts to involve them in the cultural life of Victoria. In contrast, parents chose Queen Margaret's because it was not an urban school.<sup>15</sup> The local parents were British-born professionals in Duncan, gentlemen farmers, and retirees from military and civil service posts throughout the Empire who knew their rightful social position and had every intention of retaining it. Many had had very adventurous, courageous, or colourful lives abroad but were now content to live a fairly sedate life with yachting, fishing, hunting, tennis, golf, bridge, afternoon tea, and, on the side, whatever economic pursuits they might happen to engage in. Mixed in amongst the tweed jackets and grey flannels were fathers who had prospered in the resource industries. They were fully aware that they would never be of that social class but they wanted their daughters to be part of it. Money would not buy their acceptance into it, but strength of character would. Being part of the school was up to each girl's own merits, and whether her father was the younger son of a British lord, owned a local garage, or was a lumber baron made no difference. Those who did not feel included, or could not meet the conditions of life at QMS, often just left and went to school elsewhere. Parents admired Miss Denny for the hurdles she set, well aware that girls who followed her example would develop strength of character which would serve them well for the rest of their lives. Miss Atkins at Norfolk House and Miss Denny at Queen Margaret's established different school atmospheres, very much a contrast between urban and rural, but they understood equally well how to play the game of the private school.

The founders of Norfolk House and Queen Margaret's wanted their schools to continue after they retired. This required evolution from private ownership and

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<sup>15</sup> Duncan, prior to the end of the Second World War, was a small town serving farming, logging, and to some extent mining activity in the Cowichan Valley. In the late 1920s it still had wooden sidewalks by the train station and rutted dirt roads. QMS was on the edge of the town backing onto farmland and woods.

responsibility into non-profit societies with boards of governors. Both schools have survived, Queen Margaret's as its own entity but now with boys up to the end of grade 7 and Norfolk House in union with Glenlyon Boys' School as Glenlyon-Norfolk.

Two generations of girls, in the timeframe of this paper, grew up not only with British academic schooling but also with truth, honesty, perseverance, and self-confidence etched into their characters to serve them well wherever they journeyed and whatever they attempted for the rest of their lives. In this sense, Queen Margaret's and Norfolk House were elite, but also egalitarian as within the school every girl had the same expectations placed upon her. These were two schools among a group throughout the former Empire which shared similar roots and ideals and produced leaders in all fields of endeavour.

Parental choice is basic to the success of any private school without an endowment. Norfolk House and Queen Margaret's survived because long term headmistresses understood and provided the kind of education families wanted. Ethnic preservation, upward social mobility, need for the security of an academic (preferably the familiar British) education, an alternative to the real or perceived deficiencies in the public school system, a safe environment, and the development of character were all forces which attracted and retained parents. Fathers and mothers were prepared to overlook deficiencies in buildings and facilities, financial difficulties in the case of Norfolk House, and scarcity of competent classroom teachers in wartime at Queen Margaret's in favour of atmosphere and school tradition. The headmistress with a strong sense of what was right was the force which made the school. She, the teachers, and the girls she directed needed to have a strong conviction of ownership of their school. Angela College certainly had buildings and facilities, although they decayed through the years, but never had stable finances, atmosphere, or strong traditions, or the 'character' of a long-lasting headmistress playing the role on the stage of education. Miss Atkins, Miss Denny, and Miss Geoghegan were successful because they knew unwaveringly how the game was played.

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## CHAPTER IV - APPENDIX

The following are a number but not necessarily all of the girls' schools which operated in competition to Angela College, listed by opening year. Some were short-lived, others survived for a number of years. Source: *The Colonist* except as noted.

### 1859

St. Ann's Convent Schools – ongoing throughout the period

J. Silversmith – Select Day School – coed – corner of Broadway and Yates

E. Mallandaine, architect, purchased the Select School late in 1859 – moved to Broad St. in 1860

Mme. Petibeu – Young Ladies' School – Douglas St. corner of Yates [operated a school in San Francisco for 5 years prior to coming to Victoria and continued her school in Victoria, under various names, for at least 15 years]

### 1860

Mme. Petibeu – Young Ladies' Seminary – View St. and Ladies' Seminary – Victoria St.

Rev. W.F. Clarke – Victoria Academy – coed – Congregational Lecture Room

### 1861

Mr. Jessop – Central School – coed – Fort St. between Douglas and Blanshard [started as a private school]

### 1862

Mrs. Wilson Brown – Church Bank House Academy for Young Ladies

R.R. Templeton – The Victoria School – Government St. – coed

Mrs. Atwood's School - coed

### 1863

Mme. Petibeu – School for Young Ladies – Fort St. at Meares

Miss Faussette – Ladies' School – Douglas St. [married John Jessop in 1868 and moved school to new home in 1869]

**1864**

Mme. Petibeu – Fairfield Academy - Fort St.

Presbyterian Girls' School – at the church, Pandora St.

Mrs. Hayward – Fort Street Academy

Miss Alsop – in Rev. Cridge's report

Miss Fernetell – in Rev. Cridge's report

Miss Lester – in Rev. Cridge's report

**1867**

Miss Fawcett

Mrs. Hayward – Fort St. [re-opened after time at Angela College]

Mrs. Wrights

**1869**

Mrs. Jessop – Roseville Academy – Yates St. (between Quadra and Vancouver)

Mrs. Mills – corner of Douglas and View

**1870**

Miss Barry – Boys and Girls School – corner of Rae and Blanchard Sts.

Miss Cridge – James Bay

Mrs. Haywood – Fort St. [after teaching at Angela College]

Mrs. Fellows – corner of Quadra and Broughton

**1871**

Miss Mills – opened at some time between 1865 and 1871

Mrs. C.S. Todd – Frederick St. - opened at some time between 1865 and 1871

Yardley – Fort St. - opened at some time between 1865 and 1871 <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Elsie Ina Watts, "Attitudes of Parents toward the Development of Public Schools in Victoria B.C. during the Colonial Period", MA Thesis, Simon Fraser University, August 1986.

**1872**

The Misses Pollard

**1874**

Mrs. Sidney Wilson – Private School - Blanchard and Johnson Sts.

**1875**

Mme. Petibeau

Rev. and Mrs. Cridge - Reformed Episcopal Ladies' School – until 1885 – sometimes named Kane Street Ladies' School

Mrs. Bushell – Young Ladies Day School

**1879**

St. Mary's School (affiliated with Angela College) – Vancouver St.

Miss Dupont – Young Ladies' Select School moved to Angela College in fall of 1880

**1880**

Mrs. Jessop – reopened - Yates St between Quadra and Vancouver

Miss Green – Cypeswyk – Moss St.

**1881**

Mrs. G. Bridges – Private School for Girls and Boys – Mason St.

**1884**

Mrs. Cridge – Maryfield Cottage School, Maryfield St., James Bay

**1888**

Miss Arrowsmith – Superior St., James Bay

**1890**

Miss Caton – Vancouver St. moved to new building on Bellot St.

Miss Boddington and Miss Galley

**1891**

Mrs. A. Blythe - 16 North Park St.

**1892**

Miss Kitto – Private School for Girls – 224 Fort St. corner of Cook St.- became Victoria Ladies' College – Belcher St. by Autumn Term

Mrs. J. Wastie Green, Victoria College – accepted some girls

Miss Devereux – English Academy – Vancouver St.

Miss Inghish – Private Boarding and Day School for Girls – Glen House –Vancouver at Scoresby Sts.

**1893**

Miss Fenton – 98 Quebec St., James Bay

Miss C.G. Fox – 36 Mason St.

**1894**

Miss Kitto – Clovelly College – Belcher St.

Miss Galley and Miss Powell – 31 Mears St.

Mrs. C.J. Brenton – Head St., Esquimalt

Mrs. Blacklock – Victoria Day School

**1895**

Mrs. R.S. Day – Kindergarten and Primary School – 10 Blanchard St.

Miss Goward – St. Charles St.

**1897**

Miss Devereux – English Academy - 8 Richardson St. corner of Vancouver

**1899**

Miss Dawson and Miss Green – Victoria Girls' School – corner of Cadboro Bay Rd. and Stanley Ave.

Miss Sehl – Stanley Ave. School - coed

## CHAPTER V APPENDIX

Norfolk House School Examinations from early 1940s <sup>1</sup>

### Science Examinations

Questions addressed the following topics:

#### Form III Upper Summer 1942 - Mrs. Thompson

1. Question about instruments
2. Light years/gravity/ solar system/earthquakes/erosion/fossils
3. Differences – a) rocks b) vertebrates/invertebrates c) warm/cold blooded animals
4. Origin of the earth
5. Volcanoes
6. Formation of coal
7. Ice Ages
8. Chronology of life forms

#### Form IV Lower B Summer 1943 - Mrs. Thompson

1. Definitions
2. Water
3. Water Purification
4. Biology – agriculture
5. Geology – rocks
6. Chemistry – gases
7. Chemistry – gases
8. Chemistry – gases
9. Parts of a flower
10. Four stages of life of an insect

#### Form IV Lower Xmas 1943 - Mrs. Thompson

1. Revolution of the earth around the sun - diagram
2. Temperatures
3. Tides
4. Eclipses
5. Planets
6. Meteors
7. Latitude
8. Longitude
9. Rock-Soil cycle
10. Origin of the earth

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<sup>1</sup> Examination Papers of a student, NHS Society Fond NF2 – 11, Glenlyon-Norfolk Archives.

**Form IV Lower Summer 1944**

1. Temperature
2. Daylight/Darkness
3. Tides
4. Orbits – planets, moons
5. Planets – stars
6. Latitude
7. Longitude
8. Geology
9. Air
10. Air Pressure
11. Winds
12. Sea and Land breezes
13. Dalton's Atomic Theory
14. Decomposition
15. Physical Change
16. Emulsion
17. Foods

**Form IV Upper Test November 13, 1944 - Mrs. Cheetham**

1. Composition of the Atmosphere
2. Electrolysis of water
3. Characteristic properties of metals
4. Brownian Movement
5. Boyle's Law
6. Charles' Law
7. Four assumptions of Dalton's Atomic Theory

**Form IV Upper Xmas 1944 - Mrs. Cheetham**

1. Definitions
2. Electrolysis of water
3. Brownian Movement
4. Law of Conservation of Matter / Kinetic Molecular Theory
5. Diffusion of gases - describe experiment
6. Spontaneous combustion - “ ”
7. Chemistry - preparation and tests for gases
8. Biology - plant cells
9. Biological comparisons and contrasts
10. Photosynthesis
11. Parts of a flower

## History Examinations

### Form III June 1942 - Miss Clarke

1. Matching questions, mostly from English, Italian, and Portuguese Renaissance
2. Hundred Years War
3. Pretend to be a pilgrim traveling to Canterbury with Chaucer
4. Tell the story of the Peasants' Revolt – causes/leaders/events/put down/results
5. a) Tell the story of William Caxton and England's first printing press – advantages/uses  
b) Describe Shakespeare's England – theatres and plays, pastimes, clothes, country houses, traveling, dangers of London
6. Discovery in Geography – Discovery of New World, identify four explorers and one colonizer, tell the story of one

### Form IV Lower B December 1942

This exam consisted of two parts, the first a matching section all based on British History, and the second required written answers, again all British History.

### Form IV Lower B June 1943

1. Matching question – British History
2. Describe London 200 years ago
3. Describe career of Bonnie Prince Charlie
4. Write a paragraph about three of the following – Marlborough, Clive, Wolfe, Nelson, Napoleon
5. Agricultural Revolution in Britain/ Factory system in Britain
6. French Revolution

### Form IV Lower December 1943 - Miss Clarke

1. Matching question, mostly English History, rest European
2. Answer any three of the following:
  - a) Social and political evils which Dickens saw in England
  - b) Life and work of either Nelson or Napoleon – include character
  - c) Public health – Louis Pasteur, Dr. Lister, Florence Nightingale
  - d) Evils of the Industrial Revolution in England
  - e) Colonization of Australia – self-government in Australia/New Zealand

### Form IV Lower June 1944 - Miss Clarke

1. Matching – mostly Canadian with a few American
2. a) Champlain – reasons for actions  
b) Frontenac

- c) French Canadian Seigniorial System
- d) Explorers
- e) Seven Years' War
- f) Problems of government in Canada after 1763

**Form IV Upper December 1944** - Miss Clarke [student noted *Rather Hard* on her exam paper]

- 1. 1837 Rebellion – people involved, responsible government
- 2. a) Rivalry between the North-West Company and Hudson's Bay Company  
b) Race to the Pacific  
c) Selkirk Settlement
- 3. Sir John A. MacDonald – National Policy/ Imperial Preference/Reciprocity
- 4. Second Riel Rebellion – causes, leadership, events, results, importance
- 5. Confederation – what? when? how? why? / British Columbia's joining

### **English Examinations**

**Literature and Composition Form IV Lower A & B Christmas 1942** - Miss Hill

- 1. Write "Coronach" from memory
- 2. Name four songs from *The Lady of the Lake*
- 3. Questions on *The Lady of the Lake*
- 4. More questions on *The Lady of the Lake*
- 5. Still more questions on *The Lady of the Lake*
- 6. Composition – short letter
- 7. Composition – definitions – exposition, narration
- 8. Composition – punctuation correction

**Literature and Composition Form IV Lower B Summer 1943** - Miss Hill

Question paper hand-written with copies made by carbons. Duration 2 hours.

- 1. Memory Work – "The Revenge"
- 2. *The King of the Golden River* – describe various incidents
- 3. Answer any 5 from a list of factual questions on works studied
- 4. *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* – fill in the blanks questions
- 5. Composition – correct punctuation of a passage
- 6. Composition – write a conversation of 8 – 12 lines between a dog lover and a cat lover
- 7. Spelling – dictated list of words

**Literature Form IV Lower Christmas 1943** - Miss Monkton

1. Lorna Doone - factual question
2. Lorna Doone - opinion question
3. Lorna Doone - factual question
4. Lorna Doone - factual question
5. Lorna Doone - factual question
6. Lorna Doone - opinion question
7. Lorna Doone - question on characters – “What do you know of . . . ?”

**Literature Form IV Lower June 1944** - Miss Moore ( Mrs. Drought)

1. Lorna Doone - favourite Character
2. Lorna Doone – relate events leading to marriage
3. As You Like It - specific plot questions
4. As You Like It - plot questions
5. Memory work
6. Opinion questions
7. Opinion questions

Option: Instead of Lorna Doone questions, read “In Search of a Race Track” in Life and Literature and answer the four questions on page 135.

**Literature and Composition Form IV Upper December 1944** - Miss Clarke  
Examination on two hand-written mimeographed sheets.

1. Identify quotes - The Seats of the Mighty
2. Write character sketches for any two of the characters in Question 1
3. Identify two incidents which use colour and spectacle, and two which use suspense
4. Tell the story of . . . – plot summary
5. Describe the scene of . . . using figures of speech

**Composition**

1. Correct the errors
2. Write a short story (2 pages)

**Grammar** [Form IV Lower?] **June 1944** - Mrs. Cheetham  
[Student noted *ug! ug! horrible!* on the paper]

1. ‘Rules of Thumb’ for parsing who/when, which/what, when/how/why/there & that
2. Parsing specified words
3. Subordinate clauses
4. Analyse verse of a poem

**Grammar Form V Lower December 1944** - Mrs. Cheetham

Typed with carbon papers on half a sheet of paper.

[Notated with *very hard*]

1. Parse underlined words
2. Verbs – state kind, voice, tense
3. Parse gerunds
4. Subordinate clauses – identify kind and relation
5. Analyse two lines of poetry

## CHAPTER VI - APPENDIX

Queen Margaret's School Hymn – Soldiers of Christ, arise

Soldiers of Christ, arise  
 And put your armour on;  
 Strong in the strength which God supplies,  
 Through his eternal Son;

2 Strong in the Lord of hosts,  
 And in his mighty power;  
 Who in the strength of Jesus trusts  
 Is more than conqueror.

3 Stand then in his great might,  
 With all his strength endued;  
 And take, to arm you for the fight,  
 The panoply of God.

4 From strength to strength go on  
 Wrestle, and fight, and pray;  
 Tread all the powers of darkness down,  
 And win the well-fought day.

5 That, having all things done,  
 And all your conflicts passed,  
 Ye may obtain, through Christ alone,  
 A crown of joy at last.

6 Jesu, Eternal Son,  
 We praise thee and adore,  
 Who art with God the FATHER ONE,  
 And SPIRIT evermore. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. Charles Wesley, 1749, *The Book of Common Praise: Being the Hymn Book of The Church of England in Canada*, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, undated), Hymn #419.

This hymn book went through many printings, as it was in common use in Anglican-leaning private schools in Canada for much of the twentieth century. "Soldiers of Christ, arise" appears in a slightly different version in *The Hymn Book of the Anglican Church of Canada and the United Church of Canada*, (Toronto: Southam Murray, 1972), Hymn #171.