

MEANINGS OF SCHOOLING:  
Cultural Interpretations of Pictou Academy in  
the Nineteenth Century

by

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


MASTER OF ARTS


in the Department of History

We accept this thesis as conforming to the required  
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Abstract


Cultural interpretations of nineteenth-century schooling, it is argued in this study, provide a more sophisticated analysis of historical evidence than the whig or even sociological interpretations of the distant and more recent past.


Using the wealth of historical evidence concerning Pictou Academy, the six chapters guide the reader into this new form of understanding. The thesis argues that this cultural approach to the discipline of history will lead to a clearer understanding of the power of professional rhetoric to order social policy, to discipline society, and to impose professional values within institutional forms, in short, a more complex understanding of the relationship of schooling to power.

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### Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Eric Sager, and members of my thesis committee, Dr. Paul Wood, Dr. Tom Fleming and Dr. Larry McCann, for their constructive criticisms of earlier drafts of this thesis. Dr. Sager particularly helped me to define the precise ways in which cultural history differs from earlier socio-economic interpretations of schooling. The entire project arose from challenging questions raised by Dr. David Wootton during 1993-4 in two courses on historiography which he directed at the University of Victoria. I thank him for his encouragement and for his careful guidance in earlier stages of the thesis.

My Nova Scotia research was greatly assisted by the staff of the Public Archives of Nova Scotia, especially by Allan Dunlop, Associate Provincial Archivist, who drew my attention to many of the archival treasures at PANS. The curators at the Hector Centre in Pictou were also helpful, as was Eleanor Earle at the Maritime Conference Archives. Research costs for several years were partially covered by Dalhousie University and by the Pictou Academy Educational Foundation. I thank all these people and organizations/institutions for their support.

Dedication

To Connla, for years of forbearance!

## INTRODUCTION

Pictou is located in north-eastern Nova Scotia, Canada, across the Northumberland Strait from Prince Edward Island. It is a small town, which at its nineteenth-century peak in 1881 had a population of 3,402. Because of Nova Scotia's geography and early trading patterns settlement occurred in isolated pockets around the periphery of the colony and external communication patterns continued to be by sea until railways were built in the later nineteenth century. Communities constructed distinctive cultures and tended to preserve their records, thus providing the historian with a remarkable opportunity to study their nineteenth-century roots. De-coding the layers of meaning held by many different people over the years, however, and especially their interpretations of a significant cultural institution, such as Pictou Academy established in 1816 by Scottish Presbyterian leaders, becomes a challenge for the historian. This thesis not only undertakes this task but also guides the reader by making explicit the kinds of questions cultural historians ask of evidence. As well, it reveals the complex process they undertake to interpret this evidence. The case study of Pictou Academy becomes, in effect, a sub-plot to the main hypothesis of the thesis, namely how is cultural historiography of schooling interpreted in 1995, and especially, how does this approach contribute to the understanding of the relationship of

schooling to power?

Over the last twenty years school historians have been preoccupied with the origins of national education systems. Chapter Three summarizes many of the approaches offered by a variety of these revisionist scholars. The problematic of state formation has become a more recent focus of examination, which follows on or reacts to the earlier paradigm. As Andy Green writes in a seminal review of the literature concerning educational historiography,

Much of the recent work under discussion [is. . .] driven by a desire to find more complex and nuanced ways of understanding the power relations involved in schooling. Bruce Curtis has used Foucauldian discourse theory to analyze the dispersal of power within the Canadian educational state; Ian Davey and Pavla Miller have used theories of patriarchy and family formation to understand the crucial aspect of state--and educational-state--formation; and I have worked primarily with Gramscian notions of hegemony to explain the differing relations between the state and schooling in different societies.<sup>1</sup>

A second concern of recent scholars engaged in comparative studies of national education systems has been the unevenness of their historical development; existing theories of educational change were unable to explain the differential timing and form of educational development across a range of countries. The earlier interpretations of revisionists, for instance, which linked the rise of national education systems with industrialization and urbanization, were unable to explain the fact that the first national systems emerged in pre-industrial and primarily rural societies or, in the case of England,

national education development occurred after its industrial take-off. Political agendas of interest groups are cited as significant for state involvement in the construction of national systems of schooling. Out of this emerged what Green describes as "the 'state formation' problematic,"<sup>2</sup> which he places in its intellectual context of 1) Whig or liberal theory, 2) structural functionalism, and 3) neo-Marxist theories of urbanization and proletarianization. These themes have been addressed in the following study, but have been approached with a different methodology than that of the current revisionist historians.

In Chapter One, for instance, rather than applying a model or hypothetical question to the evidence, the groundwork for digging through the layers of meaning is established by exploring the nature of evidence and the ways in which facts are interpreted by different players. As suggested above, cultural meaning is constructed and power acquired by different interest groups in the first instance by means of their legitimizing their version of the truth and the significant facts which establish this perspective. Later historians, looking at this evidence, should be alert to biases in the interpretations of these authority figures. They should also examine the reactions or effects of these authoritative accounts of the facts on people living at that time and experiencing the cultural

construction process. Chapter One concludes that cultural construction is a complex process and that the judgment of historians today is tentative and will change, as indicated by Green above, under the dialectic of academic discussion.

Chapter Two uses a number of histories of Pictou Academy to illustrate for the reader the Whig account of educational development in the nineteenth century, which has been under sustained attack from educational historians since the 1960s. It suggests a number of reasons why earlier historians preferred this perspective and, throughout the chapter, it reviews the flaws of historicism, of undue optimism concerning progress, and of omission of contrary points of view or discontinuities which afflict the cultural construction process and which these whig historians tend to ignore.

Chapter Three, as suggested above, outlines the theoretical approach of recent revisionist/structuralist historians. Their earlier industrialization theory has been widely discounted. As Green notes, "during the first decades of the nineteenth century, when several national education systems were established, the demand for new industrial skills was fairly limited and not one of the main motivations behind educational development. . . . Governments were concerned more with educating political leaders, administrators, officers, soldiers, and loyal

subjects rather than scientists, technologists, production engineers, and skilled workers." <sup>3</sup> While agreeing that these continued to be the main motivations of nineteenth-century bourgeois leaders for establishing schooling, and eventually national systems of education, this study concludes that the impetus for Pictou's initiatives came from within the community, rather than from the central government as recent scholars have posited.

It is argued that the Scottish professionalizing thrust, epitomized in the meritocratic type of secondary schooling and the credentializing emphasis of college education (Chapter Five), was clearly spelled out by the Reverend Thomas McCulloch, first Principal of Pictou Academy (1816-1838) and first President of Dalhousie College (1838-1843). The Presbyterians who primarily established these institutions took advantage of colonial inter-denominational rivalry at the college level, of financial weakness at the secondary school level, and of almost non-existent state regulation of schooling in the colony, to attain political, professional and intellectual positions of authority. They were thereby constructing what Harold Perkin describes as a [Scottish] "professional ideal,"<sup>4</sup> which effectively displaced the earlier English design of education for the colony.

Rather than ascribing the motivation for schooling to governmental inspectors, to secularizing tendencies in

society, or to bourgeois attempts to police the lower classes, this thesis suggests that the marginalized position of Pictou Scots with respect to the seats of power in Halifax, their clear understanding of how to construct a professionalizing counter-culture via their type of meritocratic schooling, and their early attainment of key policy-making positions enabled them to assume leadership of Nova Scotia's fragmented Dissenter population, and to take advantage of the colony's weak financial status and lack of control of social conditions across the province; they constructed a school system which suited their Scottish professional cultural values.

Chapters Four and Six explore the effects of the imposition of a Scottish-Canadian professionalizing ideal on school discipline (using Foucauldian metaphors and forms of analysis in Chapter Four) and on the construction of mythical Scottish justifications for their hegemony over schooling. Voices of dissent and subversion revealed counter-interpretations of progressive or whig justifications of schooling and of the embourgeoisement process. Unexpected transformations of the professional ideal occurred as it was put into practice. Continuing Presbyterian justifications, gender expectations, and institutional agendas influenced the school lives of Pictou Academy students. The power of professional rhetoric to order social policy, to discipline society, and to impose

professional cultural values within institutional school forms was considerable by the end of the nineteenth century.

This case study suggests that motivation for Pictou Academy's major role in the design and implementation of provincial schooling throughout the later nineteenth century was derived as much from local as from national considerations; Pictonians constructed an institutional culture which would allow their children to advance rapidly into positions of power throughout their province and North America. Is this a whig interpretation of history? Evidence provided throughout the thesis draws attention to the layered meanings/effects of schooling. It suggests that the translation of this Scottish-Canadian school ideal was not continuous and experienced many unexpected transformations, and, in retrospect, could be seriously questioned because of its liberal theoretical assumptions about the adequacy of this professional ideal for the larger population.

The early intellectual thrust of McCulloch's curriculum, his critical political stance with respect to the power structures within his society, and the crass manner in which his authority was displaced, was a warning to schoolmen and to historians of his time. McCulloch's experience with the professional ideal of public service appeared to be too vulnerable to political manipulation.

Today, bureaucratic structures and standardized bureaucratic procedures buffer teachers, administrators and civil servants from much political interference. As Perkin notes, the system of credentials and professional monopoly embedded in our twentieth-century democratic/welfare state uses persuasion, much as did these Pictou Presbyterians, to convince the rest of society and eventually the state that professional meritorious services are vitally important and worthy of guaranteed state rewards. Perkin warns, however, that professionals in the late twentieth century are being criticized for their élitism, for their perceived arrogance, and for their gate-keeping monopoly of their professions. Are they serving the public or their own self interest?

Perkin also observes that professionals today appear divided between public sector professionals, which in the area of schooling would include teachers, educational administrators and civil servants, and private sector professionals, who in their North American context would comprise a number of parents and interest groups promoting charter schools, the core curriculum and increasing emphasis on examinations/credentials in schools. The rhetoric and policies of public sector professionals tend to promote "an egalitarian, caring and compassionate state run by well-paid professionals."<sup>5</sup> This leads the public to believe that school policy needs to be drafted by these

neutral school experts and that professional power and closure is necessary and should be protected by teachers' unions, by departments of education, and by faculties of education. Curriculum policies, such as whole language, progressivist activity methods, and continuous progress applied across a state system of schooling, is justified at the elementary school level on the grounds of democratic fairness for a wide spectrum of the population. The private sector professional ideal of equality of opportunity for the meritorious few able to climb the corporate ladder of success is defended, on the other hand, as it is in North America's meritorious type of secondary and university schooling, by arguments of limited job openings and the need to identify talent for a specialized, skilled labour force in our complex capitalistic society.

Should the public debate over schooling, a multi-billion dollar enterprise in the late twentieth century, continue to be polarized between these rather extreme professional positions--the traditional pendulum swing characterizing school policy? Is there not today a sufficient groundswell of educated parents, of a number of beleaguered classroom teachers and of irate taxpayers to call a halt to the professional experts' monopoly on the construction of school culture? In the early nineteenth century the Scottish-Presbyterian leaders, but as well the people of the Pictou district, understood the political

nature of cultural institutions and the effect of power on their lives. They demanded and obtained a significant voice in the construction process. Schooling, like all human affairs, was considered a complex, transitory phenomenon that could fail as well as succeed. Moderate people in the community by mid-century took responsibility for this failure, learned to bury their extreme political differences, and constructed a Union Academy that for many years served the needs of the poor, talented rural youth of the Pictou district. Only in the late nineteenth century, when professional power was increasingly concealed by bureaucratic procedures, and when control of the construction process was removed from local control, did Pictonians begin to concoct myths of a virtuous past (see Chapter Six). They had forgotten the wisdom of their ancestors regarding the important benefits of schooling to develop critical, politically engaged citizens.

These modern Pictonians and many parents today focus on the short-term professionalizing/credentializing function of schooling, losing sight of a more important intellectual purpose, namely to educate open-minded compassionate citizens, endowing them with power to understand the complex meanings embedded in our cultural institutions and in the rhetoric of professionals. Surely a more appropriate ideal for schooling in the twenty-first century would be the ideal of many historians today, namely

widespread training of a critical, open-minded populace whose schooling would help them to reach appropriate intellectual and social judgments. These ideally educated citizens would learn to treat their world as a complex social system, which can be understood on a variety of levels; they would learn to avoid extremes of the above professional positions and would form an educated public whose ideal principles would assist them to assess the effectiveness of their state school system.

#### NOTES FOR INTRODUCTION

1. Andy Green, "Education and State Formation Revisited," Historical Studies in Education 6, 3 and History of Education Review 23, 3, Special Issue 1994: 2.
2. Ibid.: 3.
3. Ibid.: 7.
4. Harold Perkin, The Rise of Professional Society, England since 1880 London: Routledge, 1989: xiii.
5. Ibid.: 518.

GLOSSARY: GENEALOGY OF PICTOU ACADEMY

- 1747 Secessionist schism from established Church of Scotland
- 1765 Philadelphia Grant settlers arrive on Betsy in Pictou district
- 1773 Hector Highland immigrants arrive
- 1783 disbanded 82nd Regiment granted land rights Pictou Harbour
- 1799 Edward Mortimer elected first country member of N.S. House of Assembly
- 1803 arrival of the Reverend Thomas McCulloch at Pictou
- 1804 McCulloch called to Harbour Presbyterian Church
- 1806 McCulloch begins grammar school & 1st subscription campaign for Pictou Academy; grammar school lasts until 1828
- 1808 McCulloch's Popery Condemned by Scripture and the Fathers
- 1810 McCulloch appointed Treasurer, Pictou District Court of Sessions and Justice of the Peace until 1815
- 1815 Grammar School fire
- 1816 foundation of Pictou Academy
- 1817 first Agricultural Society in Pictou County  
Union of Antiburgher (Pictou) and Burgher (Truro)  
Secessionists: Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia [PCNS]  
arrival of Church of Scotland [C of S] minister, the Reverend Donald Fraser
- 1818 opening of Pictou Academy
- 1819 Pictou Academy building constructed  
Edward Mortimer's death
- 1820 McCulloch begins divinity classes  
cornerstone of Dalhousie College (Halifax) laid

- 1821 McCulloch Moderator PCNS  
McCulloch's first scientific collection  
McCulloch begins science lectures
- 1823 arrival in Pictou of the Reverend Kenneth John MacKenzie (C of S); formation of the Scotch (C of S) Presbytery of Halifax
- 1824 McCulloch resigns ministry Harbour Church; Rev. John McKinlay replaces him
- 1824 mission to Cape Breton of PCNS ministers (Rev. Hugh Ross & Rev. Thomas Trotter)  
University of Glasgow awards M.A. degrees 3 Pictou Academy graduates  
formation in Scotland of the Glasgow Colonial Society [GCS] (Rev. Robert Burns et al) by evangelical party within C of S
- 1825 McCulloch to Scotland to raise money for Pictou Academy  
MacKenzie petition vs Pictou Academy to N.S. Council: Chipman Commission of Inquiry
- 1826 Education Act: subdivision of county territory for school districts  
Edinburgh Bible Society publication of C of S mission of Fraser and McLennan to Cape Breton; Fraser's sermon preached at Pictou
- 1827 Colonial Patriot established at Pictou; Jotham Blanchard editor
- 1828 Statutes of Incorporation of Pictou Academy  
Horton Academy (Baptist) established at Wolfville: result of Pictou feuds
- 1829 General Mining Association began Pictou district operations  
Burns' instructions to the Reverend Dugald McKichan (C of S)
- 1830 Brandy Election
- 1831 Petition Jotham Blanchard on behalf of Pictou Academy  
MacKenzie founds Pictou Observer (C of S)
- 1832 Pictou Academy amended bill: grammar school included, trust enlarged

- 1833 visit of John James Audubon to Pictou and subsequent collaboration with Thos. McCulloch, Jr. Royal William first trans-Atlantic steam crossing Kirk Presbytery of New Brunswick organized N.S. Synod in connection with the C of S empowered to ordain colonial ministers; Fraser C of S moderator
- 1834 McCulloch's science lectures throughout the Maritimes  
Judge Sawers' recommendations re Pictou Academy to N.S. House of Assembly
- 1836 C of S General Assembly in Scotland took over GCS
- 1838 petition of George Christie for common-grammar school bonus  
Joseph Howe's report on Pictou Academy to House of Assembly  
McCulloch appointed first President of Dalhousie College
- 1839 "Samson", first steam locomotive in British North America
- 1840 S.S. Unicorn fortnightly service to Quebec
- 1841 Academy Act (N.S.)
- 1843 Disruption of C of S and formation of Free Church in Scotland and in B.N.A.  
McCulloch dies
- 1844 return to Scotland of all but 2 C of S ministers  
Burns visits Pictou
- 1845 Union Academy formed
- 1848 responsible government achieved in Nova Scotia  
expansion of West River Theological Seminary
- 1850 J.W. Dawson first Superintendent of Education for N.S.  
County Academy Act
- 1855 opening of Normal School, Truro; Rev. Alexander Forrester (Free Church) second Superintendent of Education  
resignation of Dr. Wm. Anderson, Pictou Academy Board

- 1857 Colchester Academy converted to Model School
- 1860 Union of PCNS and Free Church
- 1863 re-opening of Dalhousie College; Rev. James Ross  
President
- 1864-6 N.S. Free School Acts
- 1867 N.S. Central Examining Board for Teachers  
Confederation of British North America
- 1873 A.H. MacKay Principal of Pictou Academy
- 1874 MacKay Supervisor of Schools, Town of Pictou
- 1877 Town of Pictou schools graded
- 1881 opening of second Pictou Academy; 3-year graded  
standard;  
Grade 8 = county academies' academic entrance exam
- 1884 provincial matriculation standards adopted
- 1885 Act to Encourage Academic Education
- 1888 affiliated Fine Arts Department added to Pictou  
Academy
- 1889 4-year academic program/teachers' scholastic  
accreditation
- 1892-1926 MacKay sixth Superintendent of Education for  
N. S.
- 1916 Centenary Celebrations
- 1926 Henry Munro, seventh Superintendent of Education  
for N.S.

## CHAPTER ONE

### EVIDENCE AND CONFLICTING INTERPRETATIONS

Historians, like detectives, deal mainly with two types of phenomenon to arrive at meaning or understanding. The evidence they uncover and their interpretive imagination determine the appropriateness or quality of their judgment. In recent years cultural historians have realized that different voices often recast the same evidence to reach contrary conclusions. Events are frequently interpreted in different ways by people living at the time. Conflicts, dis-continuities, and hidden political agendas affect the direction of change. Why should school historians pay attention to the hidden layers of meaning uncovered by cultural historians?

This chapter will answer this question using the history of Pictou Academy and its seminal role in the construction of Nova Scotia's school culture. The wealth of detailed evidence available for the Academy's nineteenth-century history and the complexity of its early feuds provide the historian with a rich array of clues; key questions asked of this evidence elicit a number of significant insights into the relationship of power to schooling. To make these tentative conclusions explicit, thus uncovering the layers of meaning/depths of power relationships which were constructed at the time, the reader will be assisted by a glossary of important dates,

societies and religious groups (following Introduction), as well as with background information in the early chapters, which will guide the reader's understanding. Explicit questions and historiographical considerations will be voiced, as well, to aid the reader's comprehension of the complex factors which the historian weighs before s/he makes particular decisions as to which type of evidence is most pertinent to the argument being advanced. The chapter begins with the first account of the Academy's history between its beginning in 1816 and its imminent take-over by a rival faction in 1832.

The earliest history of Pictou Academy was given by Jotham Blanchard in his petition to the Colonial Secretary, the Right Honourable Viscount Goderich, in London on 20th May 1831. As a Member of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly and an agent of the trustees of Pictou Academy he was asked to plead with the King for relief from the institution's £800 debt and the continual veto by the Nova Scotia Council to their petitions for a permanent grant. Although he arrived in London in mid-April he neither presented the original strong petition written by Principal Thomas McCulloch, nor sought an immediate audience. He was advised by the Speaker of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly, S.G.W. Archibald who was also in London and had been an ally of the Academy, to try to seek a settlement of the matter without producing a petition. Not only did

McCulloch's draft break protocol by naming the Anglican Bishop, John Inglis (coincidentally also in London at this time), as the Academy's chief protagonist, but the unorthodox procedure of bypassing the colony's Lieutenant-Governor and Council and appealing directly to the King was embarrassing to colonial officials. Blanchard was persuaded to delay, as well, because of expected new sympathy for his cause by the incoming Whig government in Britain.

In a letter to Lord H.P. Brougham following his audience with Goderich Blanchard revealed his own Reformist sympathies, which guided his interpretation of the Academy's history. It was depicted as "the only place of learning in the British Provinces. . .where the physical sciences are taught," in contrast to King's College, the Anglican college at Windsor which received over £1400 per year but still taught "the old system of latin & Greek & the Aristotelian Logic but scorns all modern innovations. In short it is the only refuge of Bigotry & prejudice now in the Province--The Pictou Institution on the other hand is the only place where a useful and scientific Education can be had and consequently where persons of rational politics can be prepared to meet on general terms with those of contrary principles."<sup>1</sup> Blanchard, like British Reformers, believed that a useful scientific training would inculcate universal principles in students enabling them to acquire a more rational, elevated

point of view, in contrast to the conservative, reactionary attitude of members of Nova Scotia's oligarchic Council, most of whom belonged to the established Church of England and who, in his judgment, blocked progress and constitutional change.

In his memorial Blanchard emphasized the pioneering role of McCulloch and his arduous labours over the previous thirteen years; with only one other assistant he had taught a full four-year college program, mirroring that of Glasgow University, as well as a divinity course for Presbyterian theological students. McCulloch was recognized by Nova Scotians and by American and Scottish authorities as having "no equal in the British Colonies for multifarious learning, persevering industry and beneficial influence upon Society." He had been awarded two honorary doctorate degrees (from Union College in the United States, and from the University of Glasgow), was appointed honorary member of several literary and philosophical societies in England and in Scotland, and yet received "the pittance of £250 a year." McCulloch's heroic role as a beleaguered, far-seeing leader, misunderstood by his contemporaries, was to become a favourite theme of subsequent whig interpreters of Pictou Academy, who used Blanchard's 1831 petition as a key documentary source. They also repeated Blanchard's assertions that Pictou Academy attracted a wide denominational cross-section of students, was supported by

four-fifths of Nova Scotia's population who were Dissenters, and enabled over fifty students to assume important professional roles, especially in politics, law, teaching and the ministry. Pictou Academy, therefore, provided these students from north-eastern Nova Scotia with the only opportunity to gain a non-sectarian college education and substantially to improve their "station in life." Several commissioners had visited the institution and numerous authorities had examined the students; all applauded McCulloch's unique museum collection of birds, insects and plants. On the strength of its excellence and the opportunity for advancement the Academy offered to impoverished Dissenters many petitions to the House of Assembly from different regions of the province had prayed that a permanent grant be awarded the institution. Societies in the neighbouring maritime provinces and in Scotland had raised substantial funds in support of McCulloch's work, and several testimonials accompanying Blanchard's petition affirmed the fact that indeed Pictou Academy was a superior Seminary of Learning--it was useful, cheap and contributed substantially "to the quiet and orderly deportment for which the Inhabitants of Nova-Scotia have long been conspicuous."<sup>2</sup> Blanchard's historical account thus reified the educational and moral values of the Academy, depicting its factual accomplishments as beyond dispute.

As the following quotation reveals, however, this

whig perspective was not widely shared by all Nova Scotian Presbyterians:

Mr. Fraser. . .announced. . .that he was a minister from the Church of Scotland, and that he was accompanied by Mr. McLennan to Cape Breton, for the purpose of procuring ministers from Scotland for the destitute settlements in the Island [of Cape Breton]. . .he stated, that he had no connection with the ministers in Pictou, that they used him very ill since he came to the country, that he did not mean to associate with them and would not in religious exercises join with any of them. . .that an essential difference existed between him and the ministers of Pictou. . . that Dr. McGregor [sic] several years ago preached against the Church of Scotland, declaring that the ministers who belonged to her, are Thieves and Robbers Whoremongers and Adulterers [underlining sic]. Further he stated, that the pretended Seminary at Pictou was improperly founded; that the Teachers of that Institution were not properly possessed of sufficient learning and ability to educate ministers; that ministers could not be properly licensed nor ordained at Pictou; that young men who proceeded from the Academy at Pictou had not requisite learning for Ministers, and should therefore be discountenanced by and rejected by every vacant settlement.<sup>3</sup>

Faced with this piece of evidence the whig historian, if he didn't reject it out of hand, would be forced to ask the following types of questions:

**How reliable is this source?**

**How valid was this criticism of Pictou Academy?**

**Why is biased evidence valuable/significant for historical interpretation?**

Before these questions can be answered the historian has to establish the facts through a thorough perusal of a wide variety of sources. In the case of Pictou Academy, the cultural historian today would consult relevant theses

and secondary source monographs/papers relating to the topic; primary published sources, such as reports, memorials, newspaper editorials/letters/accounts, and legislative journals; and unpublished archival holdings, such as minutes, letters, reports, addresses and petitions. She would establish an accurate chronology of events (see Glossary) and then would address the task of selecting and weighing her evidence. Each type must be subjected to rigorous criticism, particularly answering the above questions. The cultural historian is aware that the compiler of the evidence had a reason for selecting, interpreting and conveying this type of evidence to readers. What purpose(s) might the author of the above quotation have had in mind and especially why did he include such strong language?

The Reverend Hugh Ross was writing to his mentor, McCulloch, about his pioneering mission in 1824 to Cape Breton with the Reverend Thomas Trotter of Antigonish, another Secessionist minister belonging to the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia [PCNS].<sup>4</sup> Ross was obviously embittered by the encroachment of Church of Scotland [C of S], or Kirk ministers on what he considered Secessionist territory. He may have been accounting for his lack of success in gaining this call. By citing Fraser's interpretation of the rhetoric of the Reverend Dr. James MacGregor, an evangelical PCNS pioneer in Nova Scotia, Ross

no doubt was castigating the fraudulent means by which these missionary Kirk leaders, in his judgment, successfully won advantage over their Secessionist rivals. On the other hand, MacGregor's language, if correctly cited by Ross and by Fraser, resembled that of an evangelical jeremiad. As Ned Landsman writes, "The principle behind the jeremiad is that of the covenanted nation, which faces divinely ordained trials to remind it of its sworn duties as a chosen people."<sup>5</sup> Did MacGregor and Ross see themselves as the "elect", divinely ordained to lead the Highlanders of Cape Breton out of the wilderness?

If so, their imagined superiority was rudely shattered by the successful victory of the Reverend Donald Fraser in Cape Breton. His vivid descriptions of his two journeys to Cape Breton with the Reverend John MacLennan, published in the Seventeenth Report of the Edinburgh Bible Society (1826), was widely publicized around the English-Atlantic world. Significantly, Ross' letter to McCulloch was written in 1826, two years after his failed mission and the same year as the above publication. Fraser considered that McCulloch and his disciples had strayed far from their evangelical roots. For one thing, according to Fraser (mistakenly, in the case of Ross) neither Ross nor the one Secessionist minister on the island spoke Gaelic, the language of nine-tenths of the population of Cape Breton. Nor could they appeal in a charismatic manner to

the recent Hebridean awakenings to which most of these Highlanders had been exposed before leaving Scotland in the mid-twenties. Above all, Fraser's further accounts of the plight of these isolated settlements in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Reports of the Glasgow Colonial Society (1826-1829) placed the spiritual destitution of Cape Breton before the Scottish public for the first time. As Laurie Stanley writes, "The much publicized mission of MacLennan and Fraser signalled a turning point in the history of Cape Breton Presbyterianism. The Scottish public was no longer content to see Cape Breton left to the Roman Catholics, or to become an ecclesiastical preserve for the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia. . . .Cape Breton would become a colonial mission of the Established Church of Scotland--instructed, enlightened and saved." Particularly, she noted, "free from the polarities of Kirkman and Secessionist which bedevilled the religious scene in Pictou."<sup>6</sup> As a bitter participant, therefore, Ross probably could be termed a reliable witness of the struggle between the two Presbyterian groups for control of Presbyterianism in Nova Scotia. How valid was Fraser's criticism of Pictou Academy, the qualifications of McCulloch, and the training of PCNS divinity students?

From the time of his arrival in Pictou from Glasgow in 1803 en route to his first Presbyterian posting in Prince Edward Island (aborted by his call to Harbour Church

in Pictou), McCulloch had cultivated his alliance with the merchant "King of Pictou", Edward Mortimer, and with the gentry of the province by means of his writings. Mortimer sold him land on which McCulloch built his home and grammar school, he helped McCulloch and other PCNS ministers found the first agricultural society in Pictou County in 1817, and he served as President of the Pictou Academy Board of Trustees until his death in 1819. As the first "country" member (1799) to be elected to the House of Assembly, defeating the incumbent C of S Council Treasurer, Michael Wallace, Mortimer led Dissenter interests in the province, combatting the Anglican-commercial oligarchy of Halifax. McCulloch became tarred with Mortimer's republican reputation, which Council members visited on these upstart Dissenters. To counter their charges of disloyalty (and thus prevent having his growing influence curtailed), McCulloch signed a declaration of his loyalty in 1809, cultivated the good favour of Bishop Charles Inglis, and wrote Popery Condemned by scripture and the fathers<sup>7</sup> in 1808 to assist Inglis in his paper war with the new Roman Catholic Vicar General, the Reverend Edmund Burke. In 1810 McCulloch was appointed Treasurer of the Pictou District Court of Sessions and, between 1810 and 1815, served as justice of the peace. Being a trained and licensed Scottish Secessionist minister, McCulloch was asked to serve as Minister of Harbour Presbyterian Church

in 1804 and for several years used his medical training from the University of Glasgow to act as district doctor. By 1810, therefore, McCulloch had established himself as a colonial leader in Pictou, mirroring the role of the English gentry class. As Ian Steele remarks, the colonial gentry throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries across the English Atlantic world "held and enhanced their positions by serving as conveyors of metropolitan influence, exploiting imperial legitimacies but also defending their localities." Their "set of values and attitudes. . . were shaped by English-speaking leaders everywhere."<sup>8</sup>

The thirty-nine subscribers who signed McCulloch's first campaign list for his Academy in 1806 were predominantly established settlers of thirty to forty years. Eight were Scots-Irish descendants of the original 1765 Philadelphia Grant settlers, seven were early Highland immigrants (several descendants of Hector passengers), ten were disbanded non-commissioned officers and privates of the 82nd Regiment granted land rights across Pictou Harbour in 1783, and several others were elders in Harbour Church, leading shipbuilders or merchants. McCulloch's grammar school by 1817 attracted fifty-three boys, who came from all sections of the province, from other Maritime provinces, from New England, and from the West Indies (six). In McCulloch's successful second subscription campaign to establish Pictou Academy in 1816 he drew the support of

more of Pictou's leading merchants, of five Presbyterian ministers across the province, of a substantial number of other Protestant groups and of many leading Halifax merchants, including Samuel Cunard, who later founded the famous trans-Atlantic shipping firm. By April of 1819 the number of students attending Pictou Academy for its first year of operation reached thirty, which was twice the number attending its rival, King's College, in Windsor. Presbyterians and Dissenters in the province supported Pictou Academy because McCulloch promised a meritocratic form of schooling which would help their sons to gain access to the professions and thus attain a higher status, bypassing the patronage network of the province's Lieutenant-Governor and Council.<sup>9</sup>

As mentioned earlier, Pictou Academy imitated the program of the University of Glasgow. In their first year students studied Latin and Greek; in second year, the classics were continued and logic (including general grammar) and rhetoric were added; in third year students began courses in moral philosophy, practical mathematics and algebra; in fourth year the two mathematical studies were continued and a course in natural philosophy was introduced. McCulloch described this as "a system of education adapted to the present state of this province, . . .bear[ing] on the active purposes of life. . . .Every scholar should possess a moderate knowledge of [classical]

languages. But after all, they are merely the bricks, and mortar of education: after they have been provided, the fabric must be reared."<sup>10</sup>

McCulloch's curriculum was based on the culture of the eighteenth-century Scottish Enlightenment. It stressed utility and duties in the community, attained McCulloch explained, by giving students "an accurate acquaintance with the operations of their own minds, . . . teach them to classify their knowledge, and communicate their sentiments, and. . . furnish them with those just views of the varying social relations and duties, and that knowledge of mathematical and physical science, which would be every day useful to the community and honourable to themselves."<sup>11</sup>

Using Mortimer's trading partner in Glasgow, William Liddell, McCulloch asked his Scottish colleague at United Secessionist Theological Hall, Dr. John Mitchell, to order as many books as possible with his £120 appropriation, making sure that they were firmly bound. He immediately established a school library and asked for £15 contributions from PCNS Ladies' Societies. Over the next two years McCulloch ordered a great range of books which particularly emphasized the works of the Scottish, English and French Enlightenments; writers included Reid, Stewart, Blair, Kames, Allison, Hutchison, Hume, Smith, Ricardo, Mondobbo, Burke, Butler, Hartley, Cudworth, Locke, Priestley, Shaftesbury, Paley, Fenelon and Descartes. As

well, McCulloch added current historical, sociological, geographical, geological and biographical works, such as Bryant Edwards' History of the West Indies, Bogue and Bonnet's History of Dissenters, Colquhoun on the London police, Cuvier's Essay on the Theory of the Earth, Duluc's treatise on geology, and Thomas Irving's Life of George Buchanan. He signalled his whig sympathies by ordering a year's subscription to the Edinburgh Review.

After the elegant two-storey Academy was erected in 1819, the trustees allocated a further £200 for scientific apparatus, such as water and air pumps, chemical apparatus and a magic lantern, so that McCulloch could illustrate his natural philosophy classes by means of popular experiments. In the summer of 1821 McCulloch and his family began the first of three extensive natural science collections of the flora and fauna of the province, which gave them extra income and a means of thanking their Scottish supporters. The first collection of insects McCulloch asked Mitchell to present to the Hunterian Museum, a famous natural history museum attached to the University of Glasgow. McCulloch also asked Mitchell to approach Dr. Taylor, Principal of the University of Glasgow, and several key professors with gifts of insect boxes. He wanted them to confer honorary degrees on three prominent Nova Scotian Presbyterians travelling in Scotland-- MacGregor, founder of the Presbyterian Church in Nova

Scotia, S.B. Robie, Solicitor General and Speaker of the House of Assembly, and S.G.W. Archibald, Crown Officer for Nova Scotia. He was interested not only in the individual honours these degrees would confer but also in "the influence and impulse which it would give to the presbyterian cause in the province."<sup>12</sup> McCulloch reported gains in this direction. Apparently, Lord Dalhousie, Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia, had been present at the Academy's first public examinations and had expressed gratification at the Academy's progress.

As a tribute to his own ministerial and scientific leadership in Nova Scotia McCulloch was awarded honorary doctorates of divinity, was accepted into the Wernerian Society of Edinburgh in 1823, and began to exchange plants with the famous Scottish naturalist, Patrick Neill. Denied degree-granting status by the Nova Scotian government for his program at Pictou Academy in 1824 McCulloch sent three divinity students to Scotland to be examined by Scottish clergy. Mitchell persuaded them to stand for examination at the University of Glasgow. The Senate examined them orally in the fields of Latin, Greek, logic, mathematics and morals, as well as in natural philosophy. They were awarded Master of Arts degrees and subsequently attained their divinity licenses from Scotland. McCulloch and his college had attained Scottish recognition and these three students were the first Presbyterian divinity students to

be trained in British North America.

McCulloch's liberal-scientific course of studies was the first in the Maritimes. New Brunswick's King's College had no science in its program until 1837 when two Scots, David Gray and James Robb, introduced natural science (biology and geology) and chemistry. Three years later, another Scot, William Brydon-Jack, replaced Gray, who returned to Scotland, and developed two further sciences, astronomy and engineering. Only by the 1860s did most Canadian colleges maintain cabinets or museums. Richard Jarrell attributes the vigour of New Brunswick's science program to the Scottish emphases on compulsory attendance at classes and on the necessity of passing examinations. He states that a very large number of the early science professors in Canada were of Scottish rather than of English origin and because of their rigorous scholastic influence the University of New Brunswick, as well as McGill College (headed by J.W. Dawson, a Pictou Academy graduate of the 1830s) and later Dalhousie College (whose president was James Ross, another of McCulloch's students), experienced rapid passage to modern scientific education.<sup>13</sup>

On the criteria of colonial status, recognition by Scottish and American authorities,<sup>14</sup> subscription and student support from around the province and from Scotland, McCulloch did not warrant Fraser's aspersions in terms of

intellectual ability; he was an excellent teacher, scientist and scholar. What about Fraser's final criticism that McCulloch's divinity students were not adequately trained? The Reverend Daniel McCurdy, who attended Pictou Academy with his uncle John in the 1820s reported that the people of Onslow considered the preaching of the first Pictou Academy ministers--John McLean, John Murdoch and Robert Sim Patterson--was "good, very good; but it was all learned."<sup>15</sup> In 1843 John McLeod, a graduate of Pictou Academy, described the enthusiastic reception of McLean by the Reverend Mr. Crawley [a leading Baptist] when he came to Halifax in the 1820s. McLean often preached in the Baptist Church and was much loved "for his Christian character and deportment."<sup>16</sup> The college level education offered to Presbyterian divinity students at Pictou Academy was unusual in British North America at that time, MacGregor reported to the Scottish United Secessionist Church in 1825.<sup>17</sup> During the 1830s McCulloch had over eighteen divinity students whose opportunities opened up substantially when a large contingent of the evangelical party in the established Church of Scotland walked out of the Scottish church assembly (the 1843 Disruption), forming the Free Presbyterian Church. All the Kirk ministers (except two in Nova Scotia) returned to Scotland in 1844 leaving the Nova Scotian pulpits vacant. By this date McCulloch's divinity students were being called to all Maritime provinces, to

the Canadas and to the United States. The number of McCulloch's licentiates tripled during his last few years at Dalhousie College; many served in congregations for a long time, were active in organizing missions and played significant roles on synod--a number were chosen as moderators. Seven were to receive honorary doctorates in divinity. As Douglas Earle concludes, McCulloch's contribution to the Presbyterian Church was

of strategic importance, for without his efforts, many of those early congregations would have been without ministers. In this way, he helped to establish the Presbyterian Church as a force in Nova Scotia, when otherwise much of its influence might have been lost. He was the earliest pioneer in Presbyterian theological education, and the example of his zeal and courage, has been an inspiration to those who have followed in his steps.<sup>18</sup>

If Fraser's Cape Breton diatribe on the lack of quality of McCulloch's divinity students in 1825-6 is thus refuted, was this just an isolated criticism to be dismissed or had McCulloch other critics in the Pictou district? If so, of what significance were these negative assessments of the man and of Pictou Academy, given McCulloch's stirring record?

Unfortunately, there was a long-standing court battle between the Academy and previous owners of the Academy Green. At times it was turned into a garbage dump by opponents of the Academy. In his 1825 letter to the Nova Scotian Council Hugh Denoon described the Academy as "unpopular in this place, and. . .attended only by

clowns."<sup>19</sup> The Reverend Kenneth John MacKenzie, a C of S minister who had arrived in Pictou in 1823, began to capitalize on the resentment against McCulloch both by several leading Pictou townsmen and by a number of Presbyterians who had been denied admission to Harbour Church because of their ungodliness. (McCulloch resigned his ministry in 1824 in an effort to save the Academy from similar ill-feeling.) These town malcontents for several years tried unsuccessfully to introduce the Church of England into the town. MacKenzie, who was fluent in Gaelic, persuaded a number of Highlanders in remote settlements to join them and to form a Church of Scotland (Kirk) church in Pictou. However, when he invited Fraser, who was ministering across the Pictou Harbour at McLellan's Mountain, to preach a sermon in the courthouse in 1826, the Secessionists obtained a court order to bar the doors. In September 1823 MacKenzie and Fraser had formed the Scotch Presbytery of Halifax along with the Reverend John Martin of Halifax and the Reverend Hugh McLeod of West River. McCulloch's initial attempts to unite the PCNS with them was rebuffed.

In 1821 the C of S had established a chair of theology for the proposed Dalhousie College (which, though incorporated that year, did not open until 1838 with McCulloch as its first president). Two years later Dalhousie's Board of Governors attempted to affiliate with

King's College. Kirk supporters, arguing that their Church of Scotland institution should receive as liberal a grant as the imperial government awarded the Anglican King's College, hoped that this would increase their limited prestige in the province. Unfortunately, the union proposal was refused by the Archbishop of Canterbury after behind-the-scenes lobbying by leading Nova Scotian Anglicans. Since the C of S lacked both a missionary society and a local synod to promote its interests, with the failure of this élitist thrust the Kirk ministers decided to play a strongly activist missionary role in Nova Scotia; their objective was to diminish PCNS influence in the province. Pictou Academy also became a focus of intense conflict between the two Presbyterian groups, Kirkmen concentrating their efforts on reducing the Academy to the level of a denominational grammar school, thereby creating a demand for the opening of Dalhousie College in Halifax as the major institution of higher learning for Presbyterians. They were supported in their attack on Pictou Academy from a surprising quarter--the five thousand Highlanders who lived in north-eastern Nova Scotia and who had immigrated in several waves to remote hillside settlements since their first arrival in the 1770s.<sup>20</sup>

These Highlanders differed significantly from their Lowland counterparts in terms of settlement patterns and mentality. They came by choice to the Atlantic seaboard as

a result of the rapid transformation of traditional Gaelic society under the impact of commercial development, population growth, the rapid rise in tenants' rents and the beginning of land clearances for sheep farming in Scotland. They emigrated with their families, rather than individually as did their Lowland counterparts, and they preferred to join settled Scottish communities in the wooded, hilly hinterland away from port or modernizing influences. In the Pictou district most came from three areas of the Highlands, Inverness, Sutherland and Ross-shire. They continued their pluralistic occupational patterns--subsistence farming, cattle grazing and added timber cutting in North America. They were largely Gaelic-speaking and active supporters of the Church of Scotland. Through their isolation they were able to retain strong clan, religious and linguistic ties, to hold on to traditional Highland values and to create a homogeneous community. They eagerly embraced Fraser's charismatic style of preaching in Gaelic. The PCNS ministers, who were primarily English-speaking Lowlanders, were not as popular as the C of S missionaries and lay preachers were in the Highland settlements. These late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century Highlanders, then, could be considered a protest group, who emigrated to North America of their own volition.<sup>21</sup> They were traditionalists who were reacting to the transformation of Highland economic, social and

agrarian structures, which were based on Scottish Lowland models. Like the Lowlanders they were carrying British cultural baggage to the New World.

Although the Scottish C of S had a Committee for the Colonies, under the rule of the Moderate Party in the General Assembly, it had been inactive for years. In contrast, both the established Church of England and the Methodists had active colonial societies, such as the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts [SPG], which guaranteed Anglican ministers in the colonies for two hundred pounds per year, distributed books and established schools, especially in Halifax and in southern Nova Scotia. The Methodists had good organization, effective travelling preachers and lay leaders and were proving very successful with their converts, particularly in north-western Nova Scotia adjoining the Pictou district. The Wesleyan Missionary Society, organized in 1818, was being promoted in the Maritimes by its leaders, not only for the improvement of the new settlers but also for political purposes, to unify divided congregations in Britain.<sup>22</sup> All of these tactics would be adopted by evangelical C of S organizers in the 1820s in Nova Scotia.

In 1824 a number of ministers of the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr met and organized a Committee of Correspondence with the Colonies. Within a year "The Society (in connection with the Established Church of Scotland) for

Promoting the Religious Interests of Scottish Settlers in British North America," or the Glasgow Colonial Society [GCS], was formed. Its patron was Nova Scotia's previous Lieutenant-Governor and founder of Dalhousie College, the Right Honourable George, Earl of Dalhousie, who was on leave from his current position as Governor General of the Canadas (1819-1828). The title and by-laws specifically limited helpers to those within the established Church of Scotland; all ministers had to be licensed and ordained by a C of S Presbyterian church and teachers and catechists had to be C of S communicants. The GCS organizers were deliberately excluding Secessionists and were endeavouring to strengthen affiliation of emigrant Scots to the homeland Church of Scotland.

Robert Burns, chief organizer of the GCS, because of his extensive experience with missionary publications recognized from the beginning the value of publicity. As mentioned in connection with Ross' failed mission, he issued circulars and GCS Reports giving extracts from the correspondence of the GCS's Committee of Correspondence. The objective of Burns' publicity blitz was to act as a prod on the inactive colonial committee of the General Assembly of the C of S in Scotland. This tactic worked; by 1826 it approved of the GCS's activities. The organization also successfully solicited governmental support for its work, both in Scotland and in the colonies (chiefly through

their Councils). Ministers thus were promised a more secure stipend (for three years) than their Secessionist colleagues, whose voluntaristic denominational policies made them dependent on members' subscriptions.<sup>23</sup>

There is evidence that Burns was playing a deeper game. In a letter to him from MacKenzie reference was made to "our Triumvirate [MacKenzie, Fraser and Martin]. . .all within our power shall be done to meet your wishes and expectations."<sup>24</sup> While McCulloch was in Scotland pleading for financial support both from the GCS and from Scottish Secessionists, MacKenzie wrote to Scottish GCS organizers publicizing the isolation and lack of religious instruction of Pictou's Highlanders. He maintained that he was receiving daily appeals for GCS assistance.<sup>25</sup> He and Fraser presented the Council with a list of charges against the program at Pictou Academy.

In an attempt to refute this propaganda the Reverend John McKinlay, PCNS minister of Harbour Church and Pictou Academy professor, wrote to Burns and to the Kirk Society asserting that as a result of Nova Scotia's timber trade with Britain agricultural improvements and successful shipbuilding and mercantile enterprises, the "present state. . .of the Province is prosperous." The coasts abounded in fish and there was a good market with the West Indies. Reflecting, perhaps unconsciously, the English gentry-commercial values of Lowlanders, McKinlay

believed that "All who are able and disposed to labour, have it fully in their power to live comfortably." In his judgment, the amount of money spent on rum, of which five hundred puncheons annually was imported to the Pictou district, was "incredible" and showed what "the country is qualified to do." McKinlay believed that this and other vices could be removed by preaching the Gospel and by expanding the number of schools. Although the total population of Nova Scotia was eighty-five thousand, there were only eighty-five or eighty-six Christian regular teachers in the province and twenty-four PCNS clergy. The economy of Pictou Town, whose population numbered fourteen hundred, McKinlay described as "flourishing"; it had raised £300 to help the victims of the Miramichi fire disaster. McKinlay concluded his letter by warning that if the GCS subsidized Scottish ministers it would encourage Nova Scotians to prefer "sermons for nothing."<sup>26</sup>

Facts and rational arguments were no match, however, for Burns' rhetorical skills. In his widely publicized Supplement to the First Annual Report and effective rebuttals to McCulloch's angry letters to the Edinburgh Star in June 1826, Burns was particularly adept at laying the blame for lack of co-operation between the two Nova Scotian Presbyterian groups on McCulloch, supplying a victim on which the evangelical members of the Kirk could focus their attack and thereby gain allies to

their cause.<sup>27</sup> He painted the GCS as far more open-minded than McCulloch's monopolistic PCNS synod; he denied that the GCS intended to exclude Secessionists. Using exaggerated statistics and colourful language Burns claimed that the society never considered that twenty-seven ministers and four preachers "which is the whole posse of the Nova Scotia Church, were competent to supply the spiritual wants of, at the lowest computation, half a million [underlining in text] of Scottish or other Presbyterians. . .the idea of a perverse interference. . .never once occurred to us." The petitions the GCS received without exception declared "that no man was caring for their souls."<sup>28</sup>

Not satisfied with undermining the PCNS synod and attacking McCulloch, Burns instructed the Reverend Dugald McKichan, before he went to his ministry at Merigomish and the Gut of Canso, to gather statistical evidence against Pictou Academy. In a letter to Burns in November 1829 McKichan alludes to "an idea which dropped from you when I had the honor [sic] of being entertained at your table" about bringing the Academy under the wing of the C of S. He forwarded numerous documents, newspaper reports and statistics on the "character and conduct" of the Academy, as well as slanderous gossip concerning McCulloch: "I regard Dr. McCulloch's avarice as the greatest barrier to an accommodation. His wife is extravagant, and he consequently must be avaricious."<sup>29</sup> A widely-circulated

pamphlet by "X" [Fraser?] in 1832 attacked not only McCulloch's ideas on liberal education and his control of the Academy but accused him of embezzling funds collected in Scotland for relief of the victims of the Miramichi fire. The writer then proceeded to malign McCulloch's personal character and to criticize his 1824 resignation from Harbour Church. McCulloch was accused of fomenting civil disobedience through his writings in Pictou's radical newspaper, the Colonial Patriot, of promoting the Calvinistic doctrine of "the elect", and of concentrating too heavily on spiritual [Calvinistic] rather than on temporal concerns of the Presbyterian Church--leading to poor discipline, laxity and partiality in Church affairs. After outlining the three classes within the community of Pictou--strict and rigid antiburghers [Secessionists], supporters of McCulloch, and supporters of the C of S--the writer then claimed that McCulloch "pleads for equality of rights, and deprecates undue influence exercised by any one portion of the community by another, at the same time that he would have the Anti-Burghers [sic] ruling without competition, uncontrolled, unresisted in Pictou, of whose population they form not above a third."<sup>30</sup>

While Burns' propaganda, McKichan's gossip and Fraser's political criticism of McCulloch would probably be termed unreliable by whig historians, in light of their underlying cultural assumptions and the successful

take-over of the Academy by these C of S activists in 1832, they are key pieces of evidence. Burns' sophisticated use of the full panoply of political tactics--the production of "scientifically" authorized evidence (statistics), character assassination, and lobbying in high places--bore fruit. Between 1828 and 1831 Academy requests for its annual grant and petitions for a permanent grant were denied by Council. The unfortunate politicization of the "Pictou Academy Question" came to a tragic climax in 1830 over the Brandy Election. The dispute was over a question of whether a tax on foreign brandy was legal or not and it involved the deteriorating relations between the Nova Scotian Council and the House of Assembly over which body controlled the purse. Blanchard, in support of the Assembly and allying the issue to Council's oppression of Pictou Academy, ran against the Council-sponsored candidate. Joseph Howe watched incredulously as a party of armed sailors and Highlanders, led by MacKenzie and carrying banners inscribed with the names of the Council's candidates, paraded before the Academy and Blanchard's home. MacKenzie then led his forces to the polls armed with sticks and afterwards to the tavern where he harangued them in Gaelic. A riot was incited in which one man was killed. MacKenzie's blandishments proved successful; the Council candidate, Lawrence Hartshorne, outpolled Blanchard in the district of Pictou by 142 votes.<sup>31</sup> The Acadian

Recorder described the Kirkmen's conduct as resulting in an "armed mob, a murder, and ministers of Religion. . . [becoming] political engines, endeavouring to move congregations at the Tavern."<sup>32</sup> But these political tactics bore fruit both in Nova Scotia and in Scotland.

In 1831 MacKenzie founded the Pictou Observer, a new voice for Kirk supporters. In 1833 the Kirk Presbytery of New Brunswick was organized. As well, the Synod of Nova Scotia in connection with the Church of Scotland was authorized that year with powers of ordination in the colonies. Fraser was chosen as Moderator, Martin as Clerk, and the first meeting was scheduled to be held in Pictou in 1834. By this time Burns claimed that forty ordained ministers had been sent by the GCS to British North America, ten to Nova Scotia, which included Cape Breton and Prince Edward Island. Plans were afoot to open Dalhousie College in Halifax as a key Presbyterian institution in the Maritimes. In Scotland the General Assembly took over responsibility for the GCS in 1836. As mentioned earlier, Burns and his several hundred evangelical supporters carried their campaign against the Moderates to a complete Disruption of the established Church of Scotland by walking out of the General Assembly in 1843 and by forming the Free Church.

Burns, therefore, had attained his political objectives--the evangelical party won control in the Scottish

General Assembly and the monopoly of the Secessionists in the Pictou district was broken with the passage of the 1832 Pictou Academy bill, which changed the composition of the Board and which forced the trustees to add a grammar school and more practical subjects to the curriculum. These Kirk activists were particularly successful in exploiting the Highlanders' resentment of the exclusivist, professional ideal which Pictou's Secessionists were attempting to impose on the Pictou district through their policies at Pictou Academy. As Steele remarks, colonial communities became more hierarchical when English gentry values were imposed.<sup>33</sup> The gowns and robes that McCulloch and his students donned, their separation from the population by means of the fence around the College Green, their liberal/learned English language usages, their professional authority and aspirations--all promoted deferential behaviour in the majority population excluded from admission to the Academy and, in a number of cases, from admission to the PCNS churches. The commercial-liberal values cultivated by the Academy were anathema to many Highlanders. In contrast to their communal, kinship culture, the associational relationships of a commercial economy, epitomized in Pictou's town culture, were based on a division of labour, specialization and trans-Atlantic networks of people with common interests--all characteristics of the English-Atlantic mercantile world to which

McCulloch's students were aspiring.

Ironically, this was the world Burns, MacKenzie and Fraser themselves wished on their brightest sons. When Burns visited Pictou as a Free Church proselytizer after his move to Upper Canada in 1844, he divided the town (whose population he estimated to be four or five thousand), into two classes of citizens and political parties. Believing mistakenly that the mass of the people and the elders of St. Andrew's (Kirk) congregation were "with us," whereas the trustees of Pictou Academy and gentlemen of the town were the accredited leaders of a political party (Conservative) which was hostile to the Free Church, Burns now recognized the advantage of a closer liaison with PCNS members, largely Reformers. He himself was a Liberal and a strong advocate of Free Trade and the extension of the franchise. After talking to James Ross and several PCNS members he wrote, "I am sure that the Free Church of Scotland is the only existing Church which has the power of taking possession. . .of the town of Pictou." Believing that there was a new ecumenical spirit abroad, Burns roundly condemned the political involvement of two of his previous colleagues, MacKenzie and McKichan (both of whom he had instructed fifteen years earlier to gather ammunition for his political machinations):

the Presbyterianism of the Establishment of Scotland has, for twenty years, been little else than the badge of a particular party, and any opposition to the Free Church was from this quarter exclusively. One

melancholy result of this strife has been the utter prostration of a valuable literary institution, the academy of Pictou, which, with proper management, in the spirit of love, might become the means of great good both in a literary and theological view. We felt a strong impression, that the Free Church of Scotland was specially called to this quarter, in the character of an angel of peace, to heal divisions, and to unite the Presbyterian body into one firm phalanx.<sup>34</sup>

Unfortunately, Burns' bitter condemnation of the C of S and his active proselytizing in Pictou resulted in three Presbyterian factions being formed in the district--Kirk (or C of S), Secessionist and Free Church. As the Reverend Alexander Maclean, a Kirk minister, admitted in 1853, they did not differ on one essential article of doctrine, but they each had strong camps which had "little friendly intercourse" with each other. He described his own community as "Presbyterian. . .of the most rigid and uncompromising form. Any departure from Presbyterian tenets was heresy, a deadly error, and the man suspected of a leaning in that direction lost caste, and was looked upon as lost, in the most serious and extreme sense of the word."<sup>35</sup> Like Burns, Maclean pointed out that this antagonistic attitude entered the politics of the region; every Kirkman was a Conservative and every Secessionist necessarily a Liberal. Before the election of 1845 the fighting between the two factions became so serious that a ten-foot high fence had to be erected down the main street by the sheriff to keep the sides apart during public polling.

These political and religious polarizations represented the two Presbyterian cultures in Pictou County. Religious and educational leaders had played crucial roles in the formation, contestation and construction of culture in the New World. As T.J. Jackson Lears observes regarding cultural hegemony, "ideology is less a product than a process in which different meanings are produced and reproduced through the establishment of a mental attitude toward the world."<sup>36</sup> MacKenzie and Fraser, although maligned by McCulloch, Burns and later by whig historians, had successfully mounted a new evangelical Presbyterian movement. It was rooted in the traditional cultural values of the Highland settlers, in their allegiance to the established Church of Scotland and in their Gaelic language. But they, like Burns, were directing these Highlanders towards new democratic, capitalistic values. MacKenzie's aggressive leadership as a common school commissioner for the district of Pictou in 1832, his demands for increased grants for poor children (estimated to be one-third of the children in the district in 1833), and his call for wider access to grammar schooling and a more practical curriculum would assist rural Highlanders and the increasing number of tradesmen/labourers in the newly industrializing district of Pictou to improve their status by means of increased literacy for their children (he advocated co-educational schooling). Ironically,

McCulloch's English-gentry Atlantic values, epitomized by the PCNS exclusivist/meritocratic policies with regard to Pictou Academy, did not lead directly to modernization. They built walls between gentry and commoners and erected barriers to all but a meritorious few to achieve positions of status. McCulloch tended to look back to an eighteenth-century élitist culture, while the C of S clergy more shrewdly anticipated the emerging political and economic transformations which would affect the Pictou district in the 1840s. As George Thomas notes, "Political-economic change. . . is not merely 'material' change that eventually affects 'culture'. Political-economic change is sociocultural change. Additionally, the cultural order at the start of change shapes the organization and direction of change."<sup>37</sup> The new cultural order that MacKenzie and Fraser were constructing carried with it new symbols, a different rhetoric from McCulloch's rational humanism, and it established new institutional rules, both for Pictou Academy and for social reform generally in the Pictou district.

But this new social activism was designed, as was that of the evangelical party and the GCS in Scotland, to gain power, not to change the underlying capitalistic ethos of the economy and the meritocratic culture of secondary schooling. The major reason for the success of the C of S social activists in gaining control of the majority of the

population and in changing the charter of Pictou Academy, was that their rhetoric and "environmental myths" were seen as sensible and legitimate by the population at large. As Thomas remarks, if an institution "does not fulfill external cultural requirements, it loses legitimacy and credibility."<sup>38</sup>

Cultural historians bring a new perspective to three aspects of historical inquiry. They include contradictory evidence, they pay much closer attention to specific discourses, and they place evidence in intellectual/religious as well as in political/social contexts. With respect to the question of the relationship of schooling to power, the above cultural interpretation concludes that in the initial stages of institution building, the winning of power was hotly contested. Effects of the bitter Pictou feuds were often unanticipated by community leaders. The degree that external players and the political events influenced outcomes was not fully appreciated by either constituents or school leaders. The term "hegemony", or political domination of one group or class over another, therefore, cannot be applied to this early stage of schooling at Pictou.

Cultural historians also examine specific discourses, which reveal political agendas and cultural baggage, and they attempt to measure the effects of rhetoric on different constituents. The power of discourse to polarize

groups in the community and to defeat emerging leaders is highlighted. Finally, cultural historians place more emphasis on religious-intellectual contexts, rather than on social-economic structures, or on whig/hagiographic accounts (to be discussed in the next two chapters). The trans-Atlantic context of Pictou Academy's history and the widespread construction and dissemination of new ideals, such as professionalization, are key factors to consider when assessing meanings of schooling and its relationship to power.

#### NOTES FOR CHAPTER ONE

1. Copy of letter J. Blanchard to Rt. Hon. Brougham & House, London, May 23, 1831, Public Archives of Nova Scotia [PANS], MG1, Vol. 553, Item 93. McCulloch's petition dwelt on the "oppression" suffered by the Academy, particularly at the hands of its chief persecutor, the Anglican Bishop, and his Council henchmen: [1831] Petition to the King from Trustees of Pictou Academy, Ibid., Vol. 554, Item 93. Jotham Blanchard was a member of the first class of graduates of Pictou Academy. He studied law in Pictou, and was admitted to the bar in 1822. In 1827 he became the first editor of the Colonial Patriot, a liberal-radical journal published in Pictou and the first newspaper of any significance in Nova Scotia to be published outside of Halifax. In 1830 Blanchard won one of the four seats for Halifax County and became a strong "legal reformer" in the Nova Scotia House of Assembly. The next year he travelled to Britain where he remained for nearly a year primarily to present the Pictou Academy memorial to Lord Goderich: See, J. Murray Beck, "Blanchard, Jotham," in Frances G. Halpenny (ed.), Dictionary of Canadian Biography [DCB], Vol. VII, 1836-1850 Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988: 81-5.

2. Copy of Petition of Jotham Blanchard to the Right Honourable Viscount Goderich, London, May 20, 1831, in Journals of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly [JHA] 1832, Appendix 1: 4-5.

3. H. Ross to T. McCulloch, Tatamagouche, N.S., December 20, 1826, PANS, MG1, Vol. 553, Item 131. Between

1825 and 1827 Ross preached in Halifax and on the South Shore as far as Shelburne. He was inducted at Tatamagouche in 1827, but changed allegiance to the Kirk in 1840 and was in charge of its Georgetown and Murray Harbour congregations in Prince Edward Island. At the Disruption of 1843 he joined the Free Church, but afterwards re-joined the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia. In 1856 he died suddenly leaving a wife and five children.

4. In the mid-eighteenth century the Secession had split with the Church of Scotland (or Kirk) over the question of Church patronage and the role of the congregation in the selection of ministers; no doctrinal matters of faith were involved with the dispute. McCulloch, Blanchard and Ross were Secessionists, whose synod was the PCNS.

5. Ned C. Landsman, "Religion and Revolution: The Two Worlds of John Witherspoon," in Richard B. Sher and Jeffrey R. Smitten (eds.), Scotland and America in the Age of Enlightenment Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990: 30.

6. Laurie Stanley, The Well-Watered Garden: The Presbyterian Church in Cape Breton, 1798-1860 Sydney: University College of Cape Breton, 1983: 48, 47.

7. Thomas McCulloch, Popery condemned by scripture and the fathers: being a refutation of the principal popish doctrines and assertions maintained in the remarks on the Rev. Mr. Stanser's examination of the Rev. Mr. Burke's letter of instruction to the Catholic missionaries of Nova Scotia, and in the Reply of the Rev. Mr. Cochran's Fifth and Last Letter to Mr. Burke Edinburgh: J. Pillans, 1808. And see, Susan Buggie and Gwendolyn Davies, "McCulloch, Thomas," in DCB VII: 529-541.

8. Ian K. Steele, The English-Atlantic 1675-1740: An Exploration of Communication and Community New York: Oxford University Press, 1986: 268, 269.

9. In a series of letters, written under the pseudonym "Investigator" at the time of the opening of Pictou Academy in 1818, McCulloch argued strongly that his program of liberal education would give his students a particularly good training for the professions without their having to go to the United States, where they would be exposed to republican sentiments. As a preliminary training for the ministry, candidates would have an improved general knowledge, particularly valuable as "religion and political influence of the clergy, go hand in hand": See, "Investigator," Acadian Recorder [AR] (Halifax), January 24, 1818.

10. "Investigator," *Ibid.*, February 28, 1818. McCulloch's curriculum closely followed that of George Jardine, Professor of Logic at the University of Glasgow between 1774 and 1827, who may have taught McCulloch when he attended the university. Jardine signed McCulloch's 1826 petition to the Church of Scotland and his textbook, Outlines of a Philosophical Education (1818 and 1825) McCulloch later ordered for his Pictou Academy students.

11. "Investigator," *AR*, February 28, 1818. And see his attack on King's exclusivist charter and literary curriculum: *Ibid.*, April 25, 1818. Patricia Jasen notes that the concept of utility, or the accumulation of useful knowledge became an important characteristic of mid-Victorian Canadian colleges. It was based on faculty psychology (the belief that each subject played a special role in developing different aspects of the mind), on an over-riding preoccupation with religion and with the development of a Christian conscience, and on non-conformist attempts to break down barriers of religion and class, which the Oxford model of King's Colleges symbolized. See, Patricia Jane Jasen, "The English-Canadian Liberal Arts Curriculum: An Intellectual History, 1800-1950," Ph.D. thesis, University of Manitoba, 1987: 38-42 and 21. And see, "Utility and anti-classicism, 1809," in Michael Sanderson (ed.), The Universities in the Nineteenth Century London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975: 35-6. Also see, Stanley E. McMullin, "In Search of the Liberal Mind: Thomas McCulloch and the Impulse to Action," Journal of Canadian Studies 23, 1 & 2 (Spring/Summer 1988): 68-85; and, B. Anne Wood, "Thomas McCulloch's Use of Science in Promoting a Liberal Education," Acadiensis 17, 1 (Autumn 1987): 63: "Scottish universities stressed the integral relation between the program of studies and the everyday world. McCulloch therefore frequently deplored the 'monkish' boarding school practices of King's, which he judged to be harmful for the [moral] character of its students. He also believed that, although professors in a liberal college should be men of learning and respectability, they should live exactly as a member of the community should live."

12. McCulloch to Rev. Dr. Mitchell, Pictou, November 24, 1821, PANS, MG1, Vol. 553, Item 14.

13. Richard B. Jarrell, "Science Education at the University of New Brunswick in the Nineteenth Century," Acadiensis 2, 2, Spring 1973: 55-79.

14. In 1833 John James Audubon visited McCulloch at Pictou and pronounced his second collection of provincial birds to be the finest in North America. He collaborated for a number of years after this with McCulloch's son,

Thomas Junior, who sent him many samples of Nova Scotian bird life. This second collection was offered to the province for £500; on being refused, it was put up for auction in London. McCulloch's third collection was given to Dalhousie College.

15. Daniel McCurdy to A.J. McCurdy [February 1872], PANS, Biography, Israel Longworth Papers, Vol. 1.

16. "Account of great educational meeting. . .convened at Onslow," Ibid.: 188.

17. James MacGregor, Address of the Rev. James MacGregor to the United Secessionist Church and Others, in behalf of the Literary Institution at Pictou, N.S., East River, August 22, 1825, Ibid., MG9, Item 31: 4.

18. Douglas Earle, "The Story of Pictou Presbyterianism from its Beginnings to the Union of 1875," M.Div. thesis, Atlantic School of Theology, 1973: 117. It was estimated by the 1840s that there were eleven thousand Presbyterians in the Maritime provinces, but McCulloch judged them to be the least influential, though the largest denominational group.

19. Excerpt in letter John McKinlay to George Smith, Pictou, March 30, 1830, PANS, Micro: Places, Pictou Academy, Reel 1. Students were required to wear scarlet gowns, in imitation of the costume of students attending the University of Glasgow. Denoon (or Dunoon), eldest son of the Rev. David Dunoon of Killearn, Ross-shire, was born in 1762, went to America with the British army and settled after the war at Merigomish, one mile south of Pictou. He recruited emigrants, especially in 1801 when he chartered a vessel with three hundred persons at Fort William. The Scottish ruling classes used this vessel as an example of over-crowding to impose trans-Atlantic regulations, necessitating much higher costs, and thus achieved their purpose, to stem widespread emigration. See, J.M. Bumsted, The People's Clearance: highland emigration to British North America, 1770-1815 Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, and Manitoba: University of Manitoba Press, 1982: 88-9.

20. Table II, in J.M. Bumsted, "Scottish Emigration to the Maritimes 1770-1815: A New Look at an Old Theme," Acadiensis 10, 2, Spring 1981: 68.

21. Bumsted, The People's Clearance. And see, Marianne McLean, "Peopling Glengarry County, The Scottish Origins of a Canadian Community," Canadian Historical Association, Historical Papers 1982 Ottawa: Canadian

Historical Association, 1983; Eric Richards, "Scotland and the Uses of the Atlantic Empire," in Bernard Bailyn et al (eds.), Strangers Within the Realm: Cultural Margins of the First British Empire Chapel Hill & London: University of North Carolina Press, 1991: 67-114; and, B. Anne Wood, "The Significance of Evangelical Presbyterian Politics in the Construction of State Schooling: A Case Study of the Pictou District, 1817-1866," Acadiensis 20, 2, Spring 1991: 62-85.

22. John Reid, Mount Allison University: A History, to 1963, Vol.I: 1843-1914 Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984: 8; and see, Judith Fingard, The Anglican Design in Loyalist Nova Scotia, 1783-1816 London: Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, 1972.

23. Although MacKenzie received a £120 stipend he threatened to resign in 1825 unless the GCS paid him the £150 amount owed him for the previous two years. See, Ken. Jn. MacKenzie to Robert Burns, Pictou, November 8, 1825, PANS Micro: Misc., Societies, Glasgow Colonial Society, Reel 1, Item 27.

24. Ibid.

25. MacKenzie to Rev. Dr. Scott, Pictou, December 9, 1825, Ibid.

26. John McKinlay to Kirk Society, Pictou, November 29, 1825, Ibid., MG1, Vol. 553, Item 128. And see McCulloch's lengthy rebuttal to all of Burns' and MacKenzie's charges in Thomas McCulloch, A Memorial from the Committee of Missions of the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia, to the Glasgow Society for Promoting the Religious Interests of the Scottish Settlers in British North America with Observations on the Constitution of that Society, and Upon the Proceedings and First Annual Report of the Committee of Directors Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1826.

27. Howard Miller, in an astute analysis of Presbyterianism in the United States between 1707 and 1837, draws attention to its divisive theology, vacillating between evangelical and rational strains, and its hierarchical structure of government, which leads to numerous schisms and theological camps, each attempting to gain control of church government. Under external attack, Miller suggests, these internal tensions are exacerbated and when a sole figure represents one camp, he is exposed to undue vituperation in order to defeat his side. See, Howard Miller, The Revolutionary College, American Presbyterian Higher Education 1707-1837 New York: New York University Press, 1976: 5-6.

28. Robert Burns, "Appendix No. IV. Remarks on [No.III] by the Rev. Mr. McCulloch, in the Edinburgh Star of July 22, 1826," in Supplement to the First Annual Report of the Society in Glasgow for Promoting the Religious Interests of Scottish Settlers in British North America: Containing a Reply to the Memorial of Dr. McCulloch and Accompanying Papers Glasgow: Andrew Young, 1826: 34-5.

29. Dugald McKichan to Robert Burns, Merigomish, November 4, 1829, PANS, Micro: Misc., Societies, GCS, Reel 1, Vol. II, Item 95.

30. "X", The Doctrine of The Rev. Doctor M'Culloch inculcated in the 'Lectures on Education,' Condemned With an Address to the Different Parties in the District of Pictou Pictou: Gossip, 1832: 23-4.

31. In the province at large, however, all Assembly supporters, including Blanchard, were voted in. See, Gene Morison, "The Brandy Election of 1830," Collections of the Nova Scotian Historical Society 30 (1954): 151-83. See also, J. Murray Beck, Joseph Howe, Vol. I, Conservative Reformer, 1804-1848 Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1982: 78. Howe was aghast at the conduct of the Kirk ministers. He believed them to be the chief villains in the political-religious disputes of the Pictou district.

32. AR October 9, 1830.

33. Steele, The English Atlantic: 271.

34. Rev. Dr. R. Burns, Report presented to the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland, on Canada and Nova Scotia Paisley: Colonial Committee, 1844: 25. Burns' condemnation of McKichan was especially unfair: "Had Mr. M'Kichan kept steady in his professions of adherence to the Free Church, or had he stayed aloof of politics, the whole would have been with us. As it is, things [at Barney's River] are not in a good state; and the sooner that Mr. M'K. leaves the district and the colony, the better. He is the cleverest of all the ministers there, but he has been among the least useful." Ibid: 29. Burns' Free Church College, subsequently established in Toronto, followed a program of studies very similar to McCulloch's at Pictou Academy.

35. Rev. Alexander Maclean, D.D., The Story of the Kirk in Nova Scotia Pictou: The Pictou Advocate, 1911: 22, 72. Hugh Ross, for instance, after moving to the Free Church was debarred at first from re-admission by the PCNS in 1853.

36. T.J. Jackson Lears, "The Concept of Cultural Hegemony: Problems and Possibilities," American Historical Review 90, June 1985: 590.

37. George Thomas, Revivalism and Cultural Change, Christianity, Nation-Building, and the Market in Nineteenth-Century United States Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1989: 7.

38. Ibid.: 17. Thomas defines cultural order as a world-view which has "a set of institutional rules that infuse people and their actions with meaning and value" (p. 14). A "cultural environment" comprises both a figure, around which institutions and organizations revolve, and its ground. In order to retain power a figure must conform to (be isomorphic with) its ground or environment, which legitimates him. (p. 17) In a seminal essay comparing Scottish with American Calvinism in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Mark Noll concludes that environment was the key factor explaining their differing theological results from influences of Scottish moral philosophy. Like the Scots, common sense moral philosophy as expounded by McCulloch, for instance, was used primarily "to repudiate the skepticism of David Hume and in order to reconcile religious faith and the deliverance of reason . . . .A common sense alliance with Newtonianism also refurbished the argument from design for. . .evangelicals. . . .To sustain orthodoxy, the Scots looked much more [than American theologians] to the Westminster Confession than to the argument from design. At times of crisis like the French Revolution and the threat of Napoleon, they tended to rely, not on 'the science of politics,' but on the institutions of the Established Church and traditional society." As Noll further states, after the 1843 Disruption in Scotland, "both major factions in the Established Church [Moderates and Evangelicals], along with the tiny minority of Reformed Presbyterians and Antiburgher Presbyterians, still contended for the notion of a nation in covenant with God." They aspired to "a comprehensive institutional control of their own affairs." This chapter argues that similarly Nova Scotian Presbyterians made considerable progress in establishing their cultural domination of provincial schooling by means of their imported Scottish ideal of professional merit, which served as an institutional means to instal God's "elect" in positions of provincial authority. See, Mark A. Noll, "Revival, Enlightenment, Civic Humanism, and the Evolution of Calvinism in Scotland and America, 1735 - 1843," in George A. Rawlyk and Mark A. Noll, eds., Amazing Grace, Evangelicalism in Australia, Britain, Canada, and the United States Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994: 96, 101, 102.

## CHAPTER TWO

### WHIG PERSPECTIVES

The term "whig" historically referred to a member of a political party in Britain that tended to favour reforms and progress. In recent years historians use "whiggish," or whig to connote a naive, present-centred interpretation of historical evidence, giving the term negative overtones. Why has the term acquired this condemnation? In order to shed light on this question the historiographical interpretations of Pictou Academy over 150 years will be examined.

Reviewing the secondary source literature on the history of Pictou Academy and on Thomas McCulloch one is struck by the large number (over fifty) of studies of the early nineteenth century. An obvious question arises--why so many? At least seven could be attributed to pride by the authors in their alma mater,<sup>1</sup> and four to genuine literary scholarship.<sup>2</sup> A major reason so many general historians have delved into the early history of Pictou Academy is that a great deal of primary source material concerning this period of the institution's history has been carefully preserved in the Public Archives of Nova Scotia. It provides a rare opportunity for Canadians to recapture the schooling history of a famous Presbyterian college that continues to function today as a high school. Ninety-five per cent of all the studies could be

categorized as whig. This chapter will explore the general meaning of these whig interpretations of Pictou Academy's history and will suggest several reasons why the early authors wrote from this perspective as well as why this viewpoint continues to be popular.

The underlying historical assumptions of whig historians are present-centred: all consider past origins to be part of a continuum with the present world, which is assumed to be more democratic, progressive and constitutionally enlightened. Mid-Victorians held common notions of progress, liberty and opportunity for advancement which are still believed by many people today. They considered that history had something to say to people. They also assumed that their universal perspective would reconcile past differences, often depicted as rooted in parochialism or bigotry, and that their liberal, general perspective regarding contentious issues would produce a more harmonious society based on an elevated point of view. As Laurence Fallis explains about another British North American province whose development paralleled that of Nova Scotia's,

tremendous changes. . .had taken place in Canada since . . .the 1820s. Population had increased dramatically. The land that was once a wilderness had yielded its harvest. . . .Where once savages launched their. . . canoes. . .cities and towns had arisen as if by magic. On all sides was the evidence of that prosperity and abundance which bespoke the honest toil of the Canadian people. The experience of Europe was a compound of conquest, misery and despair. The experience of the New World was grounded in the reality of improvement.

The law of the Old World was decay; the law of the New World was progress.<sup>3</sup>

McCulloch's scientific program suited enthusiastic modern thinkers who believed that they lived in an age of improvement. Nova Scotia's first historian, Thomas Chandler Haliburton, used not only descriptions but also a mass of information recently compiled by government surveyors, census-takers and accountants in his 1829 two-volumed work, An Historical and Statistical Account of Nova-Scotia, which he termed a true picture of the colony's development. Brook Taylor adds, "Haliburton's theme of historical progress was also a potent weapon when turned on Nova Scotians. The scattered lessons of each settlement were that true progress came only with hard work and agricultural self-sufficiency. . . .Highland Scots. . . although industrious and frugal, were found to be held back by their antiquated agricultural habits. The real progenitors of Nova Scotia were the energetic agriculturalists from the Scottish Lowlands. . . ." Like his contemporaries, McCulloch, John Young (Agricola) and Joseph Howe, "Haliburton promoted the virtues of a staunch agrarianism, unweakened by the vices of luxury and idleness." Significantly, like Blanchard and many of his whig successors, Haliburton's narrative had few footnotes; Taylor describes his "method of gluing sources together" as a common practice of early nineteenth-century historians, who

enjoyed a "remarkable freedom from scholarly rivalry."<sup>4</sup>

In the context of Britain's freer trade (Navigation Act of 1825), 1832 Reform Bill and increasingly "Little Englandism" sentiment, Fallis suggests that fear governed the rhetoric of middle-class reformers in British North America at this time. They were conscious that previous colonial protection and British sources for population, capital and intellectual ideas might dry up. In response, many colonial élites increased their efforts to mould public opinion in this progressive direction. "At bottom the idea of progress was a philosophy of history. It served as both an explanation and a justification for social and economic change. The idea of progress by making change appear to be natural, if not inevitable, made change acceptable. As such, the idea of progress was the chief ideological ingredient in the emergence in North America of the idea of the open society." This doctrine was largely disseminated by immigrant editors (like Jotham Blanchard), by college professors (like McCulloch), and by lawyers and politicians (predominant occupations of Pictou Academy's first graduates). Fallis suggests that their motivation was primarily political:

they had to convince themselves and their fellow countrymen that the future of Canada [and Nova Scotia] would be a glorious one and second, they had to devise programs and plans which would assure the transformation of their dreams into reality. The solution of the immigrant élite to the first problem was to embrace with enthusiasm the doctrine of progress; the solution to the second problem was to give

leadership and direction to the general drive for economic, social and cultural improvement which permeated Canadian [and Nova Scotian] society.<sup>5</sup>

Because of its strong ideological overtones, suggesting Blanchard's commitment to the doctrine of progress, his 1831 petition, described in Chapter One, today could be categorized as whig political rhetoric, rather than as an historical account. He made no attempt to be critical of his evidence. Facts were produced as self-evidently true and were used primarily to promote a particular progressivist interpretation of past events. There was no effort made to inquire into the possibility of alternative interpretations. Above all, the historical process as depicted by Blanchard and by many subsequent whig historians lacked complexity and treated setbacks as only temporarily interrupting the inevitable line of progress towards modernity and democracy.

In the second history of Pictou Academy, mounted in defence of the Union Academy of 1845 by the Board's Anglican secretary, Dr. William James Anderson,<sup>6</sup> a clash of interpretations ironically resulted from two opposing whig histories of the institution. The Reverend James Ross,<sup>7</sup> principal of the rival West River Theological Seminary, argued in a series of letters to the Novascotian (Halifax) that Pictou Academy had been paid for and supported by Pictou Presbyterians and implied that its current non-sectarian, academic program violated its charter. Replying to

the members of the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia [PCNS], Anderson ably refuted Ross' charges by citing many of the Academy's documents, such as the original bill, numerous drafts of petitions by McCulloch, by the Reverend Duncan Ross (James Ross' father) and by other Academy trustees, Blanchard's memorial to the King, original subscription lists and even an 1833 address to the PCNS Synod. He demonstrated that, in violation of the founders' intentions, the Nova Scotia Council had forced an amendment to the original 1816 bill and in the 1820 charter had restricted the Academy trustees to those professing the Presbyterian religion and wishing their children to be educated in its tenets. The Act of Incorporation also gave the Lieutenant-Governor authority to refuse to approve any trustee or teacher he deemed not in sympathy with the government or not in good moral standing. The Lieutenant-Governor also had to approve all by-laws. Anderson pointed out, however, that in the 1832 amended bill these religious tests and restrictions had been removed.

After the departure of McCulloch to become the first president of Dalhousie College in 1838, Anderson admitted that the Academy had declined and had operated only as a grammar school until 1842. But while the 1832 Academy, whose bill forced a union between two feuding Presbyterian groups, failed, Anderson adroitly pointed out that Ross himself was part of the mediating group which

successfully launched a reorganized Union Academy in 1845. A new board was appointed, the building was repaired and the trustees closely followed the program recommended by Ross; Anderson backed up his case by citing Ross' statement that the key to success lay with the grammar school program.

In order fairly to recompense previous interest groups the board gave back all theological books in its library, allowing Ross and his PCNS Presbyterians to make their own selection of books which they deemed to be their property. Anderson arranged to have all McCulloch property returned to his family (McCulloch had died in 1843). Not only was the debt paid off, but subscribers from all quarters were now paying promptly, fees were collected regularly and the building was in good repair. At a meeting called by the Sheriff regarding the current Union Academy Act, Anderson concluded, "The result was one of the largest and at the same time perhaps the most harmonious assemblies ever convened in the Pictou Court House. The resolutions were put seriatim and discussed gravely and earnestly, but temperately, by men representing all parties, interests, and sects in the county, and were passed unanimously."<sup>8</sup>

While continuing to display whig characteristics of progressive improvement of the institution towards rational co-operation, efficient management and solvency, in

comparison to Blanchard, Anderson proved to be more scholarly; he backed up his claims by citing numerous original documents and by criticizing his opponent's contradictory statements. Under duress, Anderson was forced to consult primary sources and to weigh his evidence carefully in order successfully to refute his opponent's claims. His account was not just a chronology of the Academy's successes; it included failures and changes of direction in the program due to the mediation of various parties involved with the Academy's problems. Because his original letters were addressing his opponents, the PCNS, he had to be conscious of the organization of his interpretive stance and the reception his reconstruction of events would engender. His most telling strategy was to use rational arguments to convince his audience (most of whom were graduates of McCulloch's Academy) that their inside knowledge of the true facts might be in error. Anderson's whig account thus emphasized the original intentions of Pictou Academy's founders, that is to have a broadly representative Board of Trustees, to open admission to a wide cross-section of the population, and to have no religious tests or restrictions either on students or on Board members. Blanchard's and Ross' whig interpretations, by adulating founders and traditions, implied that power/-control should remain with the Secessionists because they were McCulloch's rightful heirs. Their whig history was

more on the level of propaganda.

Along this line but on a more sophisticated level, the Reverend George Patterson in his chapter on "Dr. McCulloch and the Pictou Academy" in A History of the County of Pictou (Montreal: Dawson, 1877) produced another whig interpretation. An earlier manuscript version of this book won the 1874 Akin's prize for histories of Nova Scotia counties (established in 1864). As Taylor writes, alone among all the contenders Patterson met all the criteria established by its founder, Nova Scotia's first Commissioner of Public Records (1857), T.B. Akin. Not only did Patterson consult a much wider variety of sources than his predecessors but he even attempted to capture the flavour of the age by depicting history as a process. Patterson's previous journalistic and ministerial careers, as well as his evangelical, antiquarian and social interests encouraged him to add many details about social life, contentious issues and possible motives of political opponents that were missing from earlier accounts of Pictou Academy. Taylor adds, "Patterson even introduced as an interpretative theme the antagonistic relationship between moral strength and material progress. He was thus one of the few nineteenth-century Canadian historians to pause and count the cost of development."<sup>9</sup>

Patterson's added skills, however, did not prevent him from perpetuating the whig biases of his Secessionist

predecessors. A Church of Scotland [C of S], or Kirk, critic writing in 1860, pointed out that Patterson held the "well-known prejudices and proclivities. . .describing men and events which provoked the anger of his sect in bygone days." In his earlier biography of his ancestor, A Few Remains of the Rev. James MacGregor (Philadelphia: Wilson, 1859), Patterson interpreted MacGregor's life as a series of providential stages, influenced primarily by his Creator, towards the ultimate goal of achieving humanity on earth. As the reviewer remarked, "What particular kind of progression is meant, mental, or spiritual, or physical, or all combined?" In a subsequent article, this anonymous critic noted that actions of C of S adherents were discredited by Patterson not only with offensive epithets but also by broad insinuations. "He merely makes his charges in a style and spirit at once flippant and insulting; takes the thing for granted and reasons accordingly. No atom of proof does he adduce to make good his position."<sup>10</sup>

Between the draft essay of his 1874 history of Pictou County and the published version of 1877, Allan Dunlop notes, there was a distinct neutralization of delicate topics. Citing a letter of 1891 from the Reverend William Fraser of Barrie, Ontario, Dunlop observes that Patterson, contemplating a later full history of Pictou Academy, had handled this chapter in his History of Pictou County with carefully guarded courtesy.<sup>11</sup> And yet, another

1913 critic, in a series of four letters written to The Echo (Halifax) and reprinted in the Evening News (New Glasgow) in 1973, found not only bias but numerous inaccuracies in Patterson's account. The first charge, according to the reviewer, was because he "was a clergyman, and naturally prone to look at events and persons through clerical spectacles. He was a near relative, on both sides of his father's house, to certain of the pioneers who in consequence loomed somewhat larger than nature in his historical vision." The second charge was a result of Patterson's method of gathering testimony from third-generation settlers and "trusting, as he was often compelled to do, largely to oral tradition."<sup>12</sup> Was Patterson constructing a myth about the outstanding leadership of his ancestors in Pictou County?

Certainly Patterson was whiggish in his black-and-white depiction of the history of Pictou Academy. But he also attempted to fathom the intentions of both protagonists. Putting himself in the shoes of the institution's enemies, such as Lieutenant-Governor Sir John Wentworth and provincial treasurer Michael Wallace, Patterson imagined that such "a scheme [McCulloch's plan for college status and a permanent degree] would only appear to them as favoring a nest of pestilent disloyalty, which ought to be crushed as the serpent's brood." Patterson also attempted to expose strategies in the midst of the political

realities of the day: "to avoid exciting the jealousy of the friends of Kings College, who were really all powerful in the Government, it was resolved not to seek the right of conferring degrees or the other privileges of a college. Hence the name Pictou Academy, though from the first it was intended to impart the education usual in colleges." The "herculean" task of establishing such an institution Patterson conveyed by supplying the reader with social details:

as to education, few thought of seeking for their children more than the ordinary training of a common school. Even that in many places was difficult to obtain, and when obtained very inferior. A large proportion of the inhabitants, did not feel the necessity of any thing better, and many did not value education at all. The population was sparse, and the several portions had but little communication with one another or with the capital. The tests introduced by the council threw the institution into the hands of the Presbyterians, and as they then consisted only of about twenty congregations, most of these in thinly settled districts and the members in humble circumstances, it will be perceived, that the Dr. [McCulloch] had entered upon an undertaking, requiring a large amount of that faith, which can remove mountains.<sup>13</sup>

Patterson also added to his account names of the first students, details regarding the building of the Academy, and courses taught by McCulloch and by his first assistant, the Reverend John McKinlay, all of which made these early days live for the reader. Repeating many of the facts that Blanchard and Anderson gave of the fight between Pictou Academy and the Council, Patterson provided the reader with another level of contextual meaning by

stressing "the inferior position of Dissenters, the prejudices with which they were regarded even by sensible men, and the difficulties therefore which were thrown in the Doctor's way, at every stage of his efforts on behalf of the Pictou Academy. Many believed that a Dissenter must necessarily be disloyal."<sup>14</sup>

But Patterson also remained uncritical of past whig interpretations, such as those of McCulloch and Blanchard, who depicted Bishop John Inglis as using "his whole influence" in Council to defeat the Academy bill. Patterson substantiated this charge by suggesting that "He was sure of [Honourable Michael] Wallace's help to do any thing against the wishes of those Pictou Dissenters, and with two or three placemen he was able to command a majority in the Upper House to defeat its claims. It will be seen that in that year, (1826) it was only by his casting vote that the bill was rejected."<sup>15</sup> Subsequent historical judgment reduces the bishop's role to carrying no more weight than any other councillor; as Susan Buggie observes, their antagonism to Pictou Academy was based on their extreme Tory political and financial fears that a moderating climate in Britain would leave their privileged position even more vulnerable to attack from within and from without.<sup>16</sup>

Where Patterson's account breaks significant new ground is in his depiction of the Academy's Kirk enemies as

critical in the second phase of attack. Once again he focusses on their mental attitude:

When the ministers of the Church of Scotland commenced the movement, forming an organization in connection with that body [the Glasgow Colonial Society], they found the Institution [Pictou Academy] ready to send out its first company of native preachers. They came with that contempt, which it was customary then and long after, for old country people to entertain for everything colonial. The idea of training some of the natives of the backwoods for ministers, seemed to them supremely ridiculous, and when they commenced preaching they decried them in the strongest terms. They also looked upon Seceders with that disdain, with which the members of the Established Church [of Scotland] at that time generally regarded that body.<sup>17</sup>

Patterson noted the political advantage that the PCNS held over the Church of Scotland [C of S] in its new ability to provide Presbyterian ministers for the province. Like his predecessors he emphasized the extreme antagonism to the Academy mounted by two C of S ministers in particular, the Reverend Donald Fraser and the Reverend Kenneth John MacKenzie. And he assigned blame especially to these two individuals for the "entire destruction" of the Academy. Patterson linked these events even more securely than had his predecessors to the struggles of the day for responsible government:

these things were but the beginning of the end of the whole system of the irresponsible power of cliques and compacts. The discussions on the Pictou Academy raised the whole question of the Council's constitutional rights, and there were men now to claim for the Assembly that control of money matters, which, according to the British Constitution, belongs to the people's representatives. The temper too of both the House [of Assembly] and country was being roused, by the manner in which the Council had exercised their [sic] powers, and men were now found boldly to cry out

to have the whole concern swept away.<sup>18</sup>

Patterson's whig claim that the "Pictou Scribblers," Blanchard and McCulloch, in their fight against both the Council and their C of S enemies, converted Nova Scotian Tory leaders, particularly Joseph Howe, to the reform cause and that they were significant leaders of this cause, has been denied by recent scholars. J. Murray Beck, for instance, in his biographical assessment of Blanchard, states categorically, "There is no evidence at this time for the often quoted but probably apocryphal admission of Howe that the 'Pictou Scribblers' had converted him from the error of his ways." And, suggestions "that Blanchard 'left his mark writ large upon the history of Nova Scotia' are not borne out by fact; indeed, he ended up as a largely tragic figure." Beck does admit, however, that "although [Blanchard] did not 'convert' Joseph Howe singlehandedly he did contribute significantly to opening Howe's eyes to the magnitude of the province's ills. Only his limited physical resources prevented him from being more than someone who would hint at the major political changes that were to come in the 1840s."<sup>19</sup>

Patterson's history, then, because of its vivid imagery, dramatic portrayal of events and extensive employment of primary source material, became an important source for subsequent whig historians. They copied his black-and-white portrayal of political issues, exaggerating

the role of protagonists and ascribing their undue influence on subsequent events. Patterson's whig mental bias, like that of Blanchard and Anderson, implied principles of selection and organization of material which were not acknowledged by the authors. Their successors, sharing similar naive attitudes towards events and enjoying Patterson's added advantage of greater hindsight regarding the culmination of responsible government in the birth of a new nation, repeated his whig conclusions. Motives of protagonists were deemed responsible for the course of events. Employing narrative style, their story was told in rather simplistic terms, ignoring the complexities of the historical process. Unintended results and compromises of mediators, such as those who formed the 1845 Union Academy which in the early 1850s was a highly successful college, were downplayed or dismissed. Patterson acknowledged that the "Pictou Academy was subsequently remodelled as an Academy or High School, and as such has been doing good work," but stated that despite the successful reopening of Dalhousie College in 1863, "the higher education in Nova Scotia has ever since been inextricably muddled."<sup>20</sup>

While Patterson's history certainly was an improvement on those of his predecessors, he reached questionable moral conclusions which would often be repeated by his successors: "never did time, which tests all things, more thoroughly determine any question, than it has vindicated

the wisdom of the course adopted by the Presbyterian ministers, in endeavouring to establish a collegiate Institution, with a special view to the training of a native ministry, and the unwisdom of the opposite."<sup>21</sup> As John Tosh observes, the effect of this political/moral emphasis tended to construct a mystical reverence of British political processes, especially when the country united behind leaders who emphasized national or reform consensus; in effect this whig interpretation was a form of censorship.<sup>22</sup> Whig historians discount aspects of past experiences which are alien to modern ideas, such as C of S criticisms of Pictou Academy policies. While Patterson and his contemporaries believed they were giving a true, factual account of events according to the evidence at hand, in effect because of their present-centred attitudes and selection of documents they were constructing a providential myth of the importance of higher education; its goal was to serve the liberal intentions of Pictou Academy's founders, to socialize middle-class youth into the mores of modern capitalistic culture and to select the meritorious few for professional leadership in their community. While these underlying goals were hidden in the earlier whigs' historical accounts, they were more apparent in later, more detailed histories, such as those of A.H. MacKay in the 1880s and of William McCulloch, whose biography of his father was written also in this period but

was published by his grand-daughters in 1920.

Alexander Howard MacKay, former student of Pictou Academy (1868) and graduate of the Truro Normal School (1866) and of Dalhousie College (B.A. in 1873), became Principal of Pictou Academy in 1873 and substantially altered the institution. It became a model for the provincial re-organization of Nova Scotia's county academies. His historical account of the history of Pictou Academy, written for the Halifax Herald in a series of three articles in 1881, could be seen as whig propaganda to promote the state take-over of these institutions on passage of the proposed bill, "Act to encourage Academic Education."<sup>23</sup>

MacKay's first article reviewed the history of Pictou Academy, dividing it into five periods. Needless to say, the portrayal was in terms of its progressive development both in its two early phases, conception to formation in 1816 and inauguration to Act of 1832, and in its last two periods, co-operation of 1845 to education act of 1864 and period of reformation, 1864 to present. MacKay recounted the early religious battles in a colourful, metaphorical style. Emphasis was placed on the Academy's new motto, "Concordia salus," which MacKay suggested "with bitter irony proved a proverb." By means of a developmental approach and a literary, narrative style MacKay imprinted a whig stamp on his interpretation.<sup>24</sup>

Utilizing previous sources, such as McCulloch, Blanchard and Patterson, in his second article MacKay reviewed the heroic early history of the institution. Enemies were accused of fomenting a "poisonous spirit of ecclesiastical and party politics." They were charged with the destruction of McCulloch's Academy, which "was to all intents and purposes a Scottish College, although it had not the power of giving collegiate honours." After the passage of the 1832 bill, the Academy was reduced to a grammar school and was closed down in 1844. McCulloch's science collection was sold "to the everlasting shame of Pictou."<sup>25</sup> But the people rallied round, overcame their differences and the two feuding parties voluntarily combined.

In MacKay's third account he entered his own era and broadcasted his considerable accomplishments; three departments worked well together and nearly £700 in bequests, subscriptions and donations complemented the fees, which amounted to over £1000. After the passage of the 1864-5 School Acts Academy trustees

with the most genuine exhibition of public spirit, surrendered to the public school system their property and prestige. It was agreed that the Academy should form an organic part of the school system of the town, under the same management as the Common Schools, and open free of charge to all from the highest grades of the Common Schools in the county, who should be qualified to pass the 'Admission' examination. The government, in return, pledged the Academic provincial grant. The combined Board of Management consisted of three trustees from the Academic Board co-operating with the three trustees for the school section elected

under the Act. Never has the arrangement been conducted more harmoniously, nor with better results to the public interest.<sup>26</sup>

After reviewing the Academy's staff since 1865, MacKay emphasized the scholarly accomplishments of its members by recounting their subsequent careers: one was a professor of chemistry at the Royal Military College, another became a leading physician in Philadelphia, and a third became a professor of physics at Dalhousie College. Two of the three had been among the first Nova Scotians to go to Germany for post-graduate training. The current staff were all university graduates and one held an M.A. degree from the University of Glasgow. With the program of reform introduced to the provincial educational system by Superintendent David Allison in 1879 (and largely drawn up by MacKay), there was increasing need for Pictou Academy to serve all of northern Nova Scotia. A magnificent new building was constructed in 1880 (as a result of MacKay's leadership) at a cost of \$30,000. MacKay justified this expenditure by stating that the past performance of students--nearly two thousand of whom had attended Pictou Academy since its founding--and their considerable accomplishments now made this 1880 institution "the capstone of the common schools and one of the cornerstones of the Universities."<sup>27</sup>

What MacKay's whig historical account really promoted was the value of a bureaucratic solution to

sectarian problems and the ideal of striving for professional status. Merit was attributed to those students who were able to pass the provincial examination system, which now controlled all levels of schooling. Mirroring the centralizing tendencies of the developing nation, MacKay's notion of efficient schooling entailed an organic relationship not only with the lower (elementary grades) and higher (college) levels but administratively within a provincial system. Efficiency and the public interest were equated. The loss of control of constituents--parents, students and the local community--and the increasing requirement to pass through provincially-controlled credentialising hoops in order to gain access to higher levels of schooling were not alluded to in MacKay's paean to the new system. By placing the names of Pictou Academy's famous graduates before the public, he hoped not only to gain extra status for his institution but also to give students specific models to emulate.<sup>28</sup> Practically all these graduates were in the professional class; no mention was made of a number of entrepreneurs, such as James W. Carmichael who was a major ship-builder in the region, or of the numerous teachers and missionaries who were also distinguished graduates of Pictou Academy.

Surprisingly, considering MacKay's behind-the-scenes assistance, he did not mention the accomplishments of Ada Brownrigg, the Academy's 1877 gold medallist. When

she applied to the University of Halifax for a B.A. degree program she was denied access, ostensibly because she had not taken Greek. After an appeal, she was permitted to study it privately and to try her matriculation papers in the subject. Not only was she successful but she was awarded a twenty-dollar scholarship and became the first woman in Canada to gain a Bachelor of Arts degree in September 1881.<sup>29</sup> By focussing on the successful careers of middle-class, largely professional male graduates of Pictou Academy, MacKay established an accreditation ideal for future students (see Chapter Five) which complemented the type of schooling system being promoted by whig ideologues. School administrators became increasingly empowered by means of provincial examinations to control the advancement of students. Merit increasingly became equated with prizes and with high marks on examinations. Success, rather than failure, tragedy or suffering, provided the only important evidence worth recording in a school's history. Numerical evidence, such as number of students, number of courses offered, amount of prize money, or size of provincial grant awarded an institution, began to count as more valid evidence than mere description. Only later observers would be conscious of the fact that this history was compiled and written by middle-class, professional male historians, most of whose professional careers were vested in the system they were celebrating.

So convinced were most mid-Victorians of the correctness of this whig interpretation of history that, by the time William McCulloch wrote his version of his father's life in the late nineteenth century, specific intentions and acts had become totally identified with universal causes. The 1831 trustees, for instance, were depicted as "men of firmness and decision, men who felt that the crisis had come, that it was theirs to go forward and leave results with God. . . .They had been fairly aroused to struggle for their rights, and they hoped much from a fact apparently unnoticed by the opposing party that a reaction had set in demanding the restoration of popular freedom, whose ultimate influence would extend to the remotest province of the Empire." Not only did William McCulloch ignore petitions of Highland immigrants to the Nova Scotia Council for more democratic schooling for their children, but he judged all voices dissenting from the whig cause as necessarily disloyal. Looking back at the fire which burned down his father's first (grammar) school in 1815, he stated "The burning of the school house was unquestionably the work of an incendiary. Party spirit, taken in connection with strictness of discipline in the Church, aroused the opposition of some of the very men whose sons were benefitting by its training." While acknowledging the point of view of these critics-"He [McCulloch] was blamed for diverting youthful energies from

useful objects, and exciting desires never to be gratified"--McCulloch portrays his father as a visionary leader--"Few dreamed of the uses to which Mr. McCulloch hoped to put the studies carried on in those early days."<sup>30</sup>

His father's role as a civil rights activist, a student of Blackstone's Commentaries and Montesquieu's Esprits des Lois, arousing Nova Scotia's dissenting clergy to protest against the monopoly of the Church of England over marriage licensing and prodding the members of the House of Assembly to object to encroachment on their constitutional rights, permeated McCulloch's biography.<sup>31</sup> Far more than his historical precursors McCulloch emphasized the Scottish-liberal Dissenters' cultural distinction from that of the English oligarchy in Halifax, who attempted "to smother free thought, by providing a College [at Windsor] where the doctrine of human rights would certainly form no part of the curriculum. . . .and to prevent the youth of the Province being contaminated by the liberalism of United States Colleges. . . .The College was designed by the Assembly to be unsectarian, but the idea that none but Episcopalians could be entrusted with any important position led to the legal restriction of the Principalship, as well as the Trusteeship, to a particular denomination." The statutes were drawn up "in the days of arbitrary power, and Episcopal domination." Scottish colleges, on which the program of Pictou Academy was based, were founded on the

principles of social right. . .they are the anticipations of a far-seeing mind."<sup>32</sup>

Embedded in the citations from private letters of Thomas McCulloch to his Scottish colleague, Dr. John Mitchell, and in his son's interpretations were numerous value judgments supporting the validity of McCulloch's liberal leadership and the meritocratic program he initiated at Pictou Academy. Both assumed that on a non-sectarian meritocratic college program for middle-class youth depended the future progress and welfare of society. McCulloch's science lectures throughout the Maritimes in 1834 were designed to awaken, according to James McCulloch who accompanied his father, "the middle orders of society" to the importance of burying differences and of arriving at a consensual view on the development of their provincial resources. Highlighting Howe's account of the Pictou election riots of 1830 and his sudden awakening to the reform cause, William McCulloch repeated Patterson's myth that

he owed to the Anti-burghers [Pictou's Secessionists] all that he was. . . .He saw in the Liberal success the evidence of the rising tide of popular power, and while giving him all due credit for his new patriotism, he was sufficiently astute to see that in existing conditions he was on the losing side; . . .Throwing the full weight of his character into the struggle, he so concentrated the scattered forces of public indignation as to sweep away not only the old Council with its tyrannical government, but to place himself at the head of the movement for Responsible Government. He seized and guided an existing movement which through his efforts culminated in the present state of affairs.<sup>33</sup>

As moralistic clergymen the two McCullochs visited their liberal judgments onto the social scene. Dr. McCulloch believed that public spirit arose when a nation, such as Scotland or the United States, achieved a certain density of population and degree of wealth, especially among retired country gentlemen who could lead the colony in such projects as agricultural improvement or coal development--"Already the coal of Pictou is rendering it the Newcastle of North America.'" They deplored the improvident habits of their Pictou neighbours, who were more concerned with visiting and showing off their finery than with any form of systematic management of either their time or their work. The result was an economy drowned in debt, with no money for capital development. Dr. McCulloch's antipathy to Halifax society, quoted in his son's book, was based not only on his ill treatment there but on his perception that it was a "mercantile emporium, being the seat of government, a garrison town, etc., is also the seat of extravagant dissipation.'" Even the PCNS Dr. McCulloch judged to be kept down by the majority who did not share his public-spirited values: "Most of them have a crooked and perverse generation to deal with, and instead of struggling like Dr. McGregor [sic], and a few others, to make their congregations public spirited, they have themselves become bondsmen.'"34

The effect of their moralistic interpretation of

events and of society was to simplify the early history of Pictou Academy into a providential cautionary tale:

an idea started with great labor and trouble and wrought out to what seemed indisputable evidence of success, like Jonah's gourd[, ] withered and died. After events have shown that opponents were merely agents fulfilling, though unconsciously, a divine purpose. The Academy had accomplished its real objects, the setting forth [of] the value of a native ministry, the awakening of the public mind to the necessity of higher education in the Province, and the impossibility of forming a provincial social life on the basis of a mere grammar school education.

With the continuation of the Secessionists' ideal in the West River Theological Seminary, and after the Union of the PCNS with the Free Church in 1860, McCulloch's Pictou Academy ideal "became the basis of the resuscitation and efficiency of Dalhousie College as it is today." Dr. McCulloch, quoted by his son, saw his removal to Halifax as

"the hand of Providence. . . .God has given me to possess the gates of my enemies. . . .Lord Dalhousie, who for the sake of his College, hated me, built it for me. Our Bishop, in the expectation, of making it his own, was, I believe, the principal means of preventing it from going into operation till I had need of it . . . .Against Pictou other parts of the Church within the bounds of the Province have ever had a dislike, simply because its clergy and people possess more (public) spirit than others were willing to exercise . . . .In Pictou it is a common remark that no man who opposed the Academy ever prospered in his deed."<sup>35</sup>

Both men reduced the complexity of Pictou Academy's history not only to a vision of continuous progress but also to one idea, that it epitomized the providential struggle for social justice and individual rights. Events were judged according to their correspondence to this ideal, an ideal shared by many twentieth-century

interpreters of Pictou Academy's history.<sup>36</sup> Whig historians attempt to reach general truths or propositions claiming universal validity; they select and use their sources to tell a story which infers the validity of their subject's interpretation of events. This over-simplification of evidence and principle of selection is in contrast to the approach of current cultural historians. The latter are concerned with the art of putting the person, thing or event in its appropriate context. By asking fruitful questions of a rich variety of evidence they attempt to understand the labyrinthine process by which ideas or the intentions of actors arose and were interpreted by different people living in that remote era. Drawing on more diverse sources and weighing evidence much more critically, the cultural historian can recover the rich, concrete life of the past, which differs radically from our own. The conclusions drawn will not be providential generalizations, but specific explanations of particular events and of why they occurred. The richness of the detailed research, the explanation beyond what could be inferred from the present or from arm-chair logic, the revelation of significance, consequences, accidental results and dis-continuities, make historical judgments about the past tentative rather than certain. Subsequent histories will always be written; new insights bring different questions. As Herbert Butterfield writes, "Real

historical understanding is not achieved by the subordination of the past to the present, but rather by our making the past our present and attempting to see life with the eyes of another century than our own."<sup>37</sup>

At the same time, the reader should recognize that professional historians today are addressing an academic audience, many of whose members are feminists and socialists, therefore very different from that of their whig, amateur predecessors. The social or cultural historian in the last few decades studied those who were victims of "progress" and used their story for critical and oppositional purpose in the present; the perspective of élites and those who attained a degree of political or cultural power is often ignored by recent academic historians.

The overview of Pictou Academy's early histories in this chapter reveals that whig histories were not all of a piece. These whig historians began to adopt increasingly rational procedures for weighing evidence. They included social details and speculated on the motivations of a variety of principal players who initiated key events. They were beginning to realize the importance of context and of mental attitudes in historical interpretation. Even MacKay's organic liberal account of Pictou Academy's history revealed his understanding of the power of human capital rhetoric and the potential of bureaucratic structures and of professional credentialism (to be discussed in

Chapters Four and Five) to construct a new cultural ideal for impoverished rural youth. As suggested throughout this chapter, whig historians had powerful political agendas, were often skilful narrators, and were remarkably successful in accomplishing their cultural goals; they convinced the population at large that their whig interpretations of events were the true facts that accounted for present-day progress.

Current structural theorists, who will be discussed in Chapter Three, represent another equally successful interpretive stance and are similarly biased in their selection of evidence. Concentrating on mid-nineteenth century development when socio-economic structural transformations occurred most dramatically these historians ascribe a major role to national systems of schooling in the emerging formation of capitalist society. Even while eschewing a social control bias in recent years, as described in the Introduction, these revisionist historians still tend to be structural; they ally social/institutional forms with the emerging capitalist mode of production. In contrast, nineteenth-century whig historians gave more weight to earlier intellectual-religious roots of Pictou Academy's heritage and to the power of professionalization to forge a new type of North American ideal.

#### NOTES FOR CHAPTER TWO

1. Copy of Petition of Jotham Blanchard to the Right Honourable Viscount Goderich, London, May 20, 1831,

"Appendix 1," in Journals of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly [JHA] 1832, pp. 1-9; William B. Hamilton, "Education, Politics and Reform in Nova Scotia 1800-1848," unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Western Ontario, 1970; Gertrude Holton, "Pictou Academy Has Lengthy and Distinguished History," The Chronicle Herald (Halifax), December 9, 1964; William McCulloch, The Life of Thomas McCulloch D.D., n.p., 1920; A.H. MacKay, "The Pictou Academy--an historical sketch," Halifax Herald, December 22, 23, 24, 1881; George Patterson, A History of the County of Pictou, Nova Scotia Montreal: Mika [1877] 1972; H.L. Scammell, "Rise and Fall of the Pictou College," Pictou Advocate, May 18/25, 1928: 6-7-8.

2. Gwendolyn Davies (ed.), The Mephibosheth Stepsure Letters Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1990; *Ibid.*, "Penetrating into Scott's Field: The Covenanting Fiction of Thomas McCulloch," in Studies in Maritime Literary History, 1760-1930 Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 1991: 63-70; V. Sharman, "Thomas McCulloch's Stepsure: The Relentless Presbyterian," Dalhousie Review 52, 1972-3: 618-25; Marjory Whitelaw, "Thomas McCulloch," Canadian Literature 68-69, 1976: 138-147. All of these works could be termed "whig-gish". For trenchant criticism, see Graham Carr, "Literary History: Convergence or Resistance?" Acadiensis 23, 1, Autumn 1993: 159-179. As Carr observes, "the problem with orthodox literary history is that it has failed to keep pace with the changing courses of both criticism itself and historiography. Circumscribed by the prescriptive teleology of the canon, as well as by a residual faith in the narrow, documentary function of historical research, traditional literary history has become vulnerable to challenges on all sides." (p. 179)

3. Laurence S. Fallis, Jr., "The Idea of Progress in the Province of Canada: a study in the History of Ideas," in W.L. Morton (ed.), The Shield of Achilles, Aspects of Canada in the Victorian Age Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1968: 170.

4. M. Brook Taylor, "Thomas Chandler Haliburton as a Historian," Acadiensis 13, 2, Spring 1984: 56, 57, 61, 62. "At a time when basic facts were not as near as the closest library or textbook, when many of the relevant books were almost unobtainable, creativity lay in bringing a story together for the first time in a convenient form." (*Ibid*: 62)

5. Fallis, "The Idea of Progress": 173, 174.

6. Anderson, a Pictou physician, served on the Board

from 1845-1855. As a result of a libel suit over his spirited and crucial defence of the Union Academy against its PCNS detractors and also because of the effects of typhus, which he contracted during an epidemic in Pictou, Anderson resigned from the Board in 1855, left Pictou and eventually settled in Quebec City where he became a key figure in the revival of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec in 1862. See, Elizabeth Waterston, "Anderson, William James," in Marc LeTerreur (ed.), Dictionary of Canadian Biography [DCB], Vol. X, 1871-1880 Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972: 13-14.

7. James Ross was the son of Secessionist pioneer, the Reverend Duncan Ross, of West River. He succeeded to his father's church at his death in 1835, and served there until 1846, when he was appointed professor of biblical literature and later professor of philosophy for the divinity classes at Princeton, Prince Edward Island, which moved to West River in 1848. Ross modelled the curriculum of the West River Theological Seminary and his teaching style on that of his mentor, the Reverend Thomas McCulloch. His program was similar to that of the Union Academy and the PCNS Seminary thus became a rival institution in the Pictou district. Ross' attempts to discredit the Union Academy by means of his newspaper battle with Anderson were defeated by Anderson's cogent arguments. In 1863 Ross was named president of the revived Dalhousie College. He was awarded an honorary degree by Queen's University in 1864 and he retired in 1885, leaving Dalhousie in a much more secure financial position than when he arrived. See, Allan Dunlop, "Ross, James," in Frances Halpenny (ed.), DCB XI, 1881-1890 Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982: 772-3.

8. Wm. Jas. Anderson, "Education and Pictou Academy," Pictou Academy, May 15, 1854: 8, PANS, Micro: Places, Pictou, Reel 2. And see, Wm. Jas. Anderson, "Education and Pictou Academy, 4 Letters written to the Members of the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia," March 16, 1850, n.d., 1850 and April 1850, Pictou, in Ibid., MG100, Vol. 206, Item 6a.

9. M. Brook Taylor, "Nova Scotia's Nineteenth-Century County Histories," Acadiensis 10, 2, Spring 1981: 165. And see, Allan C. Dunlop, "Patterson, George," in Frances G. Halpenny (ed.), DCB XII, 1891-1900 Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990: 828-30.

10. The Monthly Record of the Church of Scotland in Nova Scotia and the adjoining Provinces 6, 4, April 1860: 78; Ibid., May 1860: 107.

11. Allan Dunlop, "George Patterson: A Pictou Historian," unpublished paper presented to the Nova Scotia Historical Society, Halifax, March 2, 1984.
12. "Letter of 60 Years Ago Critical Pictou History," Evening News (New Glasgow), July 31, 1973. The author goes on to correct errors of judgment (that the early Highland settlers were poor and extremely ignorant) and of validity of evidence (that Durham pioneers were from Dumfries, instead of from Kirkudbrightshire).
13. Patterson, History of the County of Pictou: 323, 327, 328. While the details of seeking only academic status at first were mentioned by Blanchard and by Anderson, Patterson more appropriately sets them in their political context.
14. Ibid.: 338. Dissenters comprised Protestant sects which had separated from the established Churches of England and of Scotland; they were denied a number of rights, such as the issuance of marriage licenses. This theme is ably developed in one of the few non-whig histories of this period: Susan Buggey, "Churchmen and Dissenters: religious toleration in Nova Scotia, 1758-1835," unpublished M.A. thesis, Dalhousie University, 1981.
15. Patterson, History of the County of Pictou: 340.
16. Buggey, "Churchmen and Dissenters": 214-215.
17. Patterson, History of the County of Pictou: 343.
18. Ibid.: 344, 350. This theme was subsequently fully elaborated by Hamilton in "Education, Politics and Reform in Nova Scotia".
19. J. Murray Beck, "Blanchard, Jotham," in Frances G. Halpenny (ed.), DCB VII, 1836-1850 Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988: 82, 85.
20. Patterson, History of the County of Pictou: 358.
21. Ibid.: 363.
22. John Tosh, The Pursuit of History: Aims, Methods & New Directions in the Study of Modern History London and New York: Longman, 1991: 6. And see, Ibid: 145: By reducing history's social value, these whig historians ignore a large storehouse of past experience which could be contrasted with our own.
23. 48 Victoria, chap. 11, passed 24 April 1885.

24. MacKay, "I. The Pictou Academy," December 22, 1881.

25. "II. The Pictou Academy," December 23, 1881.

26. "III. Educational Enterprise," December 24, 1881.

27. Ibid. MacKay stated that over one hundred ministers of the Gospel, many lawyers, doctors, politicians, merchants and mechanics, who had attended Pictou Academy could be found around the globe.

28. Famous graduates, in order of MacKay's presentation (denoting his hierarchy of status) included Sir C.D. Archibald, Baron of the English Court of Exchequer; Sir William Ritchie, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada; Sir Hugh Hoyles, ex-Chief Justice of Newfoundland; A.G. Archibald, C.B., Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia; Judge Young of Charlottetown, P.E.I.; Judge George Blanchard of Kentville, N.S.; George R. Young, journalist, Member of the House of Assembly (deceased); Dr. W.R. Grant, Professor of Anatomy, Pennsylvania Medical College; George Patterson, historian and antiquarian of Pictou County; George Munro, New York publisher who gave a magnificent endowment to Dalhousie University; J.W. Dawson, Principal of McGill University and discoverer of two of the earliest reptilian remains in North America; Principal James Ross of Dalhousie and Principal George Grant of Queen's. He mentioned numerous local eminent citizens, including James D.B. Fraser, pharmacist, Dr. Wm. Jas. Anderson, Rev. John McKinlay, Rev. George Elliott (Anglican), and Jas. Primrose, merchant.

29. This was one year prior to Harriet Starr Stewart at Mount Allison University, supposedly Canada's first: see, John Reid, Mount Allison University: A History, to 1963, Vol. I Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984: 121. However, in 1875 Grace Annie Lockhart won the distinction of being the first woman to be awarded a bachelor's degree (Mount Allison, Bachelor of Science and English Literature) in any institution in the British Empire.

30. McCulloch, Life of Thomas McCulloch: 126-7, 44, 47.

31. Ibid.: 9, 61-3, 64, 71-2, 103.

32. Ibid.: 38, 40, 41. Dr. McCulloch, living in the shadow of the French Revolution and the American War of 1812, would not have dared to promote American

republicanism for fear of being branded a traitor. His whig politics were far more muted than was William McCulloch's interpretation of them.

33. Ibid.: 122, 125. Even church history was distorted to this optimistic vision. Regarding the 1817 union of Burgher and Anti-Burgher Secessionists in the PCNS, McCulloch concluded, in clear contradiction throughout the text of continuing jealousies between the two groups, that this synod "struck the death knell of Presbyterian disunion." (p. 53) The term Liberal is an anachronism here; the Liberal Party was formed only after responsible government was achieved in 1848.

34. Ibid.: 178, 154, 162.

35. Ibid.: 174, 175, 178-9.

36. See for example: George A. Campbell, "The Contribution of Thomas McCulloch to the educational system of Nova Scotia (1803-1843)," unpublished B.Ed. thesis, Dalhousie University, 1955; Daniel Cobb Harvey, "Dr. Thomas McCulloch and Liberal Education," Dalhousie Review 23, 3, October 1943: 352-62; Ibid., "New Light on Dr. McCulloch," Journal of Education (Halifax) 6, March 1935: 130-2; William B. Hamilton, "Thomas McCulloch, Advocate of Non-Sectarian Education," in Robert S. Patterson, et al (eds.), Profiles of Canadian Educators Canada: Heath, 1974: 21-37; Claude J.W. Kedy, "Pictou Academy, from its founding to the present--an important narrative in the History of Education in the Province of Nova Scotia," unpublished M.A. thesis, Mount Allison University, 1933; Bruce Francis MacDonald, "Intellectual Forces in Pictou, 1803-1843," unpublished M.A. thesis, University of New Brunswick, 1977; Ibid., "Thomas McCulloch," in W. Stanford Reid (ed.), Called to Witness: Profiles of Canadian Presbyterians, Vol. I Toronto: Presbyterian Publications, 1975: 111-127; Stanley E. McMullin, "In Search of the Liberal Mind: Thomas McCulloch and the Impulse to Action," Journal of Canadian Studies 23, 1 & 2, Spring/Summer 1988: 68-85; Ibid., "Thomas McCulloch: The Evolution of a Liberal Mind," unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Dalhousie University, 1975; J.B. Roald, "Thomas McCulloch and the Pictou Academy: controversy, man and events assessed," Journal of Education 19, 1973: 55-62; H.L. Scammell, "The Rise and Fall of a College," Dalhousie Review 32, 1, 1952: 35-44; Ibid., "Why did Thomas McCulloch come to Dalhousie?" Nova Scotia Historical Society Collections, Vol. 31, 1957: 64-72; Marjory Whitelaw, Thomas McCulloch: His Life and Times Halifax: Nova Scotia Museum, 1985.

37. H. Butterfield, The Whig Interpretation of History London: Bell, 1950: 16. And see, E.H. Carr, What is History? Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1961; G.R. Elton, The Practice of History New York: Crowell, 1967; T.G. Ashplant and Adrian Wilson, "Whig History and Present-Centred History," The Historical Journal 31, 1, 1988: 1-16; and, "Present-Centred History and the Problem of Historical Knowledge," Ibid. 2, 1988: 253-274.

## CHAPTER THREE

### STRUCTURAL VERSUS PROFESSIONALIZING FACTORS

Pictou County by mid-century had primarily an agricultural and trading economy. In 1850 sixty-five per cent of the labour force was engaged in agriculture. The traditional export staples of fish and timber were replaced by economic infrastructures required to mine and export coal. Ship-building became the major industry of Pictou Town. In the 1840s sixty-seven vessels were built for the transfer trade--to be sold primarily in the United Kingdom. The town of Pictou also had emerged as the main wholesale-trading centre of the district, but its economic leadership was beginning to be challenged by the commercial-industrial initiatives of the General Mining Association [GMA], a London-controlled company developing coal mines, and by ship-building interests across Pictou Harbour at New Glasgow. After the 1850s there was a shift of investment from the maritime sector to the landward sector.

During the 1860s and 1870s the Pictou region entered more fully the "mercantile-industrial transition" discussed by Larry McCann and others.<sup>1</sup> Foundries and sawmills in the early years were followed by the development of gypsum mills, salt works and iron-smelting furnaces. Secondary consumer goods were manufactured in breweries, flour and grist mills. Later, soap and tallow plants, tobacco and confectionary establishments and

tailoring businesses began to flourish. By the 1870s and 1880s the industrial towns of New Glasgow, Stellarton, Westville and Trenton were beginning to manufacture agricultural implements, carriages and tin and sheet-iron goods. In the 1890s boiler-making, rolling and planing mills, moulding and tinsmith operations signalled the firm establishment of a capital goods production stage of industrialization. As Rosemary Ommer concludes,

Pictou, then, had demonstrated admirably that it possessed the 'capacity to transform', having changed from a traditional 'maritimes' economy in the pioneer and post-pioneer era, to the transfer trade in ships, to the carrying trade economy, to landward industrial growth by the 1880s. It was a rogue element in the Canadian eastern seaward economy in its anticipation of the trend towards maritime disinvestment by as much as twenty years.<sup>2</sup>

Was there any relationship between these economic/structural transformations of Pictou County and the professionalizing ideal promoted by Pictou Academy?

Since 1968 with the publication of Michael Katz' The Irony of Early School Reform, Educational Innovation in Mid-Nineteenth Century Massachusetts, "revisionist" Canadian educational historians have tended toward the interpretation of state schooling promulgated by American social historians.<sup>3</sup> As Katz, teaching many of them during Education, and Paul Mattingly wrote, "similarities in social forces, in economic development, and in political and cultural values produced educational systems with many of the same underlying features in both Canada and the

United States."<sup>4</sup> Using sociological models, census and school attendance records, school registers, and computer processing facilities, these researchers conclude that structural features determined the contours of state schooling, which they claim was imposed by school reformers and by professional bureaucrats ("top-down") as a form of social control, especially of poorer classes; that the bureaucratic institutions these reformers constructed embodied bourgeois values and gave school administrators power to regulate entry to higher forms of schooling and to determine career paths of students; and that schooling reform was urban-inspired and primarily capitalistic in ethos.<sup>5</sup> By mid-century rewards for achievement had supplanted the cultural rewards of pre-industrial society based on ascription. The state schooling experiences of thousands of early nineteenth-century youngsters had primarily achieved this cultural goal of school reformers and had prepared citizens for a market economy.

Critics of Katz and his followers argue that their undue concentration on urban American prototypes, on Marxist ideas of social control and on "presentism,"<sup>6</sup> gives a distorted interpretation of rural, British North American, nineteenth-century schooling; that these social historians did not adequately penetrate the complexity of the "black box" of schooling as experienced by students at that time; and that, contrary to the continuity emphases of

Katz and his students, development was discontinuous, retrogressive, and there was a great deal of local input in the construction of BNA schooling.<sup>7</sup>

Some of these criticisms were addressed in Susan Houston and Alison Prentice's Schooling and Scholars in Nineteenth-Century Ontario,<sup>8</sup> which particularly focussed on the internal history of schooling and the character of education prior to Upper Canadian educational reforms of the 1840s. But, as David Hogan concludes in his excellent 1990 review of the book, their descriptive approach was at the expense of "an explicit and formal account of the dynamics of institutional and organizational change. Such an account requires a focus on the nexus of causal relations that link the school on the one hand and the political economy and the social structure on the other. . . . developed into a systematic theory of educational change that links changes in economic life, the process of state formation, and processes of class formation with changes in school organization and control." Nor did the authors develop detailed case studies "that would pin down the particular political context and dynamics of systemization at the local level."<sup>9</sup>

Two subsequent books by Bruce Curtis attempt to address these criticisms, especially by drawing on sociological theory regarding institutional change, by emphasizing cultural power, and by clarifying theoretical concepts and

distinctions.<sup>10</sup> Education, he concludes, was part of a much larger process of state formation throughout the English-speaking world. During the 1840s the "administrative, ideological, and political infrastructures accompanying capitalistic development were elaborated."<sup>11</sup>

Bourgeois values were constructed/defined and widely promoted through a variety of media, but particularly through bureaucratic-centralization processes initiated by school administrators. Male, bourgeois political and social hegemony was achieved primarily by means of the cultural institutions which these professionals constructed. Thus, bureaucratic institutions were not politically neutral, as schoolmen claimed, but were embedded with bourgeois cultural values and power, which became hidden and closed to public debate.

While Curtis answered many of the first objections to current educational historiography raised by Hogan's review article, his evidence could not adequately address the second, that is give a detailed case study which would satisfy the historian's demand for particular political contexts in order to trace the dynamics of systemization at the local level. Curtis, and many other social historians, particularly examine provincial data and give collective biographies of a variety of central-office administrators. They use sociological models to establish possible linkages between state schooling and industrial development.

Concentrating on public records, which began to proliferate during the period of industrialization, like Katz, Curtis stresses urban-bourgeois leadership and concludes that by the 1850s centralized administrators constituted an all-powerful, pervasive "regulatory authority" throughout Canada West. Inspectors became key agents, Curtis asserts, in the structural transformation of schooling and the process of state-formation that public schooling implied. As a result of this "state project" public schools lent "legitimacy to the ultimately illegitimate domination of a class (and, one should add, of a sex and a race as well)".<sup>12</sup> The general trend regarding the history of Pictou Academy tends to support Curtis' over-all interpretation regarding the significant use of state schooling to construct a regulated, modern society. However, in the particular context of Nova Scotia there are problems with his approach. For one, the state-building process and its relationship to provincial dictates is difficult to assess in Pictou because of the lack of quantitative (census) records for many towns in the 1850s and 1860s and the difficulties with similar Scottish family names?<sup>13</sup>

The preceding chapters have implied that with respect to the development of schooling in the Pictou district, structural explanations may account for an opposite point of view. For instance, what were the effects of weakness of central political and economic

structures specifically on one key institutional leader (Pictou Academy) within its developing rural and industrial hinterland?

Chapter One assessed the effects of political conflict on the fortunes of Pictou Academy in the 1820s and 1830s. As a result of more sophisticated political strategies and closer communication with the predominant rural Highland population, the evangelical Kirk (Church of Scotland or C of S) leaders, supported and guided in Scotland by the Glasgow Colonial Society, were able to alter the membership of the trust of Pictou Academy, to change the curriculum in a more practical direction and to have a grammar school introduced to the premises beginning in 1832. These changes were orchestrated by urban authorities in Pictou and in Scotland. They were designed to build rational school structures/disciplinary procedures considered appropriate by bourgeois leaders for the coming industrial era. Economic and structural influences were also important in this political victory of the Kirk forces.

When the Academy was established in 1816 the economy of the Pictou district was still in its timber heyday. Subscribers were largely second-generation families and, on the basis of promised funds from supporters in the district as well as from provincial subscribers (£729 from Halifax alone), the trustees went ahead with the

project. Three years later, however, they had to approach the provincial government for assistance; sixty-three subscribers had not paid their promised £331-0-10.<sup>14</sup> With the cessation of the War of 1812, a down-turn in trade and repeated crop failures, the trustees stated that there was a general shortage of cash in Nova Scotia. This was to be a perennial problem for the next three decades which affected not only the Academy but teachers in general throughout the Pictou district.<sup>15</sup> Before 1825 the Academy charged no fees and there appeared to be no regular minutes or account books. However, regular yearly appeals were made to the legislature for grants to relieve the Academy of debt, which had reached £800 by 1825. The provincial government complied and, although turning down Academy requests for a permanent grant as was given King's College at Windsor, appropriated £1,300 between 1820 and 1823 and gave another £400 in March 1825. As a result of his Scottish appeal in 1826, the Reverend Thomas McCulloch raised a further £584-16-6.<sup>16</sup> In 1827, however, the total receipts of the Academy stood at £5,195 while total expenditures amounted to £5,895, leaving a continuing debt of seven hundred pounds.

The Kirk leaders used this financial weakness of the Academy to their advantage. Drawing on bourgeois, non-sectarian efficiency criteria, they submitted a petition to the legislature accusing the trustees, and

particularly McCulloch, of inefficient management, of allowing the entire direction of the institution to fall into the hands of persons not connected with the established (C of S) church, as they interpreted the Academy's charter, thus giving the institution an "exclusive and sectarian appearance and. . .a tendency to create . . .clerical division and disunion in the Community."<sup>17</sup> By charging fees, by opening the admission to female students and to all classes in society, by cutting off McCulloch's divinity class, and by offering a practical curriculum, similar to that of Scottish academies, Kirk leaders argued, an institution of more value to the public at large would be established. A petition from James Munro to the 1827 Chipman commission, set up by the lieutenant-governor to look into the efficiency of Pictou Academy, claimed that parents had had to hire a qualified teacher in order for their sons to acquire grammar school [bourgeois-industrial] training in "useful Branches of Education. . . writing, arithmetic, book-keeping, geography, practical mathematics, comprehensive trigonometry, land surveying, navigation, guaging [sic] drilling, fortification, drawing."<sup>18</sup> He pleaded for an institution catering to both sexes and providing a liberal education for fifty to one hundred individuals.

As a result of this attack, on 17 July 1828 the board went ahead with the incorporation of Pictou Academy

and passed by-laws which stipulated for the first time the role of trustees, the program of studies and the regulations pertaining to students and to the Academy library. Trustees were to hold annual meetings on the first Wednesday in August "at which the proficiency of the Students shall be ascertained by public examination." A standing committee of three was to be appointed. It was responsible for the buildings and property of the corporation and, when requested by the professors, its members could assist in the governance of students. Regular minutes of transactions and general reports to the governor were to be maintained. There were to be two terms of four months, beginning on the first of October and on the first of April. At entry each student was to be examined and then placed in the class for which he was qualified; individual programs were allowed. (The overall program, however, was modelled on that of the University of Glasgow and emphasized logic, mathematics, moral and natural philosophy, or science, as outlined in Chapter One.) Fees were three pounds per year, half of which was due at the commencement of each term. A register was to be kept of the name, rank, and age of each student as well as the occupation and place of residence of his parents. Professors were empowered to punish delinquent students, who could then appeal to a standing committee of the Board of Trustees. At the conclusion of his studies each student "whose

proficiency and good conduct have merited approbation, shall. . . be entitled to a certificate of his attendance, improvement and character, signed by his Professors, and also, by the President and Vice-President of the Board of Trustees."<sup>19</sup>

While these statutes would appear to have been imposed, and could thus be classified as "rationalized" (legal) forms of government by Curtis, the economic/political history leading up to the enactment of these regulations more properly reflected the power in 1828 of both Secessionist and Kirk bourgeois leaders "to define the moral, the culturally worthy, the proper, and the appropriate in the realms of behaviour and consciousness, and to endow these partial definitions with general prestige."<sup>20</sup> Thus governance in the 1820s and 1830s was still at the non-rationalized (moral/ideological) form of rule. While politically these leaders engaged in vituperative feuding, at the underlying level of cultural assumptions they were agreed on basic principles: order and good government would only arise when the mass of the population behaved in conformity to the laws of the state, and when Pictonians respected their bourgeois leadership and adhered to the dictates of capitalistic development and improved agricultural practices. The Kirk group particularly stressed the necessity of institutional solvency. Like their Scottish established church colleagues, they viewed the state as a

co-partner in citizenship-training, thus they demanded state-sponsored schooling. Both Presbyterian groups, however, repeatedly sent petitions to the legislature to mediate in their political feuds and to cover the perennial indebtedness of the Academy. As R.D. Gidney and Wyn Millar comment about Upper Canadian college and school funding in the 1830s, "in the provision of collegiate and preparatory education, the state was the interloper on ground historically occupied by the churches, and it was the credibility and competence of the state that had yet to be established."<sup>21</sup> Government was not considered necessarily the only or proper agency to formulate educational policy or to administer schools before mid-century either in Canada West or in Nova Scotia.

Partly as a result of the Pictou feuds and the demise of the Academy in the late 1830s,<sup>22</sup> an Academy Act was passed in 1841 which distinguished these institutions from common-grammar schools. Each was provided with £100 grants but the former were given a separate board of appointed trustees. While competition for higher state grants based on number of classical scholars was encouraged, local school leaders had called on centralized authorities to mediate in élite community power struggles which, they claimed, continued to impede the development of county schooling.

In 1837, for instance, a Secessionist graduate of

McCulloch's school, George Christie, applied and was awarded a government bonus for his common-grammar school at Pictou. The next year, however, his application was denied, even though there were only two common-grammar schools in Pictou County and three were allowed. In his petition of June 16, 1838, with thirty-two signatures attached including many names of supporters of McCulloch's former Academy, Christie complained that the three-member board of school commissioners had resolved not to allow any grammar school allowance in the town because of the existence of Pictou Academy.<sup>23</sup> The ex-member of the House of Assembly, George Smith, supported Christie's claim with a letter to the Provincial Secretary, Rupert George, asking the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Colin Campbell, to intervene on Christie's behalf; there were 50 to 60 scholars in the old Grammar School House and Christie "has by far the best School in the Town, and the parents of the children are much attached to Him."<sup>24</sup> In a significant rebuttal, which reflected the emerging "neutral" stance he considered more appropriate for the future development of schooling in the community, an Anglican member of the Pictou Board of School Commissioners explained to George that Christie was caught between two contending parties. The Reverend Charles Elliott continued,

I may tell you that this is the only local department in which the Antiburgher [Secessionist] party are [sic] unable to carry everything before them and I know that they indulge the hope that if Christie's institution has

no other effect, it may succeed in creating some collision between this Governor and the Commissioners which might end perhaps with change of one or more commissioners. With the exception of this school there has been the greatest unanimity between us. . . . In most matters when the interests of the two parties are brought to bear the decision rests with myself, as a casting vote, and I have happily succeeded in obtaining the confidence of both.<sup>25</sup>

Elliott pleaded with the governor not to intervene on Christie's behalf, as any interference would lead to "much mischief" and further petitions. He was supported by letters the following day from the other two commissioners. Religious and sectional rivalry afflicted other Nova Scotian academies in the 1840s. In 1847 there were seven county academies in operation. But only five were listed in 1849 and in 1850 the legislature concluded that only one county academy had maintained a continuous and consistent existence since the inception of the Academy Act of 1841.

What effects, if any, had the continuing feuds of Pictou Academy or the centralizing/normalizing regulations of the school commissioners on the general growth of schooling in the Pictou district? The 1826 Education Act required school commissioners to lay off and subdivide all the inhabited areas of their counties into school districts. A school was required in each section, but only had to remain open for the full year if there were thirty families to support it. More stringent regulations cut back the number of licensed teachers and schools. Seven of the twenty-two licensed teachers in the Pictou district

were graduates or were shortly to graduate from Pictou Academy; their credentials won them access to higher status teaching positions. Michael McCulloch (class of 1817 & 1820), the eldest of McCulloch's five sons, was the master of the Pictou Grammar School until its closure in 1828 when he left to become his father's assistant at the Academy. Out of his Grammar School class of thirty-seven scholars in 1824, eight proceeded on to study the higher branches at Pictou Academy. After the 1841 academy act, classical teachers were preferred for these higher institutions. By this time a number of Pictou Academy graduates had successfully petitioned for a higher allowance as combined common-grammar school teachers. They included Christie in Pictou, Peter McGregor and John Cameron at New Glasgow, and Rodrick Sutherland at Barney's River. Between 1840 and 1851 schools in Pictou County continued to climb from seventy-two to 101. Three were classified as "superior" common schools, meaning that in addition to the common school course, comprising reading, writing, geography, English grammar and composition, English history and arithmetic, they offered classics, algebra and practical mathematics to at least six pupils. Pictou County continued to maintain its record as one of the areas of rapid schooling growth in Nova Scotia but also, by the 1850s, it began to mirror the meritocratic (Scottish) levels of schooling pioneered by McCulloch with similar

effects (see Chapters One and Five).

Academy graduates who became teachers were perceived as promoting hierarchical marks of status. As early as 1829 Robert MacDonald wrote to a friend in New Lairg, Sutherlandshire, that Academy teachers worked for "the richest and ablest of the inhabitants in different parts of the district."<sup>26</sup> And as late as 1852 William McKay, writing from Earltown, in an obvious reference to the élitism of Academy graduates, applauded Superintendent William Dawson's establishment of provincial teachers' associations, which he thought led to a refreshing change from "too-long practised prejudice which characterized the minds of some teachers. . .to seek and exaggerate the ineptitude of one another, and thereby anticipated laurels of pre-eminence and distinction for themselves."<sup>27</sup> But as late as 1855 academic excellence and professional certification was far from standardized. Local school commissioners controlled the certification of teachers for their county, as recounted by Maclean Sinclair from West Settlement, East River. He described his journey to Antigonish to get his teaching license:

Dr. Macdonald was chairman of the School Board. He asked me who I was and where I had gone to school. I told him that I was the grandson of John Maclean, the poet, that I received all the schooling I had in the Beaver Meadow School, from Norman Macdonald and James Nichols and that the people of the Glen in Lochaber wanted me as a teacher. Without asking me any more questions he wrote out a license for me and gave it to me. I thanked him for the license and went away. The Doctor was a good scholar, a thorough Highlander, and a

kind and considerate man.<sup>28</sup>

With the establishment of responsible government in 1848, Reformers looked to British and to North American models for guidance in strengthening the power of the central government to promote free schooling, compulsory assessment and the establishment of normal and model schools. In 1850 William Dawson, a Pictou Academy student in the 1830s, was appointed Nova Scotia's first Superintendent of Schools. During the 1840s, while studying at the University of Edinburgh, Dawson had observed the successful social policies of the Evangelical (Kirk) Party led by Thomas Chalmers. Their social activism was more subtle than McCulloch's paternalistic leadership style and was based, as were the missionary endeavours of the GCS and the Kirk ministers in Nova Scotia, on close attention to the views of constituents. Dawson was careful not to adopt an aggressive or arrogant stance when dealing with the established county school commissioners, who

were men of age, standing, and experience, [and] who. . .without any remuneration, had managed the local educational affairs, and who might be jealous of a new educational authority tending to unsettle their old ways. Thus, I determined to commence my mission modestly. . . .In convening educational meetings, therefore, ground was usually broken by requesting the commissioners of schools in each of the counties to make arrangements for such a meeting, at which it was my function to preside. . . .The meeting was opened with a brief explanation of its objects, and the intention of the [school] law, and discussion was invited as to the special needs of the district. This, almost invariably, brought out statements respecting the defects of

education in the locality, much stronger than any I could have ventured to make, and gave opportunity. . . . to urge improvement, and to explain the facilities offered for it.<sup>29</sup>

From his teachers' associations Dawson also collected information about the ills of the system, which he publicized in his annual reports to the legislature as well as in a Journal of Education, which he distributed among teachers throughout the province. Daniel MacDonald, secretary of the teachers' association at Durham, reported that professional collegiality was enhanced through the regular meeting of eighteen teachers in his district; they had benefitted from the five lectures on proposed school legislation, on practical education, on the office of the teacher, on scientific agriculture, on the study of history and geography, and on the future prospects of Nova Scotia. In his judgment more qualified teachers were awarded increased status by the public and their "elevated position" was of benefit to society because it led to a deeper interest in the cause of education. But major structural reforms were needed to correct faults he found in the current system of schooling. There was a serious shortage of teachers as a result of young men moving to other positions and teaching only during their vacation from the seminaries. One school district had had four different teachers within the space of two years, two others had had three teachers in the same period. The practice of

boarding teachers from house to house produced "more evils than space will permit to enumerate. It prevails in nine of the fifteen districts connected with the [Teachers' Association]." Many districts were backward in furnishing schools with suitable books and maps, thus increasing the labour of the teacher. Finally, MacDonald referred to the perennial "want of punctuality in pecuniary matters [which] is an evil of no ordinary magnitude."<sup>30</sup>

Not only was there a continuing shortage and high turnover of teachers but other counties also noticed the insidious effect of local academies/seminaries on the teachers' market. Even after the passage of the 1841 Academy Act, the legislature had received numerous petitions complaining of undue Presbyterian control of teaching appointments and the allocation of salaries in various counties. Residents of Antigonish, for instance, stated that their well qualified [Roman Catholic] sons were refused positions and

the place filled by strangers brought from Pictou and other places. That the latter were principally young men from Pictou intended for the Presbyterian Church, who merely took the situation for a year or two until the profits of it enabled them to prosecute their studies in some of the colleges. That in this manner the office of Schoolmaster here has been made a convenience for the purpose of forwarding the interests of these young men and of those of the same profession of religion here.<sup>31</sup>

Norms of market competitiveness continued to prevail also at the institutional level. Anticipating provincial legislation regarding normal and model schools,

which would give these institutions much more financial security, Truro's Colchester Academy in its 1848 report to the legislature stressed the usefulness of the Academy for returning teachers who wished to up-grade their qualifications. Its initial 1841 program offered not only the classics, but also practical branches of mathematics, algebra, geography, English grammar and composition. Later, French, natural philosophy and agricultural chemistry were added.<sup>32</sup> The 1850 county academy bill<sup>33</sup> embodied Colchester's program with the addition of history and the requirement that ten scholars had to be studying the higher branches. In 1855 Truro was chosen as the site for the Provincial Normal School and Colchester Academy was converted in 1857 to a Model School, or practice teaching centre for students of the former institution. With 193 students, evenly divided between primary, intermediate and high school divisions, Colchester's financial affairs by 1860 were in a good state; it received £267-17-1 in fees, £200 in provincial grants and £25 from the county, meeting its £490-12-8 expenditures.<sup>34</sup>

By this time, even though its teachers still suffered from insecurity of tenure (see Chapters One and Four), Pictou Academy had achieved special status for its high quality program, was given yearly grants of £250, and was categorized as a special academy, along with other proliferating denominational colleges in the province, such

as Horton (Baptist) and St. Mary's (Roman Catholic) which also were granted £250, Wesleyan Academy at Sackville (£150), and the Methodist Academy in Halifax (£100). As D.C. Harvey observes, the continual insecurity of these colleges led to "the growing habit of denominational rivalry."<sup>35</sup>

But competition with other institutions and constant insecurity spurred Pictou Academy teachers and trustees to renewed lengths in order to maintain academic excellence and to meet the varied needs of the expanding population. Between 1848 and 1863 student numbers at Pictou Academy increased from 95 to 148. Although yearly numbers would decline from 27 to 22 and would fluctuate throughout this period, the introduction of female students was a welcome addition and would influence both curricular and methodological policies (see Chapter Six). The 1832 and 1845 acts continued the Academy's prohibition of religious tests. In 1848 there were 31 students belonging to the C of S, 40 Secessionists belonging to the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia [PCNS], and 14 Free (Presbyterian) Church members attending the Academy. By 1863 these had increased to 44 C of S, 69 United Presbyterians (after the 1860 Union of the PCNS with the Free Church), and 10 members of a new sect, the Evangelical Unionists. A small number of non-Presbyterian students increased between 1848 and 1863; they included Church of England (4 - 16), Roman

Catholic (2 - 4), Baptist (2 - 4), and one Methodist enrolled in 1863.<sup>36</sup> Teachers during this period were also drawn from different denominational groups, although the Board favoured Scottish Presbyterian masters as head teachers.<sup>37</sup>

By 1863 Pictou Academy trustees reported that revenues were \$1,554.90 and expenditures \$1,514.40. Two teachers, John Costley and William Jack, paid \$800 and \$500 respectively for the higher and lower branches, taught a total of twenty-five classes. Numbers of students in each varied widely. William Jack taught the English Department (or lower branches), the curriculum of which included English reading (135 students), grammar (110), composition (110), geography (115), slate arithmetic (124), mental arithmetic (124), book-keeping (33), writing (137) and terrestrial globes (35). Even with the aid of class textbooks, such as the Irish National Readers' Fifth Book, Nelson's 5th and 6th Books, and Scottish texts (Chambers' and Reid's composition and Lennie's grammar), Jack's heavy work-load led to serious illness in 1856 and 1862. His vain pleas for an increase in his salary (£125 in 1862), so that he could keep up with the expenses of his growing family of five sons and a daughter, led to his resignation in 1863. While Costley taught fewer students, he had more classes to teach: Latin (32 students), Greek (10), French (6), mathematics (37), natural philosophy (30), English

composition (30), general history (17), navigation (5), Latin composition (32), and algebra (26). Like Jack, he relied on Scottish texts, such as Chambers' Euclid, trigonometry, algebra and practical mathematics, the Edinburgh Association's Caesar, Virgil, Horace, Livy, Juvenal, Xenophon, Homer and Delectus.<sup>38</sup> The provincial Committee of Education in 1863 compared the number of students at Pictou Academy, implying a market benchmark of success, with those of other similar institutions. Halifax Free Church Academy and the Halifax Grammar School each had three teachers with only 63 and 53 students respectively. Their parents contributed \$680 and \$1,900 in fees. Pictou Academy with two teachers, 142 students and only \$594 contributions in parental fees, was relying too heavily on the provincial grant of \$1,000, the Committee warned for the second year in a row; parents needed to support their institution more adequately.

Analysis of the places of residence of students in 1861 and their length of tenure at Pictou Academy that year reveals that, although the institution was designated as the county academy, at that time it primarily served Pictou Town students (85% versus 12% from Pictou County and 3% from outside the county). New Glasgow's 1862 petition for half the county grant for their new school, which had cost them over £800 to build and which they predicted would attract two to three hundred children, would seem to have

had justification.<sup>39</sup> Pictou Academy trustees, however, claimed that a large number of students over the past few years had attended their institution from different parts of the county. (Comparing the returns of 1851 as against 1861 these numbers had actually declined by 2%, and while more students--7 females and 14 males--attended from Pictou County in 1861, none came from outside of Nova Scotia, as six had in 1851--3 from Maine, 2 from the Magdalene Islands and 1 from St. Croix, West Indies.)<sup>40</sup> Using similar meritocratic justifications as those used by defenders of McCulloch's earlier institution, Daniel Dickson cited six Pictou Academy graduates who were pursuing their studies at the University of Glasgow in Scotland, three of whom took the highest honours at that university in 1861. Nearly all graduates pursuing their studies in British colleges won distinction. Others were completing their studies in the United States and in the Canadas. Raising the old bogey of Pictou feuds, inefficiency and dissolution of the Trust if the provincial grant were halved or withdrawn, Dickson pleaded the special role of Pictou Academy, especially in the higher branch preparation of young men for professional and commercial life.<sup>41</sup>

Analysis of students' duration of stay at the Academy, however, belies Dickson's élitist justifications as well as Curtis' claim that a graded, standardized system of schooling was imposed by centralizing bureaucrats. In

1861 forty-two students (30%) attended Pictou Academy for only 4 - 14 weeks, fifty-three (37%) for 16 - 28 weeks, and forty-eight (34%) for 32 - 44 weeks. Of these students, forty-seven (33%) had attended for only one year, ninety-three (65%) for 2 - 3 years, and only two (1%) for 4 - 6 years. Considering these erratic attendance patterns, it would be difficult to maintain that Pictou Academy's program of studies had a major influence on the career patterns of a majority of its students. The students varied widely in age: forty-seven (33%) were in the 7 -12 age bracket, seventy-one (50%) in the 13 - 16 bracket, twenty (14%) in the 17 - 21 bracket and four (3%) were over 22 years old. Since the founding of the Truro Normal School there was an increase in older students (in the 17 - 21 year-old bracket, a 6% increase over 1851). Market conditions prevailed in schooling at Pictou Academy. If a student were bright and could stand the punishing work-load, there was limited potential for a meritorious few to advance into the professional classes. With the opening of Dalhousie College in 1863 and with increasing numbers of prizes and scholarships available in the 1870s and 1880s, more Pictou Academy talented students would be able to attain professional status.

Meanwhile, the majority of Town students had access to the Academy restricted after 1857 because of admission examinations imposed for Jack's class (limited to 55

students) and by Academy fees (only six free students were allowed per quarter). Students could continue to attend only if their file of papers passed examination at the end of term. Rural students, such as Sinclair at Beaver Meadow School in 1854, first had to wait until they were old enough to walk the distance to their local school, meanwhile learning to become bilingual in English. Sinclair described his home schooling from his mother who "was an excellent reader of Gaelic, and could also read English. The Gaelic books she read on Sabbath day were the Bible, Boston's Fourfold State, Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, Alleine's Alarm, and Doddridge's Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul. She had good strong lungs, and always read aloud, even when alone. Through the influence of my mother's reading and Dr. Blair's preaching it was impossible for me to be anything else than a thorough Calvinist." His home was visited by a Scottish shoemaker, John Campbell, and by a Scottish tailor, John Macdonald, who related "a great many stories. . .about the strong men that where [sic] in Lochaber [N.S.], and also about the doings of some of the ghosts that were there."<sup>42</sup>

Few of these rural students survived the poor quality teachers and "inferior" type of school which Sinclair attended. Norman Macdonald, his first teacher in 1854, taught nineteen boys and eight girls English, writing and arithmetic. Only one of his students (Sinclair?) could

read with ease, 15 could read simple lessons and 11 were unable to read. For his labours Macdonald was paid twelve pounds, half by the parents and half by the province.<sup>43</sup> Fortunately, in the fall another teacher arrived. Sinclair described James Nichols as "a good English scholar, an excellent reader, a first[-]class penman, and a very clever mimic. I went to his school about seven months. I studied geography, bookkeeping, and other things under him. I had then all the education that the Beaver Meadow School could give me."<sup>44</sup> Using the expanding opportunities for teachers in Pictou County, and his newly-acquired teaching license, Sinclair advanced up the student-teacher ladder of opportunity, boarding from house to house, using his \$120 salary to pay the tuition fees and boarding expenses of a term or two at Pictou Academy. By 1856 he was appointed teaching assistant in both departments. His final calling, however, was that of a Presbyterian minister. Like many of his colleagues, both in Nova Scotia and in Scotland, teaching became the chief way for a "lad o' pairts" to enter the professions. As R.D. Anderson observes, "liberal social theory legitimated a competitive, individualist society; if the social hierarchy was open to merit, and genuine talent could always reach the top, then middle-class social domination was felt to rest on ability rather than [on] privilege."<sup>45</sup> He also speculates that because a large number of Scottish leaders came from a wide social range,

the democratic myth of the "lad o' pairts" could be used by educational reformers as a justification for their remodeling of the system along class lines which reinforced structural inequalities; in an industrial age meritocracy was held to be necessary because there was supposedly limited opportunity.

These meritocratic Scottish ideals had been outlined by Pictou Academy bourgeois leaders from its first days in 1816. They and their students, from their Pictou town base, had defined, broadcast, and institutionalized a liberal-capitalistic ethos. As Curtis suggests, the meritocratic schooling which urban western leaders had constructed was a key element in the successful state-building process. At the same time, leadership in Nova Scotia was not necessarily from the provincial administrative centre. Evidence from Pictou's feuds, from discontinuities in the institution's history and from significant changes in the Academy's structure between 1832-45 suggests that school policies were driven primarily by local rather than by central bourgeois authorities. Structural weaknesses by the Halifax-based central government, which at first promoted an English system of schooling, lent support to local initiatives and to a variety of school cultures in Nova Scotia. Using Pictou as a case study, this chapter argues that the process of change towards a more efficient system of education was driven as much by

internal financial weakness and by external competition as by central office (Halifax-based) directives. The demands of parents and the widespread belief in the professional ideal with its promise of improved status and economic security for talented Pictonians influenced the academic as well as the practical elements in the program of studies. Schooling was a form of patrimony parents could give their meritorious youngsters in a rapidly-changing society. By the 1850s these goals over-rode continuing animosities between the feuding Presbyterian groups. Talented individual Pictonians, perceived as the Presbyterian "elect", used the emerging school system and their achieved status of professional excellence, to infiltrate boards of school commissioners, the teaching profession and the Halifax governmental bodies in order to influence the direction of change as they conceived it (see Chapter Five). Dawson and his Free Church successor, the Reverend Alexander Forrester, exploited their Presbyterian allies to launch successful Free School propaganda campaigns, to conduct widely-publicized surveys of school conditions, and to establish key professional agencies (teachers' institutes and associations, Journals of Education, Normal and model schools), which proved to be important precursors to the Free School Acts of 1864-6.

Pictou Presbyterians had a clear understanding of the advantages of professional culture and of the route

to power it offered. This, rather than economic transformations in their district, influenced their school culture. They had contributed in a major way to the construction of a state school system which effectively overcame their marginalized status in Nova Scotia and which, within one generation, had enabled their sons to gain important positions of political and professional leadership in the province. On the other hand, what was the effect of this professionalizing culture on the non-meritorious student? The next chapter will discuss the subtle consequences of professional discipline on the population at large. Before the Free School Acts of 1864-6, however, farming families (comprising 70 percent of Pictou County households) probably treated the advantages which meritocratic schooling would bring to their sons in the same way as they regarded the agricultural improvement theories broadcast by successive Pictou Academy promoters, as essentially irrelevant, costly and impractical.<sup>46</sup>

#### NOTES FOR CHAPTER THREE

1. L.D. McCann, "The Mercantile-Industrial Transition in the Metal Towns of Pictou County, 1857-1931," Acadiensis 10, 2, Spring 1981: 29-64. And see, E.R. Forbes and D.A. Muise (eds.), The Atlantic Provinces in Confederation Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993, Chapters Three and Four. And, John Reid, Six Crucial Decades: Times of Change in the History of the Maritimes Halifax: Nimbus, 1987: 127-157.

2. Rosemary E. Ommer, "Anticipating the Trend: the Pictou Ship Register, 1840-1889," Ibid., 1, Autumn 1980: 88. And see, Phillip A. Buckner and John G. Reid (eds.), The Atlantic Region to Confederation: A History Toronto: University of Toronto Press, and Fredericton:

Acadiensis Press, 1994.

3. Michael B. Katz, The Irony of Early School Reform, Educational Innovation in Mid-Nineteenth Century Massachusetts Boston: Beacon Press, 1968; and see, Ibid., Class, Bureaucracy, and Schools: the Illusion of Educational Change in America New York: Praeger, 1971; Ibid. and Paul Mattingly (eds.), Education and Social Change, Themes from Ontario's Past New York: New York University Press, 1975; and see, Alison L. Prentice and Susan E. Houston (eds.), Family, School and Society in nineteenth-century Canada Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1975; and, Alison Prentice, The School Promoters, Education and Social Class in Mid-Nineteenth Century Upper Canada Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1977.

4. Katz and Mattingly, Education and Social Change: viii.

5. Katz, Class, Bureaucracy and Schools: x-11.

6. Ibid.: xxv: "Some will argue that this book is unduly presentist and that it twists the past in the service of contemporary positions on social issues."

7. See especially, Chad Gaffield, "Children, Schooling, and Family Reproduction in Nineteenth-Century Ontario," Canadian Historical Review 72, 2, June 1991: 157-191; Ibid., Language, Schooling, and Cultural Conflict: The Origins of the French-Language Controversy in Ontario Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1987; R.D. Gidney and W.P.J. Millar, Inventing Secondary Education: The Rise of the High School in Nineteenth-Century Ontario Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990; D.A. Lawr and R.D. Gidney, "Who Ran the Schools? Local Influence on Educational Policy in Nineteenth-Century Ontario," Ontario History 72, 3, September 1980.

8. Susan E. Houston and Alison Prentice, Schooling and Scholars in Nineteenth-Century Ontario Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988.

9. David Hogan, review essay in Historical Studies in Education/Revue d'histoire de l'éducation 2, 2, Fall 1990: 356.

10. Bruce Curtis, Building the Educational State: Canada West 1836-1871 London: Althouse Press, 1988; Ibid., True Government by Choice Men? Inspection, Education, and State Formation in Canada West Toronto: University of

Toronto Press, 1992.

11. Ibid.: 29.

12. Ibid.: 9-10. Citing (p.9) Philip Abrams' Historical Sociology, Curtis affirms that social and historical development are "inevitable processes in which people, formed through social institutions, re-create and modify the very institutions that formed them in the first place. He calls this a process of 'structuring', a dialectic whose terms are human agency and social structure." While Curtis mentions human agency and unintended consequences, there is little weight assigned to these influences and he eschews narrative style, claiming that an analytical mode of discussion is more objective.

13. This problem regarding numbers of Scottish immigrants is discussed in Donald Harmann Akenson, The Irish in Ontario: A Study in Rural History Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1984: 25, footnote #30. Pictou Town census records for 1851 and 1861 have been lost, making linkage of students with their parents' occupation/class impossible.

14. Memorial and Petition of the Trustees Pictou Academy to Lieutenant-Governor George Ramsay, Ninth Earl of Dalhousie, March 1819, Public Archives of Nova Scotia [PANS], MG1, Vol. 554, Item 8. And, List of Subscribers to Pictou Academy who had not paid, 4 March 1819, Ibid., Vol. 550, Item 14.

15. For instance, in 1826 James Waddell, a Pictou Academy graduate, was teaching at West River and was paid half of his promised £50 salary in produce. See, School Return S.S. #45, James Waddell, West River, September 30, 1826, Ibid., RG14, Vol. 49-50, Item 261.

16. List of subscribers [1825-26], Ibid., Vol. 554, Item 24.

17. Copy of petition to the legislature by Kenneth MacKenzie, et al (142 names attached) [July 20, 1826], Ibid., Micro: Places, Pictou Academy, Reel 1.

18. James Munro to Judge J.B. Chipman, Pictou, 20 July 1827, Ibid., MG1, Vol. 553, Item 8. And see, Memorial from Trustees of Pictou Academy to Lieutenant-Governor, Ibid., 22.

19. The Statutes for the Regulation and Government of the Pictou Academy As Sanctioned by His Excellency Sir

James Kempt Pictou: Weir-Durham Press, 1829: 1, 6-7. While no religious tests nor attendance at Sunday service were demanded of students, they were required to conduct themselves in "an orderly and inoffensive manner" and not to profess or propagate "atheistical or deistical opinions, or any principle repugnant to approved loyalty, on pain of expulsion." (6) The laws of morality were to be obeyed and behaviour was to be governed by established social practice.

20. Curtis, True Government by Choice Men?: 175-6. Social hegemony, however, meaning "the 'spontaneous' consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group" (p. 176), could only be observed in limited form in Pictou Town society in the 1830s.

21. Gidney, Inventing Secondary Education: 31.

22. Judge Sawers concluded in his recommendations to the House of Assembly, after his 1834 inquiry into the management of Pictou Academy, that "the Board as it now exists not only exhibits a striking example of the extent to which party spirit may be carried, but also must, by the contentions of its Members, . . . frustrate the design of their Incorporation. . . . Its prosperity can be insured only by relieving it from present embarrassments [debt], placing it under direction which will insure the harmony and co-operation of the Board of Trustees, and granting it such other patronage as similar institutions in other Countries obtain." See, 'Report W.Q. Sawers,' Halifax, March 3, 1834, in "Appendix 34," Journals of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly [JHA] 1937: 112. On February 20, 1838, Joseph Howe and other commissioners selected by the House of Assembly submitted their report on Pictou Academy to the School Committee stating only that there were nine students studying the higher branches (college level) and seventeen in the lower level (grammar school). After salaries and repairs had been paid out of fees and the £400 provincial grant, a deficit of £1015 remained. The commissioners merely reported that feuding between the two Presbyterian groups continued to block the advance of the Academy. See, "Appendix 26, 'Report of the Commissioners'," February 20, 1838: 87-8, in JHA 1838.

23. Petition George Christie, Pictou, June 16, 1838, PANS, RG14, Vol. 49-50, Item 321.

24. George Smith to Rupert D. George, Pictou, June 20, 1838, Ibid., Item 316.

25. Charles Elliott to Rupert D. George, Pictou, July 5, 1838, *Ibid.*, Item 317: 1-2. He believed that if the lower branch appointment at the Academy had been awarded to a Seceder and not to a Kirkman there would have been no second grammar school established in the town.

26. Robert MacDonald, Pictou, July 23, 1829, in "Appendix III," The Fourth Annual Report of the Glasgow Society (in connection with the established Church of Scotland) For Promoting the Religious Interests of the Scottish Settlers in British North America Glasgow: Glasgow Colonial Society, 1830: 32.

27. William J. MacKay to John W. Dawson, Earl Town, December 20, 1852, PANS, RG14, Vol. 49-50, Item 384.

28. Rev. A. Maclean Sinclair, "The Beaver Meadow School," The Eastern Chronicle (New Glasgow, n.d.), extract in *Ibid.*, MG9, Vol. 545, Sinclair Collection, Scrapbook.

29. Sir [John] William Dawson, Fifty Years of Work in Canada Scientific and Educational London: Ballantyne, 1901: 75-6. And see, B. Anne Wood, God, Science and Schooling: John William Dawson's Pictou Years, 1820-1855 Truro: Nova Scotia Teachers College, 1991.

30. Report of Daniel MacDonald, Secretary, Durham Teachers' Association, to the Supt. of Education, PANS, RG14, Vol. 49-50, Item 392.

31. Alex McDougall, et al, Report of the Trustees of Antigonish Academy, Antigonish, January 20, 1843: 2, in *Ibid.*, Vol. 45, Ant. Item 108.

32. Colchester Academy Returns 1841, 1848 and 1850, in *Ibid.*, Vol. 155, Item 1.

33. "An Act for the Encouragement of Education," 13 Victoria, chap. 39, passed March 28, 1850.

34. John B. Calkins, Report on Model Schools, Truro, Year Ending April 30, 1860, PANS, RG14, Vol. 68, 1860. By this date Superintendent Alexander Forrester defined model schools as ideal patterns for all the schools of the province with regard to architecture, furniture, management, discipline, organization and methods of instruction. See, Alexander Forrester, "Report on Education--Appendix 50," JHA 1856: 220. And see, B. Anne Wood and Donald Soucy, "From Old to New Scotland: Nineteenth-Century Links Between Morality and Art Education," in Donald Soucy and Mary Ann Stankiewicz (eds.), Framing the Past: Essays on Art

Education Reston, Virginia: National Art Education Association, 1990: 46-56.

35. D.C. Harvey, "Struggling Towards an Educational System," Journal of Education (Nova Scotia) 6, March 1935: 127. By 1851 Pictou Academy had eliminated its debt, was supported by both the previously feuding Presbyterian groups; the legislature's Committee on Education (on which served Pictou Academy's star graduate, Dawson) stopped demanding denominational guarantees and annually awarded the Pictou Union Academy £250. Ostensibly the Academy was living up to its motto, "Concordia Pictou Academy Salus" (Harmony and Good Health), although in reality see continuing feuds (Chapters One and Two).

36. List of students of different denominations attending Pictou Academy during the term of July to the end of December 1848: PANS, Micro: Places, Pictou Academy, Reel 2; and Return of Pictou Academy from 1st November 1862 to 31st October 1863, Ibid., RG14, Vol. 51 & 52, Item 281.

37. Alexander McPhail, Pictou Academy teacher between 1845-50, was a Quaker; William R. Mulholland, his son, Thomas, and William G.T. Jarvis were Anglicans. Charles Hay and John Costley, both Presbyterians, were masters of the higher branches in 1846-9 and 1855-65 respectively. In 1865 Costley's superior mathematical ability was recognized by the provincial secretary, Charles Tupper, who offered him the vacant post of Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages. His obituary in 1890 noted: "Mr. Costley, owing to his pre-eminent qualifications as a statistician, brought the office to the highest state of perfection, which his annual reports and the methodical manner in which he conducted the affairs of his office, gave the best evidence of." See, "Death of Mr. John Costley," Halifax Herald, July 3, 1890.

38. Return of Pictou Academy, October 3, 1863, PANS, RG14, Vol. 51 & 52, No. 281. Note the discrepancy between the number of classes reported (25) and the number listed (19).

39. Copy of petition George Murray et al to Lieutenant-Governor, New Glasgow, March 1, 1862: 1-2, Ibid., Micro: Places, Pictou Academy, Reel 2. Pictou Academy trustees organized a counter-petition within two weeks, which contained ninety-six signatures.

40. "Names of Pupils who Attended 1st and 2nd Departments, Pictou Academy 1851," Ibid., and "Return of Pupils Who Have Attended Pictou Academy 1st November 1861 -

31 October 1862," Ibid., RG14, Vol. 51 & 52, Item 277.

41. Petition Danl. Dickson et al to Members of General Assembly, Pictou, 4 March 1862: 2-3, Ibid., Item 271.

42. Sinclair, "Beaver Meadow School."

43. Return of Southern District, Pictou County, 1854, PANS, RG14, Vol. 49-50, Item 409.

44. Sinclair, "Beaver Meadow School." Sinclair was more fortunate than many children in North Pictou County; it was estimated in 1859 that 1,314 children were not in school because of the voluntary or subscription method of funding and that ten districts were without schools. See, Return of Schools Taught in North Pictou, October 31, 1859, Ibid., Item 417. There were great inequities in the disbursement of provincial funds. The two Pictou Boards of School Commissioners sent a memorial to the House of Representatives in 1860 convincingly arguing that a great injustice had been done to Pictou County schools. Whereas Guysboro County, with only 34 schools in 1857, had been granted an average of £12-9 per teacher and 4s 11d per child taught, Pictou with 113 schools had been granted only £9-18-9 per teacher and 2s 8d per child taught. Owing to the rapid increase of children and schools in Pictou County, teachers and students were being heavily penalized and the cause of education was severely jeopardized, argued the school commissioners. See, Memorial of the Boards of School Commissioners for the Southern and Northern Districts of the County of Pictou, March 10, 1860, Ibid., Item 418.

45. Robert Anderson, Education and Opportunity in Victorian Scotland Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983: 15.

46. Pictou Academy promoters had been at the forefront of the agricultural improvement movement. As Graeme Wynn notes in his case study of Pictou County's agricultural reform movement, the founders of agricultural societies in 1817 at West River and 1822 at East River were more gentlemen farmers. Their successors, many of whom had been Pictou Academy students continued to promote a professional form of farming; they reserved for agricultural society members access to cheap seeds, implements and breeding stock. Between 1837 and 1846 only 23 people garnered 80% of the 232 premiums offered by the Pictou Agricultural Society. See, Graeme Wynn, "Exciting a Spirit of Emulation Among the 'Plodholes': Agricultural Reform in Pre-Confederation Nova Scotia," Acadiensis 20, 1, Autumn 1990: 5-51.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### HISTOLOGY OF PICTOU'S "DISCIPLINARY" VIRUS

Looking back fifteen years to his school experiences at Pictou Academy in the 1880s, Fred Yorston, President of the Montreal Standard, wrote an account which was memorable in its description of the "disciplinary" disease afflicting the institution. He noted its regulatory symptoms, its field of operation and its widespread control over students' lives. He began with the gong outside the principal's office which "regulated the movements of everyone. . . . 'Little Goosey,' [L.G. was the nickname given Principal A.H. MacKay] would stalk doorward very solemnly and ring it himself." Occasionally, though, someone would sneak out of class and peal it ten or fifteen minutes before the end of class. "The L.G. would rush about in the midst of the confusion, vainly trying to catch the offender. I may state that upon these occasions the gong was usually rung from the cellar stairs. The risk, however, was considered very great."<sup>1</sup>

The layout of the classroom and MacKay's manner of teaching continued this regime of authoritarian order with its underground sedition. The principal's book-covered desk on a raised platform in the corner was the most prominent article of furniture. From it MacKay dispensed chalk and bundles of crayons to be distributed throughout the school, thereby emphasizing his control of supplies

and authority over the staff. The drawers were stuffed with mutilated exam papers, damaged scientific apparatus (a broken air pump), and a few choice bottled snakes and preserved lizards, "which juniors were encouraged to regard with becoming awe." Older students, in an effort to dispel the orderly design these specimens were supposed to illustrate, occasionally removed tadpoles from the experimental tank in another corner of the room and replaced them with a large frog, soon discovered by a wondering circle of students. Amazed, MacKay kept murmuring to himself, "'most wonderful development!'"

Murmuring, albeit in mocking tones, characterized the defense mechanism of students, who were subjected on a daily basis to MacKay's manipulative classroom teaching practices. The blackboard was his preferred instrument of torture. Pupils would be called up to the board to work out an algebra problem. MacKay would "swoop down" on an offender who could not accomplish the task, would "circle round and round his victim, making sarcastic remarks the while, which were hugely enjoyed and rapturously applauded by those who had in the meantime safely gained their seats. After hopelessly confusing the helpless Algebraist, taking him by the ear, the instructor would lead him to his seat with the softly murmured accompaniment of 'Oh you little Goosey.'"

The power-play, needless to say, was not on

equal terms. MacKay's private room, like the psychiatrist's office, Yorston described as comfortably furnished and suitably appointed with a well-filled cabinet of curios. But, like the Inquisitor's confessional,<sup>2</sup> it exuded a subtle threatening aura preventing students from being completely at ease. "Here many tangled plots were unravelled, guilty parties ferreted out, and culprits summoned to receive sentence." A nearby gentleman's cloakroom often hid "large bands of truants [who were] frequently caught in this cloakroom. There was no escape from it when the ex-Principal [sic] had once left his room on a voyage of discovery." Upstairs, in the large canvas backdrop of Convocation Hall's stage, "The Bridge of Sighs" provided another hiding place for truants where "'Little Goosey,' on his occasional tours of inspection always stopped. . .to listen [for] the anxious wheezing of culprits [which] frequently lead to their discovery." A large wooden door led from the Hall to the tower by means of a spiral staircase. The small cabin at the top was covered with a multitude of carved initials. Legend had it that L.G. chased one miscreant from this tower. In escaping his foot broke through the ceiling of the Hall. L.G. stabbed at it with one of the School's Fiji Island battle axes!

A striking aspect of Yorston's anecdote was the degree to which the disciplinary disease had invaded, what

Michel Foucault terms, the "carceral body"<sup>3</sup> of the school. A variety of disciplinary techniques were in place by the 1880s in Pictou which was designed to produce docile and capable bodies; these expert procedures operated first on the soul/mind of each individual student who was diagnosed, categorized, and objectified by means of an array of humiliating forms of punishment, and finally was rewarded/-condemned by a ceremonial ritual which legitimized these "scientific" disciplinary practices. The "disciplines," according to Foucault, were methods "which made possible the meticulous control of the operations of the body, which assured the constant subjection of its forces and imposed upon them a relation of docility-utility."<sup>4</sup>

How was this disciplinary virus introduced to Pictou? What were its early symptoms? Were attempts made to alter its course? Why were they largely ineffective? This chapter will examine the above questions using histological procedures, namely taking slices of school "tissue", examining them under a "microscope" and reporting them through detailed analyses, in an effort to uncover the course of the "disciplinary" disease as it spread through school culture over a sixty-year period.

Like many diseases, this "disciplinary" virus arrived by ship. Commercial and Presbyterian leaders in Pictou spotted the pair of globes, terrestrial and celestial, that the Reverend Thomas McCulloch carried with

him during his stop-over at Pictou en route to his first mission on Prince Edward Island in 1803. They persuaded him not to proceed because of the winter ice build-up. The next year McCulloch was called to Harbour Church. The meagre stipend (£150), which was paid irregularly, forced him to serve as medical doctor and then as school teacher to supplement his income. McCulloch's grammar school, which shortly attracted students from all over the western margins of the Atlantic "lake," unfortunately was burned to the ground in January 1815. William, McCulloch's eldest son, believed this act to be "unquestionably the work of an incendiary. Party spirit, taken in connection with strictness of discipline in the Church, aroused the opposition of some of the very men whose sons were benefiting by its training."<sup>5</sup> Was this act merely motivated by political pique?

Six years earlier McCulloch had been forced to attest to his loyalty to the Sovereign's representative in the Province, Lieutenant-Governor Sir George Prevost, because several "'new inhabitants,'" as McCulloch termed them in his address, had charged him with disloyalty. In his defence McCulloch accused them as being "'no friend of religion or good order'" and as having resorted to malicious personal attacks on him to injure his reputation and character. He categorized them as "'men whom no clergymen could class among his [sic] friends or acquaintances

without lessening himself in the esteem of every person valuing purity of religious character.'" While McCulloch acknowledged that his Presbyterianism was of a dissenting sect, the Secessionist Antiburghers, he cited the "'right of private judgment'" as a "'law of nature, and secured to every British subject.'"<sup>6</sup> With these words McCulloch was able to justify his new form of authority, an authority based not just on his religious role and on his Dissenter's rights, but on a more abstract "normalizing" concept of natural law and on a Calvinistic sense of orderly government, which he was defining. The Lieutenant-Governor sanctioned the introduction of McCulloch's new disciplinary regime by appointing him a justice of the peace for the district of Pictou. Discontent with McCulloch's rational leadership and the power of his discourse to quell his enemies,<sup>7</sup> however, continued to fester in the souls of Pictou's malcontents and members of the Church of Scotland in Halifax. As mentioned in earlier chapters, they attempted to block the first efforts of McCulloch and his Secessionist colleagues in 1806 to erect a college which would challenge the monopoly (since 1802) of King's College at Windsor on higher education. By means of its exclusivist clauses, which forced all candidates for its degree to swear to the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England, Anglicans controlled access to college education in the province. By 1816, however, McCulloch had won support for

the construction and operation of Pictou Academy.

In May 1818 the second symptom of McCulloch's "disciplinary" virus had appeared: the wooden frame of the Academy was rafted from Middle River across Pictou Harbour. The two-storied handsome building with its prominent bell tower was in operation by November of that year. Its interior design and equipment embodied concepts of the new scientific "order" and efficient pedagogical techniques, which McCulloch's enemies recognized as threatening to their traditional powers based on kinship, on religious ties of communitarian loyalty and on relationships of political patronage. The extensive library which became filled with a variety of works from the Scottish Enlightenment and the scientific laboratory and museum with its "inventory" collection of birds, insects and plants of the New World, were signs of the arrival of a new scientific age. These signs were epitomized in McCulloch's rational style of teaching, described by George Reny Young in the following terms:

The lectures which I have heard Dr. McCulloch deliver this week in the Natural & Moral Philosophy classes have tended to produce in my mind a very high opinion of his abilities. Notwithstanding all his peculiarities of character. . . he is really a man of profound & accurate knowledge. His lectures are to me a treat. They are delivered in plain almost homely language but at the same time display an intimate acquaintance with his subjects. He takes a clear view of everything--sees the very bottom of his question & illustrates it so fully that if a due attention be paid it is impossible that you can leave the room without understanding clearly his elucidation. His examples are all taken from nature--they are strong but I must confess they

sometimes appear coarse. He either despises the imagination or . . . .If he has one it is a jaded old, ploughhorse--not a fiery & foaming steed.

Young went on to describe the new order of forms introduced in 1821 to McCulloch's class "which tends to preserve the dignity of the Professor. He sits in an elevated seat above the class & wears now a black silk gown similar to those in which our attorneys appear at the bar. It has really a very imposing & respectable appearance."<sup>8</sup> He confessed to his brother, William, that he and the other students feared McCulloch, especially the rigorous scrutiny which he gave to their weekly papers. He felt that McCulloch's distance from his students and attempts to keep up his dignity was one of his major faults.

These signs represented a more subtle form of power over students. The school bell rang out the regular routine/habits of behaviour being instilled; clock-time trained students for the coming industrial era and the discipline involved with their intended professional lives.<sup>9</sup> Their book-learning and program of studies, modelled on the program of the University of Glasgow, disciplined students into rational/competitive patterns of thinking and of discourse, contrasting sharply with the alcoholic behaviour and superstitious beliefs of many town and rural Highland dwellers in the district of Pictou at that time.<sup>10</sup>

McCulloch's influence was not just within the

Academy. His disciplinary techniques extended to the newly formed Synod of the (Secessionist) Presbyterian Church in 1817. One of its first acts was to appoint a "Ways and Means" committee to promote the professionalization of the ministry. It recommended much more stringent tests for those Presbyterians wishing to have communion. Another committee, co-chaired by McCulloch, asked the Synod to appoint a Committee on Statistics, to which annual returns would be forwarded by each minister. Needless to say, strong objection to the "inquisitorial" character of this committee led to its closure. Although McCulloch won the support of Synod for a divinity class to be established at Pictou Academy in 1820 and for increased Presbyterian support for his institution, he continued to antagonize members of the community. McCulloch's 1822 sermon, delivered when he left his post as Moderator of Synod, created a sensation because he heavily criticized ministers who engaged extensively in farming. Shortly afterward, McCulloch was forced to resign his own ministry at Harbour Church in an effort to save his Academy from the venom of his critics. But, his pen and his discourse continued to spread the virus.

In 1818 McCulloch wrote a series of letters, under the pseudonym of "Investigator," which criticized the Nova Scotia Council and its abuses of public office. Three years later a series of letters parodying the mores

of Nova Scotians began to appear in the Acadian Recorder of Halifax. Through the portrait of the industrious Mephibosheth Stepsure McCulloch's discourse sharply polarized the traditional domestic, rural and religious values of his "ordered" vision of society with the materialistic, ignorant and irrational behaviour of Nova Scotia's adolescents, on whom he cast most of his "clinical gaze".<sup>11</sup> Hob Gosling, a "cute" young man, aped the genteel respectability of his father by riding races, playing cards or drinking a glass of grog at Mr. Tipple's in order to receive credit from his neighbours for his hard day's labour. His sisters were taught to paint flowers and to play upon the pianoforte, but the meat at the Goslings was always ill-cooked and the puddings and the pies "mere dough."<sup>12</sup> The children of Mr. Soakem, left to manage both the farm and their father's tavern while he maintained his reputation by stopping at every tavern on the road, soon began to imitate their father. They gave up farm drudgery and were "always strolling about" visiting their friends. Mr. Soakem's boys eventually became "lazy, drunken vagabonds. His daughters, too, who are really fine[-]looking girls, have become pert, idle hussies, without industry and economy."<sup>13</sup>

While McCulloch's scalpel was able to dissect Nova Scotian mores by means of a binary division between his disciplined order and their uninhibited materialism, his

power was still limited and only exerted at the level of representational signs, such as in Pictou Academy's school architecture, rhetorical imagery, the regulated deployment of students' bodies in a liberal-scientific program of studies, and in the establishment of a library and a literary-debating society in the town.<sup>14</sup> The continual feuding in the community indicated that the power struggle for the spoils of hegemonic control was not over.

McCulloch himself became the subject of another form of societal discipline, branding by his enemies. Their attack on his character became so effective that while he was in Scotland in 1825 to raise money for the Academy McCulloch suffered a nervous breakdown. The scarlet gowns worn by Pictou Academy students, in imitation of the University of Glasgow, earned them the epithet of "clowns" by a number of townspeople, several of whom also showed their contempt of the Academy by dumping garbage on the fenced-off Green.<sup>15</sup> In McCulloch's absence a town meeting was called, petitions were sent to the Council and, for the first time, provincial grants to the Academy were cut off. Recent graduates of McCulloch's divinity class, who were seeking a call from Nova Scotian communities, were also branded as "so unqualified for their office, that the Secession Church in Scotland would not admit them to their pulpits."<sup>16</sup> Even "The Club," a group of Halifax wits gathered by Joseph Howe, produced a parody of McCulloch which was published in

Howe's newspaper, The Novascotian. If the Council had its way, an awful fate awaited the Pictou institution: "the Academy will first be stormed and demolished, and the bottles o' lightnin' and the jars o' fermentation, and a' the apparatus for the black art, broken, and in the vera place whar the Doctor's butterflys are noo pinn'd against the wa', his sons and doghters will be stickit wi' bayonets and ither things."<sup>17</sup> Previous Baptist support of the Academy began to wane; Horton Academy was established in Wolfville in 1828 because many Baptist leaders were convinced that Pictou Academy would continue to be the focus of power struggles.

Despite these periods of respite the disciplinary disease had definitely entered the body politic of Pictou by 1830. As mentioned earlier, its symptoms could be found in material forms--Pictou Academy and its bell tower, library, special science laboratory, natural science collection, enclosed Green and red-gowned students; in social forms--Presbyterian Synod, agricultural improvement and debating societies established by Pictou Academy supporters; in the voluminous written discourse and rhetoric of McCulloch and his protagonists, both of whom employed rational argument, rebuttal, irony, parody, and especially forms of binary opposition to advance their claims to authority. The new and lethal operating techniques of these bourgeois "doctors", whose professional

expertise was now widely acknowledged, became a permanent written corpus of knowledge and a regulatory "norm" of societal relations. Both McCulloch and MacKenzie had gained power by constructing a disciplinary methodology or archive, which their successors would utilize very effectively. In the process, the disciplinary virus mutated. What had begun as signs, or representational models of a new order, became a power organism, utilized especially by means of repeated exercises of examination.<sup>18</sup>

Teachers, for instance, now were extensively examined not only for their academic knowledge, but for their moral conduct. In 1846 Basil Bell failed to turn up for his first appointment with the Academy's secretary, Dr. James Anderson, and was seen in a state of intoxication. As a result, the Pictou Academy trustees made sure that his contract had an added clause "that in the event of Mr. Bell's being guilty of misconduct, or of his ceasing to give satisfaction that the Trustees reserve to themselves the right of terminating the contract at anytime by paying the amount of salary due."<sup>19</sup> His salary was £50 lower than that of the senior Scottish master, Charles Hay, who initially agreed to have a lower salary of £175 on condition that the Board pay the second teacher an equal salary. By means of these character clauses and differentiated salary structures, then, the Board built up a hierarchical and unequal power relationship between

teachers and retained good control of the terms of employment. The ensuing tension between teachers and trustees was exploited by the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia [PCNS], which painted Bell as a weak member of the new Union Academy; his Conservative sympathies placed him also on the opposite side of a very polarized political spectrum. This 1845 Academy was established as a higher grammar school replacement of the previous Secessionist-dominated college. The PCNS Synod, determined to restore McCulloch's old college program, announced in 1848 that it planned to establish a philosophical seminary preliminary to its existing theological school, in effect competing with the new program at Pictou Academy. James Ross, newly appointed Professor of Biblical Literature and soon to be named Principal of the West River Seminary, used the semi-annual public examination as an excuse to embarrass the Academy. Ross had been invited by Anderson to examine Bell's logic class, but declined and instead visited Hay's class. Within a few hours Ross was asked by J.D.B. Fraser, in whose apothecary shop he had stopped to visit, what he thought of the logic class. Fraser was surprised to hear Ross reply that he regretted that he had not been invited to examine Bell's class. This duplicity launched the renewal of Pictou's hegemonic feuds as the two institutions battled for monopoly of higher education in north-eastern Nova Scotia. By 1848 the West River Seminary had appointed

a professor in philosophy and the Board stipulated that his main emphasis was to be on the logic class.

In response to these threats the Pictou Academy Board subjected its three teachers and ninety-five students to a gruelling seven-hour examination at the end of June to which the public was invited. A prize-giving ceremony culminated the ritual.<sup>20</sup> Bell's logic class and the performance of these students was judged to be "a complete failure," by Secessionist supporters of West River, who didn't hesitate to broadcast their views widely.<sup>21</sup> Bell objected strongly to the implication that he had refused to teach the logic and philosophy classes because he had not received an increase in salary and he threatened to resign unless these false reports were countered by the Board. Anderson attempted to refute Ross' innuendoes and ended up in a threatened lawsuit against him. Hay, meanwhile, had died in 1849 and Bell was forced to teach most of his classes, but not with any increase in salary. A letter he wrote in support of William Jack's brother, who was applying for a teaching position in New Glasgow, was falsely rumoured to be an attempt by Bell to move. Again Bell appealed to the Board to refute these charges, which he considered materially affected his character. On October second Bell threatened again to resign unless he received an increase of £12-10, which would permit him to take a holiday in Scotland to recover his health. But the

Board still refused to put his salary even on the same footing as the junior teacher, Jack, who had his salary guaranteed yearly. In January, ill and fatigued, Bell left the Academy. He was bitter that the Board still withheld his bonus, despite the long extra hours he had devoted to Hay's classes. After a protracted fight with Ross (outlined in Chapter Two), which he felt he had won because of his detailed evidence on behalf of Pictou Academy, Anderson resigned as secretary and moved to Canada in 1855.

Aside from these signs of more rigorous moral judgments being cast on teachers and on board members (particularly if non-Presbyterian; Anderson was an Anglican), the exacting schedule demanded of teachers and students after the Union Academy Act of 1845 signified a more powerful control over their lives. Alexander McPhail (who was succeeded by Jack) taught the first or lower department from 9:00 until noon (including Saturdays), and from 2:00 until 4:00 on all week days. His course load included English reading and spelling; grammar and composition; writing; arithmetic; book-keeping; practical mathematics, which included navigation and land surveying; and geography "by the use of the globes." By the end of 1848 sixty-four students had graduated from his class. Aside from his salary he was allowed to keep the students' fees of eight shillings per quarter, which under the more efficient Union Academy management were collected regularly

and which were meticulously recorded. Bell's second department, which matriculated thirty students in 1848, included instruction in Latin, Greek and French; logic; rhetoric; moral philosophy; and "Universal History."<sup>22</sup> He taught his language classes every day from 9:00 until noon, and other subjects (geography, history, English grammar and French dictation) from 3:00 until 4:00. Hay lectured in higher and practical mathematics from 9:00 until 11:00, in philosophy between 2:00 and 3:00, and in geometry between 3:00 and 4:00. Twenty-six matriculated from this highest department, out of a total of 110 students. As well, Hay allowed the public to attend some of his lectures; twenty young men came to his evening philosophy class. By 1863 three teachers taught a total of 25 classes and, needless to say, began heavily to depend on class textbooks, mainly from Scotland.

A new disciplinary regime was now in effect. It was marked by rigorous examination, constant surveillance by teachers, detailed program outlines, standardized textbooks and regular collection of fees and subscriptions (£75 required of the two Presbyterian groups). The Academy's increased fiscal responsibility and its annual report to the provincial government led to regular annual provincial grants, which placed the Union Academy on a much more secure financial basis than its predecessor. But it also marked the spreading of the disciplinary virus and the

normalizing web of power relations that would infect state schooling from that time on. The detailed, regulatory/-moral norms, constructed primarily now by centralized bureaucrats, would establish power firmly in the hands of school administrators. Through the timetable, grading system, and program of studies, the administrator was given instruments of power that more effectively controlled the quality of time used by students and their individual progress through the system. Students, now treated like inmates or patients, became objectified in this efficiently run institution. As Foucault observes, through these administrative procedures, "Time penetrates the body and with it all the meticulous controls of power."<sup>23</sup> By means of these detailed measures of control, disciplinary time was imposed on pedagogical practice,

specializing the time of training and detaching it from the adult time, from the time of mastery; arranging different stages, separated from one another by graded examinations, drawing up programmes, each of which must take place during a particular stage and which involves exercises of increasing difficulty; qualifying individuals according to the way in which they progress through these series.<sup>24</sup>

As demonstrated by the Board's treatment of Bell, with this detailed control and regular intervention by means of semi-annual examinations not only teachers could be disciplined/punished/corrected, but students could now be characterized by their level in the series they were moving through. "Power is articulated directly onto time; it assures its control and guarantees its use."<sup>25</sup>

Another administrative-pedagogical technique that marked a school's excellence at this time was the extent to which it used modern equipment. Jack's class exhibited numerous maps from his geography class in 1850. That year the trustees bought diagrams, blackwalls, an arithmeticon, a theodolite sextant, globes and more apparatus and instruments for the natural philosophy class. In the 1851 exhibition the students mounted a display of their pen drawings as well as samples of Pitman's phonetic shorthand. These developments paralleled new child-centred methods of pedagogy, which were beginning to be modelled by the provincial normal and model schools, opened at Truro in 1855. An infant school, operating in Pictou in 1862, was described by W.N. Rudolf in the following terms:

It was in interesting sight to see, and hear, the children going through their lessons with so much evident pleasure to themselves--These schools are very different from those I went to when a boy--The system of the Model Schools has often been styled jokingly "learning made easy," and really one must feel that there is some truth in the remark--for the instruction is communicated in so easy, and pleasant a manner to the children, that they never seem to weary, or find learning a lesson a task.<sup>26</sup>

This new form of discipline, termed "affective individualism" in a seminal paper by David Hogan, on the surface appeared to be an antidote to the "mental" discipline cultivated at the academies. Hogan argues, however, that both modes of discipline

defined the objectives of education in a disciplinary manner as the promotion of individual usefulness and morality or, more precisely. . . as the multiplication of

powers, the production of utility, and the promotion of virtue. But the two pedagogies also pursued very different disciplinary strategies. . . .The New England pedagogy [for instance, of Pictou's Infant School] organized the classroom around the principles of what I will call 'affective individualism': the engagement of children's interest, the intensification of pleasure, the development of loving and affectionate relationships between teachers and students (affectionate authority), and the internalization of authority.<sup>27</sup>

Hogan argues, nevertheless, that market forces largely determined both forms of discipline. Both pedagogies justified their disciplinary strategies by citing the purpose of education as being the cultivation of individual usefulness and virtue, necessary in a bourgeois market economy. Both were derived from a common cultural configuration,

disciplinary individualism--and their dialectical relationship to the market revolution as a whole. . . .During the nineteenth century, the cult of domesticity and the idea of the home as a "haven in a heartless world" were as responsible for the embourgeoisement of American society as was the expansion of market relations. On the other hand, the New England pedagogues repudiated the market revolution in the form of possessive individualism even as they endorsed it in the form of affective individualism; the Boston grammar school masters endorsed possessive individualism even as they repudiated affective individualism.<sup>28</sup>

While evidence could be cited regarding the rapid industrialization of the district of Pictou during this period, 1849-1867, especially because of the development of coal, iron and railways in the New Glasgow area,<sup>29</sup> its necessary impact on school disciplinary practices is not completely self-evident. Counter-evidence in this chapter suggests that the disciplinary practices within Pictou

Academy itself were introduced much earlier and that the later "affective" practices were due to the actions of several female students.

In 1851 Catherine Dawson [later Rudolf's wife] registered a strong rebellion to the competitive, prize-winning culture being promoted in the new Union Academy by refusing to accept any of the prizes she had won.<sup>30</sup> Only four female students were in attendance at the Academy in 1853 and the trustees were worried. Several accomplished female teachers had attracted them to their institutions, which the trustees assumed catered to parental expectations for their daughters; it meant a serious fall-off in Academy fees. As a result, in 1854 the trustees allowed a private "Female Department" to be conducted in the Academy. Twenty-one females were listed, varying in age from nine to nineteen years. In contrast to earlier female students who, since the opening of the Union Academy when they were first admitted, had won prizes in everything from grammar to history and geography, the students of this private school were restricted to subjects emphasizing the social graces--English, French, printing and ornamental needlework.<sup>31</sup> This brief deviation of females from the individualistic programs of other Academy students and the prize-giving incentives were abandoned, however, in 1855 with the appointment of a Scottish (C of S Presbyterian) mathematician, John Costley, who remained in charge of the

third and second departments for the next ten years. The female students returned to the regular program of the Academy, the majority, like their male counterparts, attending for sporadic periods of time. Costley's policy of equal treatment and high academic standards corrected the earlier female trend and attracted a large number of students from all over Nova Scotia; between 1851 and 1861 attendance numbers (20 versus 36) of females at the Academy increased by 56% (however, ratios versus males changed only by 2%). The "mental discipline" virus continued to dominate the institution; affective discipline was confined to the home and to lower levels of schooling, which were becoming increasingly dominated by Normal-trained teachers and by females.

With the introduction of compulsory assessment and free schooling in 1864-6 in Nova Scotia, a more intrusive provincial strain of the virus began to affect the control of school policies, and therefore the implementation of disciplinary practices. In order to receive the provincial grant each year trustees were required to justify their school policies according to central office regulations. They were asked to introduce more practical subjects, such as agricultural chemistry and practical mathematics, instead of classics and logic. Teachers, particularly of the lower branches, were now judged on their teaching methods, use of instructional apparatus and disciplinary

procedures, instead of being judged on their scholarship. Students began to be assessed, not on their individual understanding of the subject, but on their ability to pass matriculation examinations, to win prizes and to gain entrance to Dalhousie College. As mentioned in Chapter Two, under the initiative of MacKay, who became Principal of Pictou Academy in 1873, Pictou schooling became the model for the whole province in its "organic" bureaucratic re-organization: MacKay headed the hierarchical system in Pictou Town, inspected all the teachers, drew up all the programs for the common schools as well as for the Academy, established an admission examination for the latter, and combined all trustees into one Board of Management.<sup>32</sup> In return for their loss of control trustees were assured of future financial security for the Academy (\$1,000/year) and of a more professional teaching staff--after 1866 all Academy teachers were required to have a first-class teaching license and in 1867 a central examining board removed power for their certification from local boards.

In 1874 a significant change in the provincial grant to teachers occurred which was to begin a gradual erosion of Pictou's meritocratic form of "mental" discipline. Instead of being based on the grade of license held by teachers, now the grant was to be based also on the number of days all pupils in the county attended school. The change engendered increased uncertainty among teachers and

their more rapid turn-over; the previously privileged status of male teachers, based on gender and on their meritocratic credentials, was now eroded by the democratic norms of equity and of attendance patterns of students. The next year school registers were introduced, which recorded students' attendance and which were used to compare the attendance patterns of schools, marking another hidden form of power of school administrators. Grading of common schools was introduced shortly afterward (in 1877 for the Town of Pictou). Streaming of Academy students into two areas of specialty, mathematics and science, and English and classics, was an administrative procedure which also increased the power of administrators who could now channel students into their most productive slots, thereby further differentiating them and defining their functions. This normalizing web of power relations controlled by school administrators and by central authorities, while imposing homogeneity and greater efficiency on the whole school system, hid its underlying coercive intent. This was revealed by another female graduate in 1882 at Pictou Academy.

When Roderick MacKay resigned as an Academy teacher in that year Maggie McKenzie, the first woman in the province to win a Grade A (academic) teacher's license, applied for his position and offered her services for less than MacKay's original salary. The Town Council, eager to

save tax dollars, approved her appointment. To its consternation, however, it discovered that Hector McInnes (Pictou Academy's 1878 Gold Medallist, who was teaching the highest common school class in town) had resigned and had also applied for the position. A newspaper debate ensued as to whether women were as capable as men in enforcing classroom discipline.<sup>33</sup> Principal A.H. MacKay chose an administrative solution for the problem. First he attempted to establish a separate Pictou Ladies' College, whose curriculum of English literature, modern languages, natural science, music, and fine and useful arts would emulate that of the successful Wesleyan institution, Mount Allison Ladies' Academy.<sup>34</sup> Although a prospectus was issued for a \$40,000 capital campaign with shares to be listed at ten dollars each, the heavy mortgage incurred two years earlier by the town for the erection of a magnificent new Pictou Academy building probably led to the collapse of the proposal. The attempt by MacKay and his fellow Presbyterians to stream off female students into a more refined institution emphasizing an "accomplishment" curriculum was significant. In 1888 an affiliated program for non-academic (largely female) students was established at Pictou Academy. Six years earlier, though, Miss M.J. McKenzie was hired to begin this process of segregation; she was listed as a teacher of Fine Arts and her Grade A certificate was highlighted, giving the program

added status. The next year, on the resignation of another teacher, Hector McInnes was hired to teach mathematics and physics. The school was now differentiating students by means of academic versus non-academic programs, as well as by specialty of academic program.

The "tissues" of Pictou Academy reveal a number of significant conclusions in this "histological" analysis of the disciplinary disease. Two major stages marked its introduction into the community. In the classical "representational" phase under McCulloch's leadership, its procedures were limited to a variety of signs and types of discourse, which established new norms of order, rationality, schooling and discipline in binary opposition to existing community modes of behaviour, which McCulloch characterized as disorderly, enthusiastic, ignorant and lazy/materialistic. McCulloch's power primarily was embedded in his discourse; it legitimized these binary oppositions. His activities proliferated the signs of the disease throughout the environment; schools, specialized rooms, library books, museum collections, bells, gowns and robes symbolized the spreading influence of work-time, timetables, schedules, hierarchical authority, ranking, examinations and moral and fiscal accountability that increasingly governed the "lived experience" of Pictonians. But McCulloch's power was not complete; as a figurehead he could be knocked down.

In the more insidious second stage of the disciplinary disease a bureaucratic system replaced the figurehead; a professional corps of administrators could distribute their power/expert knowledge over a much broader field. Students, teachers and even families came under the moral-regulatory gaze of the bureaucratic examiner; their quality of performance, their regular attendance, their acquiescent/moral behaviour, all were judged and individually described. Despite efforts by evangelical clergy, female and several obstreperous male students, teachers and parents to alter the course of the disease into more humane modes, they could not prevail against a system whose hidden normalizing web of relations had spread so widely throughout the community. As Foucault observes,<sup>35</sup> the disciplinary process was incremental, its effects were not thoroughly understood by leaders who promoted it and its power and hidden nature were often masked by myths of progress and accomplishment.

The magnificent, three-storied Academy building had its cornerstone laid before a large audience of over one thousand people in 1881. Its position on top of the hill epitomized the triumph of the disciplinary gaze over the community. When completed the new Academy revealed the latest trends in modern architecture; it had hot water heating and a ventilation system, interior lighting and a series of electric bells connected to the Principal's

office. Specialized science, library and art rooms, the latest design in classroom equipment, and segregated rooms for principal and staff, symbolized modern scientific trends as well as an efficient organization of space. It was an environment especially suitable for "fact condensers,"<sup>36</sup> the epithet Professor J. Gordon MacGregor applied to MacKay and provincial educational bureaucrats, who had boasted that Pictou Academy students could matriculate into any provincial or dominion college without having to undergo special coaching.

The success of Pictou's meritorious students in garnering the bulk of provincial college prizes--more than half of all prizes were won by Pictou County students alone in 1884--outweighed any warnings of Pictou's widespread disciplinary power throughout the provincial educational system. Like its counterpart in Scotland, the democratic myth of the "lad o' pairts" and middle-class fear of the idle adolescent would function as twin justifications for Nova Scotia's remodelled educational system. The Academy's "mental" disciplinary culture was also justified as necessary for an industrial age; meritocracy complemented the supposedly limited opportunity of access to the professional classes. This cultural rhetoric hid the web of power relations and class inequalities which bourgeois reformers had constructed. The ideal, meritorious individual, as well as the deferential adolescent, as Foucault

observes, were "the fictitious atom[s] of an 'ideological' representation of society; but [they were] also a reality fabricated by the specific technology of power that I have called 'discipline'. . . .power produces. . . .reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth. The individual and the knowledge that may be gained of him belong to this production."<sup>37</sup> The key technique of the disciplinary virus, therefore, was its capacity to employ schooling to construct and then to spread its form of power relations over a large segment of society. Along with other parallel disciplinary institutions, such as the asylum and the hospital, this normalization of disciplinary procedures was accomplished in such a subtle manner that today most people believe discipline to be the chief end of a well-run society. They do not even recognize that it is a disease.

#### NOTES FOR CHAPTER FOUR

1. Fred Yorston, The Pictou Advocate [PA], December 25, 1896.

2. Michel Foucault cites the Inquisition, with its practice of placing individuals under observation, as a forerunner of "disciplinary discourse": see, Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison [DP] New York: Random House, 1979: 227.

3. Ibid.: 293.

4. Ibid.: 137. During "the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the disciplines became general formulas of domination. . . .The historical moment of the disciplines was the moment when an art of the human body was born, which was directed not only at the growth of its skills, nor at the intensification of its subjection, but at the formation of a relation that in the mechanism itself

makes it more obedient as it becomes more useful, and conversely. What was then being formed was a policy of coercions that act upon the body, a calculated manipulation of its elements, its gestures, its behaviour. The human body was entering a machinery of power that explores it, breaks it down and rearranges it. A 'political anatomy', which was also a 'mechanics of power', was being born; it defined how one may have a hold over others' bodies, not only so that they may do what one wishes, but so that they may operate as one wishes, with the techniques, the speed and the efficiency that one determines. Thus discipline produces subjected and practised bodies, 'docile' bodies. Discipline increases the forces of the body (in economic terms of utility) and diminishes these same forces (in political terms of obedience). In short, it dissociates power from the body; on the one hand it turns it into an 'aptitude', a 'capacity', which it seeks to increase; on the other hand, it reverses the course of the energy, the power that might result from it, and turns it into a relation of strict subjection. . . .disciplinary coercion establishes in the body the constricting link between an increased aptitude and an increased domination." (Ibid.: 137-8)

5. William McCulloch, The Life of Thomas McCulloch, D.D. n.p., 1920: 44. Thomas McCulloch attended the University of Glasgow, studying oriental languages and medicine, before proceeding to the Secession Divinity Hall at Whitburn, after which he was licensed by the Presbytery of Kilmarnock, Scotland.

6. Ibid.: 32, 33.

7. McCulloch's reputation was earned with his publication of Popery Condemned by Scripture and the fathers (1808), The Prosperity of the Church in Troublous Times (1814), and Words of Peace (1817). These works, as Gwendolyn Davies writes, "not only confirmed McCulloch's reputation as a church scholar but also revealed the unrelenting religious conviction that informed his battle for educational and social rights for the province's dissenters." See, Gwendolyn Davies, "Editor's Introduction," in Thomas McCulloch, The Mephibosheth Stepsure Letters Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1990: xx.

8. George Young to Father, Pictou, December 2, 1821, Public Archives of Nova Scotia [PANS], MG2, Vol. 719, F1/10, George Young Papers. And see, George Young to William Young, Pictou, 3 December 1821, Ibid., F1/11. See also, B. Anne Wood, "Thomas McCulloch's Use of Science in Promoting a Liberal Education," Acadiensis 17, 1, Autumn

1987: 56-73.

9. The school bell was originally a ship's bell, which was presented to Harbour Church in 1804 and was used there until 1822, when it became cracked and was sent to Scotland to be recast. It was at that time enlarged and presented to Pictou Academy.

10. Reverend George Patterson, D.D., A History of Pictou, Nova Scotia Belleville, Ont.: Mika, 1972 [1877]: 247: "though drinking was specially prevalent among the lumberers, yet all classes were affected by it. . . every third or fourth family would have a puncheon of rum, for the supply of themselves and neighbours," and see: "the sailors from the shipping in port made the streets frequently scenes of drunkenness and riot." (p. 249) Edward Mortimer, whose backing strongly sustained McCulloch until Mortimer's death in 1819, was dubbed the King of Pictou for the extent of his power and monopoly of the timber trade, for his rum payments, and for his system of credit in the district. When the Reverend Duncan Ross was asked by members of his Durham congregation to rid them of witches, he refused his assistance, so two members of the congregation sought aid from a Roman Catholic priest. Ross eventually preached a sermon on the subject which so offended a number of people in his congregation that they never went to his church again. The conflict was also between McCulloch-Ross' more Calvinistic, disciplined form of Presbyterianism and numerous charismatic rivals: see, The Rev. George Patterson, Memoir of the Rev. James MacGregor, D.D. . . . Philadelphia: Joseph Wilson, 1859: 417-418.

11. Foucault suggests that the "gaze", allied with the eighteenth-century corpus of disciplinary writing, which by the nineteenth century comprised a permanent archive of knowledge, was designed to focus attention on the subject/patient in his individual features, in his particular evolution, in his own aptitudes or abilities: see, DP: 190.

12. Thomas McCulloch, The Stepsure Letters Toronto: McClelland, 1960: 15. Northrop Frye explains in his Introduction (p.v) that "cute" then meant "crafty".

13. Ibid.: 31-2. As Michel Foucault remarks in Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason New York: Random House, 1988: 56-7, while the Calvinist believes that God must intervene to make labour productive and the land fertile, sloth is an absolute form of rebellion against God. Not surprisingly, houses

of confinement and Industrial Schools (including one in Pictou in the 1850s) were spaces invented by society during the nineteenth century to demarcate the limits of bourgeois order and were sustained by a moral perception of a new ethical power to segregate all the socially useless and enclose them in another world. Their bodily confinement amounted to a condemnation of "non-being," which suppressed and annihilated their evil behaviour.

14. Bentham's Panopticon, like Le Vaux's menagerie at Versailles, showed similar naturalistic concern with individualizing observation, with characterizing and classifying, and with the analytical arrangement of space. This makes it possible to draw up differences or to observe performances and "in relation to normal development, to distinguish 'laziness and stubbornness' from 'incurable imbecility'": among prisoners, species of animals, patients, school children or, in McCulloch's case, among adolescents in his community: see, DP: 203.

15. Excerpt in letter John McKinlay to George Smith, Pictou, March 30, 1825, PANS, Micro: Places, Pictou Academy, Reel 1.

16. Thomas McCulloch, "Supplement to the Memorial," in A Memorial from the Committee of Missions of the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia, to the Glasgow Society for Promoting the Religious Interests of the Scottish Settlers in British North America with Observations on the Constitution of that Society, and Upon the Proceedings and First Annual Report of the Committee of Directors Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1826: 42.

17. The Novascotian, Halifax, May 15, 1828. And see, Gwendolyn Davies, "The Club Papers: Haliburton's Literary Apprenticeship," in Studies in Maritime Literary History, 1760-1930 Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 1991: 88-106.

18. As Foucault writes, "The examination transformed the economy of visibility into the exercise of power." (DP: 187)

19. Agreement between the Trustees of Pictou Academy and Mr. Basil Bell, Pictou, August 5, 1846, PANS, Micro: Places, Pictou Academy, Reel 2.

20. The printed notice gave details about the subjects to be examined, the number of students (boys and girls in the first and second departments) and the order in which they were to be examined. At the conclusion there was to be an exhibition of manuscripts and copybooks

in William Jack's class, and reading of essays in Bell's and Hay's classes. See, *Ibid.* A serious examination system was introduced to Oxford and to Cambridge in the 1840s, as a result of German university influence: see, Michael Sanderson (ed.), The Universities in the Nineteenth Century London and Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975: 50.

21. "Pictou Academy," lead editorial in Eastern Chronicle, New Glasgow, July 6, 1848, and A.C. Macdonald to James Anderson, Pictou, 13 October 13, 1848: 2, PANS, Micro: Places, Pictou Academy, Reel 2.

22. Universal history was guided by Christian theology which posited that a supernatural providence was the dynamic of movement and progress in human events: see, Michael Gauvreau, "History and Faith: A Study of Methodist and Presbyterian Thought in Canada, 1820-1840," Ph.D. thesis, University of Toronto, 1985: 94.

23. Foucault, DP: 152.

24. *Ibid.*: 159.

25. *Ibid.*: 160.

26. W.N. Rudolf, March 4, 1862, PANS, MFM #10980.

27. David J. Hogan, "Modes of Discipline: Affective Individualism and Pedagogical Reform in New England, 1820-1850," American Journal of Education, 99, November 1990: 14. And see, B. Anne Wood, Idealism Transformed: The Making of a Progressive Educator Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1985.

28. Hogan, "Modes of Discipline": 15.

29. Rosemary Langhout, "Coal and iron: the impact of railways on the financial history of Nova Scotia, 1849-1867," M.A. thesis, Carleton University 1983: 111: "it can be argued that railways fostered greater public expectations of government, which expectations in turn encouraged greater per capita expenditure--that a decision to expand the role of government in one sphere [railways] encouraged expansion in others [state schools]." A common ideology and land-based communication pattern would ensue, she argues.

30. Catherine Dawson, who exhibited "great proficiency in all her studies, and. . .was the most advanced French scholar, declined becoming a candidate for any of

the prizes": Report of Examination, June 28, 1851, PANS, Micro: Places, Pictou Academy, Reel 4. Dawson married W.N. Rudolf, a commercial agent, in 1859. She was the youngest daughter of Robert Dawson, a Pictou merchant. Her sister, Margaret, also attended the Academy in 1848 and 1849. She married another Pictou merchant, Alex. Scott.

31. This curriculum more closely approximated that offered females at the highly popular (118 students in 1854) Mount Allison Ladies Academy at Sackville, New Brunswick: see, John G. Reid, "The Education of Women at Mount Allison, 1854-1914," in P.A. Buckner and David Frank (eds.), Atlantic Canada After Confederation Acadiensis Reader: Volume Two Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 1985: 121.

32. [A.H. MacKay] The Morning Herald, Halifax, December 24, 1881.

33. "Pictou Academy," October 13, [1882], PANS, RG14, Vol. 54, Item 71.

34. "The Pictou Academy Ladies' College," printed prospectus in Ibid., Vol. 51 & 52, Item 284. It stated that the Presbyterian Synod had appointed a committee to look into the matter and that 188,921 Presbyterians in the Maritime provinces had no institution in connection with Presbyterian bodies devoted to the higher education of young ladies.

35. Foucault, DP: 194.

36. J.G. MacGregor, "The University of Halifax--Reply to Mr. A.H. MacKay," Morning Herald, April 7, 1881. He argued that their plans for a uniform education system tended to degrade "the Province's best" students because the system lowered the higher standards of previous years. What was at issue was the power of university professors to admit and to examine students; he believed the professor's style of teaching should never be questioned by mere academic administrators.

37. Foucault, DP: 194.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### PICTOU PRESBYTERIANS AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF A CREDENTIALISING SCHOOL SYSTEM\*

"Credentialism"<sup>1</sup> is such an integral aspect of schooling that today we rarely reflect on its meaning, on its cultural significance or on its historical roots. In the 1890s Fred Yorston, President of the Montreal Standard, wrote a satirical description of his student days (1883-4) at Pictou Academy which culminated in an account of the dreaded convocation ceremony. He depicted this ritual of credentialism as "one of the most lasting memories of the old Academy days." The students first assembled in the office of A.H. MacKay, who since 1873 had been Principal of Pictou Academy. After they had proceeded to the platform everyone waited for MacKay to rise. He coughed, paused for silence, then fumbled with a batch of certificates.<sup>2</sup> The Principal began to read out the names, beginning with the lowest. Many of these students never dared to appear so he set aside their certificates. MacKay then proceeded to those who had attained first in a subject; an extra slip of paper was handed the student to paste in a special book. At last the highest aggregate marks were reached. With a benevolent smile "which he has saved up perhaps for a whole term," [the Principal] hands the winner his certificate, and so with much general applause and shuffling of feet and chairs, the proceedings came to an end."<sup>3</sup>

By the 1880s, then, credentialism affirmed attendance at a school and legitimized the authority of administrators to rank-order and to certify their student population. It was assumed that the school had the power to devise instruments, such as school examinations, to undertake this rank-ordering task. MacKay justified examinations to the public of his day in the following terms:

what is the use in every one going up to examination? . . . .It showed the student how much he really knew of the work he had been studying during the term. It showed the teacher where the weak point in his method might be looked for. It showed parents, guardians, and those interested the teachers['] estimate of the work done. But especially was it useful in giving the student a drill in the rapid and accurate expression of his thoughts on paper, an art without which no amount of knowledge and study can make a successful man at a modern competitive examination. One day of examination was therefore of more value to the dullest as well as the brightest student, than a week of the ordinary school routine. . . .[The disposition to shirk] examinations. . . .might always be taken as characteristic of a man whose future career as a student might be expected to be a failure. . . .no wise student should feel that in the loss of a coveted prize his work for the term was a failure. . . .The great prizes are to be won in the long battle of life afterwards.<sup>4</sup>

The fact that MacKay had to justify the examination system and the competitive individualism it was fostering demonstrated that credentialism had not necessarily won over all the Nova Scotian public by 1884. But the government left little time for debate. The next year the Council of Public Instruction [CPI] recommended a bill entitled "Act to encourage Academic Education,"<sup>5</sup> which used Pictou Academy as a model to force centralization on

all county academies. Every county town had to establish and maintain an academy or high school which would be free of charge to qualified students from all parts of the county. The teachers, standards of admission, courses of study, equipment and design of building were to be prescribed by the CPI. Provincial grants and teachers' salaries were now to be based on the qualifications of the teachers (accredited at the academic level) and on the number of students in stipulated high school subjects. Strict regulations were to prevail over entrance examinations, set by the CPI and based on subjects of the provincial course of study for the common schools (drafted also by MacKay at the invitation of the Superintendent of Education). Annual inspections were to be conducted to ensure compliance with the regulations, and annual reports were required of each county academy. A minimum number of students (including licensed teachers who were encouraged to attend academies to upgrade their qualifications) had to pass each annual examination in order for the provincial grant to be allocated.<sup>6</sup>

In 1886 only Pictou and Halifax were able to fulfil the conditions for the maximum grant. As Superintendent David Allison noted, Pictou Academy "continues to show an output of results, second in quantity and quality to that of few, if any of the High Schools of the Dominion."<sup>7</sup> Why and how did MacKay and his Scottish Presbyterian forebears

attain this degree of hegemony over provincial schooling? Using Pictou Academy as a case study, this chapter will examine the early history of credentialism. In contrast to current sociological interpretations it will argue that schooling credentialism was derived from Presbyterian cultural values and from pre-industrial professional requirements; that political contexts as well as religious schisms affected the credentialising process; and that it had significant effects on schooling policy, on students, and especially on the domination in Nova Scotia of Presbyterians in key administrative, political and professional positions of power.

Two features of Presbyterian culture were intimately connected to schooling at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Presbyterian government was conducted by a system of four ascending judicial courts, namely sessions, presbyteries, synods, and general assemblies, which required Presbyterian ministers and church elders to acquire abstract understanding of doctrinal and social issues in order to arrive at expert judgments and to exert sophisticated leadership. John Calvin developed this form of church government especially to deal with discipline and with moral order in the community. Both he and John Knox, founder of Scottish Presbyterianism, considered learning to be closely related to Christian life and they advocated the establishment of schools and the widespread use of printing

presses to disseminate Protestant doctrine.<sup>8</sup>

Presbyterians considered a professional ministry to be fundamental to the establishment and maintenance of authority in the community. In this respect, they were equalled only by the professions of law and medicine in Georgian Britain. As T.W. Heyck observes, these three professions recognized that organization was required to maintain standards and to prevent invasion of their professions by untrained or unsuitable candidates. Members quickly assumed the social discipline of their group in order to gain status and autonomy. Heyck distinguishes professionals from the Victorian middle class. While both shared values of hard work, duty and styles of behaviour, professionals sought to rise above commercial and industrial people and to become a kind of "new gentry."<sup>9</sup> Their chief means to this vertical mobility was through acquisition of higher credentials, in the case of Presbyterian ministers, through college education.

As argued in Chapter Four, the professional status of the Presbyterian minister and even occasional practising physician, such as the Reverend Thomas McCulloch newly arrived at Harbour settlement in north-eastern Nova Scotia in 1803, did not guarantee either community authority or provincial respect. These had to be earned. In McCulloch's case he used a variety of means to gain status and moral authority. He was called to Harbour Presbyterian

Church, but he also began a school in his home in 1806, which became so successful after the passage of the 1811 Grammar School Act that students came from all over the Maritime provinces, from the eastern seaboard and from the West Indies to attend. By 1817 fifty-three boys were attracted to McCulloch's school, whereas eleven other grammar schools in the province only had seventy-eight students.

Even as early as 1806, however, McCulloch and his Presbyterian colleagues were planning a liberal arts college to train both a native ministry and a rising professional class. As argued in earlier chapters, because of its college aspirations and the possibility of higher educational opportunity for Dissenters, extreme Tory members of the Nova Scotia Council objected to Pictou Academy's 1816 memorial because the proposed college would encroach on the established monopoly of King's College, Windsor. At issue ostensibly were two cultural systems of education. King's College was designed to train a local aristocracy for political leadership based on family privilege and membership in the established church. McCulloch's college, with its meritocratic admission standards and Scottish university program of studies, was designed to construct an alternative professional ideal. As outlined in Chapter One, when denied degree-granting status, McCulloch sent three of the Academy's first

graduates to Scotland where, after examination by Glasgow University professors in 1824, they were granted the degree of Master of Arts. Nineteenth-century professional credentialism was beginning to break down eighteenth-century church and family privilege.<sup>10</sup>

Pictou's political skirmishing also revealed the issues important to Presbyterian interest groups, their nuances of cultural order and the goal of power or cultural hegemony to which they were striving. As related in previous chapters, politics and religion overlapped in the contestation over moral/political authority in the community. Before there could be widespread public acceptance of their key professionalization tool, credentialism, the matter of leadership had to be settled.

At the classroom level, lecture notes give some inkling of McCulloch's strategies for winning moral/intellectual authority over his students. George Reny Young, for instance, was impressed with the Principal's clear exposition and use of plain language; he recognized McCulloch's wide-ranging and accurate knowledge. Students were required to master the facts of the lecture and they had assigned readings to help them understand the material. Frequent reviews and pointed questions in class also helped clarify their thinking.<sup>11</sup> Young concluded, significantly, that not only did he gain a deeper insight into human nature but the moral philosophy class helped him

regulate his own conduct, a Presbyterian goal. In contrast to the tutorial methods of Oxford University and of King's College, Nova Scotia, McCulloch's pioneering college relied on lectures, review and examinations. Two of McCulloch's surviving lecture notes on moral philosophy and epistemology of the mind convey typical devices used by theorists to organize subject matter onto universal planes, a necessary step towards a professional body of knowledge and the possibility of a standardized system of credentialism.

McCulloch drew clear distinctions between sensation and perception; he gave definitions for logic, consciousness, generalization, judgment, and modes of reasoning. Terms, logical definitions or propositions were thoroughly explained. The eleven classical types of argument were outlined. Reference was made to Francis Bacon's four types of illogical judgment.<sup>12</sup> It was no wonder that James Ross, Principal of West River Theological Seminary thirty years later, claimed that the logic and moral philosophy classes were the bedrock of McCulloch's teaching. The power of Pictou's theological professors to transform students' outlook from familial/experiential onto universal/abstract planes; to build moral cultural norms into communities by means of their Presbyterian professional authority; and to create rational institutional structures embodying their Presbyterian values was considerable by mid-century.

McCulloch's providential/universal mentality was

most clearly conveyed to students and to the community at large through his natural philosophy classes and in his public science lectures delivered to communities throughout the Maritimes in the 1820s. They demonstrated an inductive form of thinking. From individual objects and circumstances, McCulloch explained, man first induced the materials of knowledge (genus) and then proceeded to a knowledge of an abstract truth or principle (species). McCulloch, like his Scottish common-sense forebears, gave the scientific method a high priority for utilitarian, rather than for metaphysical or research reasons. They believed that facility in ordering the flux of human experience as well as natural phenomena into general principles of understanding, classification, or social action became the characteristic of a liberally educated person and led to rational social development. Scottish Presbyterians valued this systematic scientific method because it complemented their Presbyterian theology, which stressed good order in church and in state, as well as an integrated approach to all aspects of society.

As Jerry Pittman notes,<sup>13</sup> science for Nova Scotian Protestants at that time had religious significance; nature's order and underlying unity revealed God's divine presence, implying a wise and benevolent Designer. The "two-theologies" tradition, which Christians generally believed, drew on revealed religion (revelation through the

Bible) and on natural theology (reasoned interpretation of God's creation). It was understood by all Protestants, however, that Bacon's inductive method restricted science to the visible world, its description and classification. Reason, granted a greater role in grasping religious truth by Presbyterians, still was limited by the carnal mind. Church courts and their disciplinary procedures were marked characteristics, therefore, of Presbyterianism.

McCulloch also recognized the potential of his scientific, liberal educational program, along with a meritocratic system of credentialism, to allow Dissenters into the ranks of the professions. Students' newly developed

intelligence, by enlarging the sphere of usefulness, amplifies also the pleasure of doing good. Besides, education communicates a dignity of the human character, which neither rank nor wealth is sufficient to purchase; and it may be further observed, that, in this province, it presents prospects well calculated to concentrate the energies of your minds upon literary studies. The present state of the learned professions affords extensive scope to men of talents and literature. . . . this province now exhibits many proofs of a desire for literary improvement; and very soon, in this as in other countries, ignorance will find its own station; and natural abilities cultivated by literary studies, raise their possessors to the first rank in society and to the principal offices of honour and profit.<sup>14</sup>

By 1831, as a result of their rigorous, four-year academic program at Pictou Academy and constant examination by their professors, by Presbyterian examiners and by visiting dignitaries, such as the lieutenant-governor, graduates began to attain the positions of distinction

McCulloch desired for them. Jotham Blanchard, in his petition to the Colonial Secretary for a permanent grant and degree-granting status (outlined in Chapter One), could point to the widespread provincial and denominational support of over fifty graduates of Pictou Academy. Many had achieved advanced "stations in life," and had become members of the House of Assembly or were key government administrators throughout the Atlantic provinces, a number of graduates were teachers, eleven were Nova Scotian barristers and eleven others were Presbyterian clergymen.<sup>15</sup> Their Pictou Academy credentials had gained them access to professional status and important positions of power. According to T.W. Acheson, these were the same aspirations New Brunswick Calvinist religious leaders had in Saint John; they "directly challenged the existing order in an effort to force it to accommodate them. The issue for the Presbyterians was a share in the social and political establishment of the city and province. Under the banner of Scottish nationalism, they claimed an equal place with the Church of England in the imperial order."<sup>16</sup>

Although the term "credentialism" was not used by these Scottish-Canadians, its function was clearly understood by all Presbyterians; schooling provided them with an institution which they could mould in the direction of their cultural sense of order. School credentials were beginning to provide their students and theological

graduates with a competitive edge over other denominations with respect to access to political power, to professional monopoly and to moral authority in community affairs.

In order to solidify their position and to further control the direction of schooling in Nova Scotia, Presbyterians began to dominate all educational positions in north-eastern Nova Scotia during the 1840s and 1850s. In 1841 the legislature distinguished combined common and grammar schools from academies, giving the latter a separate board of trustees. As described in Chapter Three, shortly thereafter the provincial school committee began to receive complaints about Presbyterian control of teaching appointments and of the allocation of salaries in various counties. There was objection in 1853 from a Church of England minister with a parish in Albion Mines, outside of New Glasgow: "Every presbyterian minister in the county, I believe, is. . . Commissioner of Schools, they constantly attend and examine these Schools. . . ."17 Now that an Episcopalian church was at the mines, the Reverend Mr. J. Forsythe claimed that he should be given a voice in school affairs.

When J.W. Dawson, Nova Scotia's first Superintendent of Education in 1850, encouraged teachers to form teachers' associations, he began to receive a range of reports on the types of meetings and reactions of teachers to this new form of collegiality. The secretary of the Durham

Teachers' Association, for instance, reported on the agenda of their five meetings. Topics included new historiographical interpretations of the Bible, public meetings on Dawson's proposed school legislation, the importance of practical education and of scientific agriculture, the office of the teacher, the study of history and geography, and the future prospects of Nova Scotia. All of these topics were reflections of Presbyterian post-millennial cultural values, which stressed progressive improvement on earth.<sup>18</sup> Daniel MacDonald also allied this to the importance of professional counsel and of collegial unity fostered by the association, which helped to improve teachers' qualifications and to bring them a higher status in the eyes of the community. The professional ideal was being disseminated across the province via these teachers' associations. They were important policy precursors for a provincial system of free schooling and meritocratic credentialism.

As related in Chapter Four, Dawson and his Free Church successor, the Reverend Alexander Forrester, in their Normal and Free School campaigns also promoted another form of Scottish school culture, the "affectionate authority"<sup>19</sup> form of discipline advanced by evangelicals all over the western industrialized world. Dawson and Forrester derived their model of this experience-centred elementary schooling from David Stow's Model School in

Glasgow. Teachers trained by Normal and Model Schools, which used a variety of concrete aids and catechetical teaching methods, were considered more effective in implanting internal forms of conscience in the student and in encouraging self-development. These institutions also established a new form of specialization in teaching, or division of labour promoted by Adam Smith and by subsequent Scottish political economists as a more efficient/moral polity.<sup>20</sup> However, in clearly distinguishing the two levels of schooling and embedding different cultural values in each, school policy makers were on the one hand creating a form of credentialised contest mobility<sup>21</sup> at the high school level, and ideals of universal availability of schooling at the common-school level. They were constructing social class divisions based on Scottish notions of a hierarchy of merit, thereby providing opportunity for vertical mobility through schooling to rural talented youth.

In 1855 Dawson left Nova Scotia to take up the position of Principal of McGill University. He believed that Scottish Canadians should lead the way in a higher type of citizenship which would promote the development of British North America. "Gradually there will grow up in the glens of the Laurentian territory," he speculated, "a race of hardy Canadian hill-men, who, if sufficiently leavened by the elevating influences of Christianity and

education, will be of inestimable value to the country, both in peace and [in] war."<sup>22</sup> The energy and force of character of these "elect" would meet the physical difficulties they would encounter in the development of the country and a "national sentiment" would be created. Suzanne Zeller calls this new Canadian vision "an imaginative idealization of reality. The perceived powers of science lay at the very root of this leap of faith and lent to it an aura of inevitability. . . .At its core lay a growing popular interest in the study and control of nature, and a concomitant faith in recognized 'experts' in this field of knowledge."<sup>23</sup>

By mid-century, therefore, not only was the design of a credentialised system of schooling for Nova Scotia on the drawing board but myths of Scottish-Presbyterian pre-eminence which would justify their continuing dominance over the construction of the system were being promulgated. This was just prior to Presbyterian initiatives in 1856 to re-open Dalhousie College, which had closed the year of McCulloch's death in 1843. Dawson saw a draft of a report in the Presbyterian Witness of a meeting by the three Presbyterian groups with Dalhousie's Board of Governors to discuss the formation of a provincial university. He and other Pictou Academy alumni quickly took the lead in bringing this proposal to fruition. He wrote the Honourable William Young, Liberal Premier of Nova Scotia

whose two brothers had attended Pictou Academy, proposed that Young open negotiations with the Presbyterians or with other denominations to allow them access to Dalhousie's buildings, and he suggested sharing of teaching staff and free scholarships to students in return for the privilege of establishing endowed chairs for their professors. Young set up a committee, chaired by another Pictonian, the Honourable Adams Archibald, who was strongly supported by a third, the Reverend George M. Grant, newly inducted minister of St. Matthew's Church. The Congregationalists co-operated with the three Presbyterian groups and negotiations led to the re-organization of Dalhousie College in 1863. The Reverend James Ross, also a Pictou Academy graduate who now was a professor at Truro Divinity Hall, was appointed Dalhousie's second president, following in the footsteps of his mentor, McCulloch. Three of six seats on the Board of Governors were given to the newly formed (1860) Presbyterian Church of the Lower Provinces of British North America, which comprised the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia and the Free Church of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. In turn, the Presbyterians endowed three chairs and were allowed to appoint three professors (one being Thomas McCulloch, Junior, who had also been at the Truro Hall).

The Dalhousie curriculum emulated Dr. McCulloch's Scottish-Pictou program. Ross demanded that natural

philosophy and natural history, chemistry, logic and moral philosophy be included as well as Latin, Greek and modern languages. At the first convocation of the college in 1864 a library was inaugurated through the enthusiasm and fund-raising skills of Grant, who in 1877 would become Principal of Queen's College in Kingston, Ontario.<sup>24</sup> Although Dalhousie College was styled as a secular, provincial university, because Presbyterians assumed a heavy financial obligation they were given a large measure of power to institutionalize their cultural values. Their denominational influence was concealed by the provincial structure of this centralized institution.<sup>25</sup>

With the passage of the Education Acts of 1864-6, the people of Nova Scotia became aware of the meritocratic Scottish school system which Pictonians had helped to construct. The Normal School received \$4,700 and the Superintendent of Education \$1,600. Dalhousie College's provincial supremacy was secured with its \$3,000 grant. The denominational colleges, which had been created by Dissenters after withdrawing their support for Pictou Academy because of its feuds in the 1820s, were each allocated \$1,000; they now included King's (Anglican), Acadia (Baptist), St. Mary's (Roman Catholic), St. Francis Xavier (Scottish Roman Catholic), Mount Allison (Methodist) and Pictou Academy. The CPI, composed of members of the Executive Council and the Superintendent of Education, now

administered an educational system largely designed by Dawson and Forrester. The latter was shocked, therefore, to find himself superseded by his junior Baptist colleague at the Normal School, T.W. Rand, as the new Superintendent of Education. Margaret Conrad observes in retrospect,

Despite its unpopularity in certain quarters, Rand's appointment demonstrated [Dr. Charles] Tupper's shrewdness in handling difficult issues of public policy. It was popular with the Baptists who were strongly represented in the ranks of the Conservative Party and who harboured a grudging sense that Presbyterian influence had undue weight at provincially funded institutions such as the Normal School and the recently resuscitated Dalhousie College. It also satisfied Conservative partisans who saw Forrester as an unregenerate Liberal who had actually campaigned against Tupper in the Cumberland election of 1857.<sup>26</sup>

What were the consequences of this Scottish-Canadian cultural domination of Nova Scotia's schooling? In the first place, Pictou Academy students began in disproportionate numbers to garner the scholarships and bursaries at Dalhousie College, especially after 1880 when another former student of Pictou Academy, George Munro, donated more than \$350,000 in exhibitions (scholarships) and bursaries for students as well as endowing chairs. Beginning in 1870 Dalhousie launched its subsequent embourgeoisement/professionalizing emphasis by organizing a medical faculty that year and a school of law in 1883. J. Gordon MacGregor, grandson of Pictou's Presbyterian founder, the Reverend James MacGregor, assumed Munro's first chair of physics in 1879. Two of Pictou Academy teachers in the 1860s and early 1870s, Herbert Bayne and

John J. McKenzie, were the first Nova Scotians to obtain doctorates in science at German universities. They subsequently became professors of chemistry and physics at Dalhousie.

In 1881 Pictou Academy students won \$1,000 in matriculation prizes, two won exhibitions of \$400 for two years and two others tied for first place for the \$150 Munro bursaries. The effect of these matriculation prizes was to make MacKay, now Principal of the Academy, emphasize even more drill methods of teaching, examinations and public displays of students' marks and grade levels.<sup>27</sup> He solicited prizes from alumni, for instance a \$25 prize in 1882 from Major General Laurie of Oakfield. Since 1877 a silver cup had been awarded to the top prize-winner at the Academy. In 1887 a gold medal was awarded to the competitor with the highest marks in the winter term, the second-place finisher receiving the silver cup. By means of drill methods and competition in class, frequent examinations and public displays of individual examination results, prizes, scholarships and bursaries, MacKay institutionalized what had previously been informal procedures of gate-keeping. Grading and class (rather than individual) programming of students completed the efficient implementation of the school's credentialising function.

Once again, outside critics questioned the domination of Pictou Presbyterians. "Cecil," writing in 1882 in

The Morning Herald (Halifax) stated that it was not surprising that more mature students now chose Pictou Academy's fourth-year class; its curriculum was designed to gain their entry to Dal. He questioned whether this necessarily meant that Pictou Academy was the best training school in the province and why it alone of all similar institutions received \$1400 in annual grants. Intimating that this sum had "very much the appearance of a bribe, or especial [sic] inducement, to Pictou County to support the late leader [Hon. Simon Holmes, Pictou Academy student in 1849] and his colleagues in the recent election. . . . considered in connection with what the Presbyterian body already enjoys of public money invested in Dalhousie College, induces one to believe that in this Province justice has her blind eye turned in the direction of those institutions which are under the especial patronage of our Presbyterian brethren."<sup>28</sup> In a later defense of Pictou County's leadership, an 1884 lead editorial in the same paper noted that of four junior exhibitions and seven bursaries awarded students in Nova Scotia, six were given to Pictou Academy students and none to students from the academies at Wolfville, Mount Allison or Windsor. More than half of all the prizes were awarded to students from Pictou County alone. Few of the other academies taught French (only 8/16), French authors (11 did not offer), or Greek.<sup>29</sup>

Robert Anderson notes that by this date (1880s) a large number of Scottish leaders came from a wide social range [as in Nova Scotia] and he speculates that liberal social theory with its myth of the "lad o' pairts" could be used by educational reformers [such as MacKay] as a justification for their remodelling of the system along class lines which reinforced structural inequalities. Anderson also judges that the general level of middle-class culture by the 1870s was higher in Scotland than in England and that there was little gulf between the classes. In the 1880s, as a result of the secondary school reforms in Scotland, "the educational ladder was most inviting and most efficient in small and medium-sized towns [such as Pictou], where the secondary school was likely to be free and the elementary schools less overwhelmed by the task of drilling basic education into the industrial masses."<sup>30</sup>

There was a cost to bear, however, for this meritocratic Scottish model of secondary schooling. In the 1891 student population at Pictou Academy, for instance, only 16% of the first-year class was promoted, only 21% of the second-year class and only 14% of the third-year class. While a brilliant student, such as Henry Munro, who succeeded MacKay as Superintendent of Education for Nova Scotia in 1926, took only four years to pass all levels of schooling at Pictou Academy, 41% of the fourth-year students took two years to complete the required twenty

examination papers. At the lower levels attendance patterns varied according to the domicile of the students. For instance, in the third-year class 79% of the students from outside Pictou County (33 in number) remained at the Academy for only two years, whereas 72% of those from Pictou Town (10) were in attendance for five or six years. A similar "holding pattern" for Pictou Town students (37) existed in the second year; 86% of them attended for four to six years and only eight were promoted. Although half of the 279 students in 1891 were from Pictou Town, their promotion rates (12 in year one; 8 in year two; 2 in year three; 3 in year four) demonstrated that they were not given any special advantages over their rural counterparts as far as promotion was concerned. Male students appeared to dominate the rolls of these upper classes (5 females in class four and 16 in class three). In the second, first and special fine arts classes, on the other hand, females predominated by 59%, 62%, and 96% respectively.<sup>31</sup> The holding pattern for adolescents and the gate-keeping function of secondary schools for access to universities and to the professions were by this time well established.

The long-term effects of this meritocratic, credentialising form of Scottish schooling were noted in a 1935 survey of Canadian education which F. Clarke portrayed as having "a common countenance" of graded structure, drill and over-emphasis on examinations. As a result, he

concluded, "many Canadian schools at present seem to succeed in imposing upon the pupil a severe demand for sheer laboriousness with a very low demand for genuine, spontaneous, intellectual effort. The effect of such a condition in dulling the finer sensibilities, in retarding the growth of real powers, and in encouraging a heavy and conformable mediocrity, needs no emphasis."<sup>32</sup> Was this a result of over-zealous administrative regulation? This chapter suggests that it was the side-effect of the professional aspirations of Scottish Canadians, whose evangelical school culture cultivated individualistic ideals, rational institutional structures, and efficient use of private networks to gain power in key areas of public administration,<sup>33</sup> leaving behind in Pictou and in other Canadian towns those who could not get through the credentialising hoops they had constructed.

#### NOTES FOR CHAPTER FIVE

\* Paper presented at the conference on The Contribution of Presbyterianism to Atlantic Canada, Mount Allison University, Sackville, New Brunswick, 18-20 November 1994.

1. Randall Collins characterizes credentials as cultural goods which individuals and ethnic groups use as weapons to obtain and monopolize economic positions and to gain advantage over other groups. Thus, credentialism is a type of cultural currency whose value increased and became more abstract as the educational system became more elaborated. He concludes that the "rise of a competitive system for producing an abstract cultural currency in the form of educational credentials has been the major new force shaping stratification in twentieth-century America. Beginning with the internal organization of schools themselves, credentials have permeated the occupational structure, from elite professional monopolies on down, and have been the decisive impetus to the elaboration of

super-complex bureaucracies in all spheres. . . .the permeation of educational credentials into the occupational world has shaped the major issues of stratification in recent decades." See, Randall Collins, Credential Society: An Historical Sociology of Education and Stratification New York: Academic Press, 1979: 94.

2. The inscription on certificates before 1885 read: "This is to certify that the Bearer. . . , whose name is [inscribed] is enrolled and in attendance at the Pictou Academy during the present term." It was signed by A.H. MacKay and dated. See, Public Archives of Nova Scotia [PANS], Micro: Places, Pictou Academy, Reel 2.

3. Fred Yorston, "Academy Memories," The Pictou Advocate December 25, 1896.

4. "Pictou Academy," newspaper excerpt [1884], PANS, RG14, Vol. 54, No. 78. It was estimated in 1895 that the examination system and scholarships/bursaries netted Academy students admitted to Dalhousie University \$20,000 in a fifteen-year period.

5. 48 Victoria, chapter 11, passed 24 April 1885.

6. David Allison, "Appendix No. 5: Annual Report on the Common, Academic and Normal and Model Schools of Nova Scotia [AR] 1885," Journals of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly [JHA] 1886: xxiii-xxv.

7. Allison, "Appendix No. 5: AR 1886-7," JHA 1888: xxiii.

8. Lefferts A. Loetscher, A Brief History of Presbyterianism, The Broadening Church: A Study of Theological Issues in the Presbyterian Church since 1869 Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1978.

9. T.W. Heyck, The Transformation of Intellectual Life in Victorian England London: Croom-Helm, 1982: 20-21. The Reverend Thomas McCulloch demonstrated his ambition to be recognized as a man of letters, considered "gentry" at that time, in his polemical writings on behalf of Protestants (Popery Condemned by scripture and the fathers and Popery Again Condemned), in his educational addresses and writings, especially The Nature and Uses of a Liberal Education (1819), in his satirical The Mephibosheth Stepsure Letters and in his covenanting novels, William and Melville (1826) and "Auld Eppie's Tales" (unpublished).

10. See, Harold Perkin, The Rise of Professional Society, England since 1880 London: Routledge, 1989. I thank Paul Wood for drawing this reference to my attention. And see, B. Anne Wood, "Schooling for Presbyterian Leaders: The College Years of Pictou Academy, 1816-1832," in William Klempa (ed.), The Burning Bush and a few Acres of Snow: The Presbyterian Contribution to Canadian Life and Literature Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1994: 19-37. And, B. Anne Wood, "Schooling/Embourgeoisement: Pictou Academy in the Nineteenth Century" (invited chapter forthcoming in "Working with the Region," edited by Ian McAllister).

11. George Young to Father, Pictou, December 2, 1821, PANS, MG2, Vol. 719, F1/10, George Young Papers.

12. Thomas McCulloch, "A Writing on Epistemology of Mind," MSS, Ibid., MG1, Vol. 555, Item 32; and "A Lecture on Moral Philosophy," Ibid., Item 33. And see, Stanley E. McMullin, "In Search of the Liberal Mind: Thomas McCulloch and the Impulse to Action," Journal of Canadian Studies 23, Nos. 1 & 2 (Spring/Summer 1988): 71. "By science, McCulloch referred to technique rather than subject matter: his concern was with the process of categorization and definition which leads to the formulation of 'an abstract truth or principle.'" Thus, McCulloch was more of a Newtonian, than a Baconian in approach, as Paul Bogard argued in a recent conference presentation, "From Baconian Ideals to Newtonian Applications: was there a Presbyterian contribution to higher education in the Maritimes?" See forthcoming proceedings of The Contribution of Presbyterianism to Atlantic Canada, 18 November 1994, Mount Allison University, Sackville, New Brunswick. And see, B. Anne Wood, "Thomas McCulloch's Use of Science in Promoting a Liberal Education," Acadiensis 17, 1, Autumn 1987: 56-73.

13. Jerry N. Pittman, "Darwinism and Evolution: Three Nova Scotia Religious Newspapers Respond, 1860-1900," Acadiensis 22, 2 (Spring 1993): 42, 43-4, and footnotes #6, #11. And see, B. Anne Wood, "The Significance of Calvinism in The Educational Vision of Thomas McCulloch," Vitae Scholasticae 4, 1&2 (Spring/Fall 1985): 15-30 (copy at PANS). In his scholastic series of sermons on Calvinism, the doctrine of the scriptures or a scriptural account of the ruin and recovery of fallen man, and a review of the principal objections which have been advanced against the Calvinist system ([1846] London: Collins, n.d.), McCulloch attempted to refute two doctrinal positions, Arminianism as propounded by Dr. John Taylor, an English dissenting divine whose work on original sin (1740) attacked the underlying

ideas of the Westminster standards and whose writing strongly influenced Scottish evangelical (later Free Church) Presbyterians, such as Robert Burns, and the deist philosophy as depicted by Dr. Whitby in his book, Concerning the Perseverance of the Saints. McCulloch implied that both doctrines threatened the original concept of government as represented by the Westminster Confession because they proclaimed the moral freedom of men. McCulloch and his Secessionist colleagues, instead, asserted that moral order should be based on doctrines of the Reformed Church. Adam had been charged with dominion and control of God's earthly kingdom. By his fall the whole human race (not just individuals, as Taylor claimed) was doomed to share in his sin and suffering. The first parents, conscious of their guilt, experienced an evil conscience over their violation of God's trust and became completely estranged from Him. Natural man, their descendant, represented the moral depravity to which mankind was everlastingly condemned because of Adam's fall. Social institutions, political rule and individual good deeds (the covenant of works) could not correct the depravity of man's original nature. Only in Christ could the sins of mankind be redeemed (the covenant of grace). Both Adam and Christ, therefore, acted as representatives of the moral order, providing divine psychological models, or moral guides on which governments and institutions should be based. What McCulloch did not bring out, however, was the extent to which this interpretation bestowed authority on learned clerics and church elders. Because Presbyterians granted reason a greater role than other Protestant denominations in interpreting these religious truths, their culture tended to emphasize a rigorous combination of doctrine and discipline, thereby placing greater power in the hands of church courts/government. This was in sharp contrast to the contractual, human arrangements of the body politic as epitomized in English models.

14. McCulloch, Nature and Uses of a Liberal Education Halifax: Holland, 1819: 23.

15. Petition of Jotham Blanchard to the Right Honourable Viscount Goderich, London, May 20, 1831, "Appendix 1," p. 5, JHA 1832.

16. T.W. Acheson, Saint John: The Making of a Colonial Urban Community Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985: 120. The leader of the Saint John Presbyterians was George Burns, brother of Robert, the GCS and Free Church leader in Scotland and in Canada.

17. Rev. Mr. J. Forsythe to Hon. M.B. Almon, Albion

Mines, June 10, 1853, *Ibid.*, Vol. 70, 1853. In Pictou Town the year that McCulloch left for Dalhousie College (1838), Charles Elliott, the Anglican minister on the three-member Pictou Board of School Commissioners, reported that, as a result of the feuds of Pictou, this was the only institution in town which operated in a unanimous manner. "In most matters when the interests of the two parties are brought to bear the decision rests with myself, as a casting vote, and I have happily succeeded in obtaining the confidence of both": Charles Elliott to Rupert D. George, Pictou, July 5, 1838, *Ibid.*, Item 317: 2.

18. William Westfall, Two Worlds: The Protestant Culture of Nineteenth-Century Ontario Kingston & Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989: 182-3. And see, Daniel MacDonald to the Superintendent of Education, Durham, 1852, PANS, RG14, Vol. 49-50, Item 392.

19. David J. Hogan, "Modes of Discipline: Affective Individualism and Pedagogical Reform in New England, 1820-1850," American Journal of Education 99, November 1990: 14-15: "The New England pedagogy organized the classroom around the principles of what I will call 'affective individualism': the engagement of children's interest, the intensification of pleasure, the development of loving and affectionate relationships between teachers and students (affectionate authority), and the internalization of authority." I have traced this new pedagogy to its evangelical roots in Scotland in "The Significance of Evangelical Presbyterian Politics in the Construction of State Schooling: A Case Study of the Pictou District, 1817-1866," Acadiensis 20, 2, Spring 1991: 62-85. And see, B. Anne Wood, God, Science and Schooling: John William Dawson's Pictou Years, 1820-1855 Truro: Nova Scotia Teachers College, 1991.

20. Thomas Chalmers, who was the Scottish evangelical leader dynamically influencing Stow, Robert Burns, Forrester, and the young Dawson studying at Edinburgh University in the early 1840s, claimed that Smith's Wealth of Nations was his favourite text: see, Boyd Hilton, The Age of Atonement: The Influence of Evangelicalism on Social and Economic Thought, 1795-1865 Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988: 67.

21. Collins, Credential Society: 91: The U.S. educational system, in contrast to the European sponsored mobility system, has no sharp divisions among different types of secondary school. The main pattern is one of continuous attrition from high school on to professional training. Final professional identification does not occur

until the very end of the schooling sequence, whereas in the European system branches direct students into various training programs.

22. J.W. Dawson, "Report of the Geological Survey of Canada, 1853-55," pp. 37-8, cited in Suzanne Zeller, Inventing Canada: Early Victorian Science and the Idea of a Transcontinental Nation Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987: 99.

23. Ibid.: 111.

24. Grant would be succeeded by another Pictou Academy graduate, Daniel Miner Gordon, in 1903. A. Ross Hill in 1916 became the President of the University of Missouri, Dr. A.O. MacRae, Principal of Western Canada College, and Frank Parker Day President of Union College, Schenectady, New York, between 1928 and 1933. Larry MacKenzie was President of the University of New Brunswick from 1940-44 and President of the University of British Columbia from 1944 to 1962. Eight university presidents emanated from Pictou Academy. Aside from the above, they included Thomas McCulloch, James Ross and William Dawson.

25. See, P.B. Waite, The Lives of Dalhousie University, Vol. One: 1818-1925, Lord Dalhousie's College Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994: 112-113 for the Dalhousie College curriculum of the 1860s and 1870s. And see Ibid., 88: "The Dalhousie Act was clever for what it did not say. The word Presbyterian was not mentioned. . . .The other denominations would never give up their own colleges; hence the Presbyterians, knowing that, could found their own college, using public money by calling it a non-denominational university." This thesis agrees with McMullin that Scottish Calvinist theology and Scottish Enlightenment thought formed the core of McCulloch's progressive view of society and greatly influenced the thought of his students. At the same time, "In the case of a colonial thinker such as McCulloch, the process of isolating the influence of individual Scottish thinkers is fraught with peril since the demands of colonial life tended to force the intellectual to modify, blend, borrow and apply ideas in ways quite different from their peers in Europe." See, McMullin, "In Search of the Liberal Mind," p. 82. A full analysis should be undertaken of the complex interweaving of Calvinist and Enlightenment influences in McCulloch's thought.

26. Margaret Conrad, "'An Abiding Conviction of the Paramount Importance of Christian Education': Theodore Harding Rand as Educator, 1860-1900," in Robert S. Wilson

(ed.), An Abiding Conviction: Maritime Baptists and Their World Hantsport: Lancelot Press, 1988: 162.

27. List of students 1883: PANS, RG14, Vol. 54, Item 121. And see, Prize List 1884, Ibid., Item 100, and, "Pictou Academy and Education," Colonial Standard March 14, 1882.

28. "Cecil," The Morning Herald (Halifax) November 25, 1882. He suggested that the withdrawal of Yarmouth Seminary's \$1400 grant may have been in retaliation against "the late member of Yarmouth, for his violent opposition to their College Bill."

29. "Pictou Academy and Other Academies," Ibid., October 26, 1884.

30. Robert Anderson, Education and Opportunity in Victorian Scotland Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983: 249. And see, Ibid., "Education and the State in Nineteenth-Century Scotland," The Economic History Review, second series, 37, 4 (November 1983): 518-34; Ibid., "In Search of the 'Lad of Parts': the Mythical History of Scottish Education," History Workshop Issue 19 (Spring 1985): 82-104; Ibid., "Secondary Schooling and Scottish Society in the Nineteenth Century," Past and Present 109, November 1985: 176-202.

31. "Catalogue 1890-91," Pictou Academy Course of Study For the Year 1891-2 n.p., n.d.: 9-13; and "Catalogue 1891-92," Ibid., 1892-3: 11-15; and, "Pictou Academy, School Registers," PANS, Micro: 1888-1932, RG14, Series R-1. These levels of schooling and examinations were tied to the teachers' certificates, introduced by Superintendent MacKay in 1893 in a new high school grading system, as follows: Grade 9 corresponded to scholastic work required for a Grade D certificate, Grade 10 to Grade C, Grade 11 to Grade B and Grade 12 to Grade A.

32. F. Clarke, "Education in Canada--an impression," Queen's Quarterly 42, 3 (Autumn 1935): 313, 321. And see, B. Anne Wood, "'The right ordering of our several loyalties': Canadian Citizenship for a Progressive State," in Keith A. McLeod (ed.), Canada and Citizenship Education Toronto: Canadian Education Association, 1989: 19-26.

33. As George Patterson complained, however, in 1943 to President Stanley of Dalhousie University, "We have lost control of High School and Academy. Never before in my time was the Principal of Pictou Academy or the Principal of the High School here other than a Dalhousian until now." He was complaining of the growing attraction of

Acadia College for Pictou students and potential Presbyterian clergy and he urged President Stanley and his faculty to "advertise. . . .There ought to be some way of making your staff alive to the fact that their duties do not begin and end with the classroom--that they are employed by the year and owe something more to the College than three hours a day for six or seven months." In, PANS, D.C. Harvey Papers MG1, Vol. 438, Folder 40. My thanks to Allan Dunlop for drawing this to my attention.

## CHAPTER SIX

### CONSTRUCTING NOVA SCOTIA'S 'SCOTCHNESS':

#### THE CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS OF PICTOU ACADEMY IN 1916<sup>1</sup>

During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries north-eastern Nova Scotia was flooded by an invasion of Scottish immigrants.<sup>2</sup> Most were Gaelic-speaking Highlanders. Those who were Roman Catholic moved on to the Antigonish area; the remaining Presbyterians settled largely in the rural hinterland of the Pictou district. After the Napoleonic Wars they were joined by a number of Scots from the Lowland areas. While most of the post-1815 immigrants were farmers and artisans, a large number were business and professional people, especially teachers and clergymen. As could be expected, the latter group were intent on developing the commercial possibilities of the district, building schools to train their upwardly mobile progeny in the skills needed by a rapidly developing commercial-industrial economy and in adapting their language and institutions to this North American society. In the 1871 census 34% of Nova Scotians were listed as of Scottish origin. As J.M. Bumsted notes, they tended to fraternize together and were particularly active in establishing schools that emphasized training for the talented. Graduates became highly visible in politics and in business; nearly 50% of the nation's industrial leaders in the 1880s had recent Scottish origins. Bumsted further

believes that it "was largely because of their influence that the preponderant culture in Canada was British, rather than English, and distinctive Scottish patterns can be discerned in Canadian education and [in] moral attitudes . . . ."3

Although large numbers of Scots continued to emigrate to Canada after 1871 (80,000 between 1871 and 1901; 240,000 between 1900 and 1914; and 200,000 between 1919 and 1930), most settled in Ontario and the West and quickly became assimilated. A substantial population with Scottish origins remained in the Maritimes, however, and developed a culture distinct, Bumsted claims, from other groups originating from the British Isles. Indeed, Bumsted notes that many of these Scottish Canadians considered themselves "superior to" their English, Welsh or Irish neighbours.

Contradicting Bumsted's claims, other historians state that by the late 1870s Scottish models had lost their force in higher education;<sup>4</sup> that Scots rarely took advantage of Nova Scotia's 1841 legislation permitting them to educate their children in Gaelic; and that "the Protestant Scots lost their distinctive culture even more rapidly than the Catholics, partly because they were even more anxious than the Catholics to flee the rural areas which were the stronghold of the old language."<sup>5</sup> John Reid does admit that, despite this assimilation process, the mythology of

the Scottish tradition remained strong, especially when it was used to form the basis of an ideology of meritocratic selection in which limited equality of opportunity was held to justify the reinforcement of structural inequalities. Citing the excellent parallel work of R.D. Anderson in Scotland, Reid argues convincingly that the myth of a democratic intellect began to attain a momentum of its own, particularly during a period of rapid socio-economic change such as the beginning of the twentieth century.

Using Pictou Academy as a case study this chapter will argue that a Scottish "progressive" mythology was inculcated primarily through an élitist form of schooling; that this myth on the surface promoted individualism and meritocracy, values synchronizing with Pictou's capitalistic industrial economy; but that, bureaucratic school practices and repressive disciplinary policies instead indoctrinated students with a deferential outlook more in keeping with the emerging bureaucratic centralizing policies at both provincial and national levels of government. The tension between these two world views was played out in the forty years leading to the Academy's centenary celebrations in 1916. In effect, community leaders were attempting to achieve a market edge for Pictou Academy graduates in the commodification of credentials, but also they were trying to maintain their hegemonic control of schooling and cultural affairs in the district. These

mixed messages had a major impact on students and on their middle-class parents. They began to construct a third world view, based on interests of gender and of class as well as on middle-class evangelical values. These various voices of dissent questioned the Scottish mythology which dominated the rhetoric during the centenary celebrations. This examination of the process of construction of these mental attitudes, therefore, will provide the focus for the central question being addressed in this chapter, namely, what function did the Scottish myth of a "lad of parts" play in the jostle for ascendancy of three world views in the Pictou district?

T.J. Jackson Lears and other American historians note the crucially important role played by organized religion in the actual exercise of power of one group over another.<sup>6</sup> In both Canada and the United States a new class of professional leaders concerned themselves with the creation of a new strata of intellectuals whose role was to win over traditionalists to support the modern social, economic and political state and to create a single national culture. These leaders were in a symbiotic relationship with religious leaders and with the new social order; they were deputies in exercising social hegemony and political government. Their construction and operation of state school systems played a significant role in this re-fashioning process.

The sources available for this period particularly suit this type of study. While public records reveal administrative structures, political trends and educational policy, all of which tend to serve provincial and even national interests, local newspaper accounts, private correspondence, journals and oral interviews expose voices of dissent. The latter reveal political pressures, not often included in the public record. These voices of dissent also tend to spell out the prevailing ethos, in the case of Pictou Academy the individualistic world-view of the male student striving for access to college and to the professions, which may differ significantly from the purported communitarian school goals advanced by evangelical church and school leaders. Thus, not only is this chapter examining the political process of cultural construction but it is also noting the rhetoric employed by bureaucrats, by evangelical moralists, by adolescents and by female alumni. Ironically, out of this jostle for cultural ascendancy emerged effects unanticipated by any of these groups. Class tensions tended to be exacerbated, females began to behave more assertively, Pictou Presbyterians withdrew from union with the emerging United Church of Canada, and male community leaders established a boarding school for male students in an effort to re-construct traditional values in their school culture.

By the 1880s the progressive ethos of Pictonians was

evident in the built environment of their Shire Town. As described in J.H. Meacham's Illustrated Historical Atlas of Pictou County,

Pictou of 1879 is a town of no ordinary importance, situated as it is on the north side of the harbor, on gradually rising ground; its position, as seen from the water, is both commanding and attractive. During the last few years a large number of elegant houses have been erected within its limits, especially in the more elevated position of the town. Here we find commodious and handsome mansions--modern villas--and neat cottages, all of which are unmistakable indications of the opulence and prosperity of its inhabitants. The public buildings are likewise worthy of notice. The courthouse, registry office, and custom-house, which include the Inland Revenue Office, views of which appear among our illustrations, stand foremost in this class--the latter building especially, which was erected by the Government at a recent date, is an ornament to the town.

Other marks of a progressive, middle-class Victorian community cited in the atlas were the establishment of the Pictou Bank, the formation of a branch of the Young Men's Christian Association, the presence of six churches, a Masonic hall, two newspapers, and Pictou Academy, which was "ably conducted by A.H. MacKay, Esq., principal, and Messrs. R. and E. McLellan, his coadjutors, with Miss Campbell in the primary school. This college affords superior advantages, and more especially to those who have been born in the County, as they have special privileges not enjoyed by those whose birth-place is outside its limits."<sup>7</sup>

As related in the previous chapter, by 1885 the Nova Scotia school system, designed largely by MacKay and by his

Presbyterian colleagues, was completed with the passage of the bill, "Act to encourage Academic Education," which forced county academies to conform to a three-year model introduced by Pictou Academy in 1881. All counties were to establish and maintain one academy or high school which was to be free of charge to qualified students from all parts of the county. In 1889, MacKay's last year at Pictou Academy, students were organized in platoons, nearly all covering the same subjects with their cohort.<sup>8</sup> Four specialized teachers taught these classes for one hour each. The first-year academic class was partially adapted to the teachers' program for Grade D license; higher classes corresponded to work demanded for licenses C to A. Many of the students presented themselves for the provincial teachers' examination. In the winter term of 1889, for instance, 181 of Pictou Academy's 245 students tried the exams. Of these, 169 (93%) passed.<sup>9</sup> Of the original 181 students who applied, 46 already had teaching licenses,<sup>10</sup> and 12 more became teachers by 1893. Because of the new academy regulations, therefore, these institutions by the 1890s were serving gate-keeping, credentialising functions, largely (32%) for the teaching profession.<sup>11</sup>

David Hogan also argues that the competitive promotions examinations joined the classroom to the marketplace. "Competitive exams thus assumed a position in meritocratic ideology similar to the one assumed by free

and competitive markets in capitalistic doctrine: they promoted effort, achievement, and character, they invigorated learning, they opened up channels of educational mobility for the meritorious, they tested and rewarded competence, they punished the indolent, and they matched merit to social position. . . .In fact, [though,] success in examinations was really little more than successful entrepreneurship in an educational setting."<sup>12</sup> Aside from serving as the main gate-keeper to higher education, school administrators were also constructing a normative mythology, shortly to be tied in to supposedly Scottish characteristics of poverty, industriousness, merit and later success, which diverted attention from the results of this constructed culture. This normative mythology diverged significantly from the prevalent Romantic Scottish mythology, expressed in Victorian novels which highlighted the feudal/clan origins of the Scots, their gaelic language and distinctive tartan dress.

Instead, a fine arts program began to define the genteel respectability increasingly being demanded of female culture both by the Presbyterian Synod and by the middle-class leaders of the community.<sup>13</sup> Many female and less competitive male students, critical of the mindless drill and authoritarianism of MacKay's regime,<sup>14</sup> increasingly supported this program at the Academy, which gave them a sense of identity and social accomplishment. As

related in Chapter Five, MacKay's solution to the newspaper debate over whether a male or a female should be appointed to the vacant position of mathematics teacher at the Academy was to appoint Hector McInnes to the academic position and to hire Maggie McKenzie to begin a separate non-academic program, which by 1888 was affiliated to Pictou Academy and was largely supported by female students. By 1893-4 there were 40 students (including 3 males) enrolled in the music program.<sup>15</sup> Emulating the credentialism and professionalization strongly marking the academic program, the fine arts calendar highlighted the academic background of its music teachers; Kate Thompson, hired in 1894, had spent seven years at Pictou Academy, reaching the third academic level and graduating after spending two years "in Pianoforte, Harmony and Theory of Music [from] the Music Department."<sup>16</sup> She and two other female graduates of Pictou's music program were continuing students at the New England Conservatory. The Pictou program was graded in four levels to correspond to those of the New England Conservatory's program; students who graduated from Pictou could enter the fourth grade of the American program.

Publicity surrounding this popular non-academic program emphasized its money-raising potential and its utility (many graduates were supposedly requested as music teachers throughout Nova Scotia).<sup>17</sup> In 1897 the music

department's annual concert in the new Convocation Hall raised over one hundred dollars, which was used to supplement the Academy's ornithology and other museum collections.<sup>18</sup> Not only did the fine arts program not cost Pictou Academy any money (fees varying from \$4 to \$10 an hour were charged groups of four or individual students), but it lent the institution an aura of respectability. Its high culture matched the growing middle-class aspirations for higher status; Pictou Town was becoming snobbish.<sup>19</sup> In December 1899, for instance, four students held a garden party, a "social" was held by Mrs. Thomas Young at the end of term, and the Pictou Academy teachers gave a reception to male students after their annual parade around town.<sup>20</sup> At the Christmas social in 1898 a vote was taken for the first time on the prettiest girl in the Academy. As they went home Principal Robert Maclellan reminded male students that they should conduct themselves as became "true gentlemen and scholars of Pictou Academy."<sup>21</sup>

These social events began to intrude on the studious habits and serious extra-curricular activities which Pictou Academy school authorities had heretofore controlled. When a rink was organized in 1899 the debating society experienced a serious drop-off in its numbers; a letter to the editor of The Pictou Advocate advised male students to make sure they were introduced to young ladies while at the rink. The writer also advised them to profess interest

in astronomy so that they could justify evening walks at the Beaches.<sup>22</sup>

Other expressions of an incipient youthful counter-culture took more serious forms. A large number of students turned out, for instance, for the 1898 debate on "Should women vote;" Miss McRae took the women's side and was greeted with loud applause when she argued that the vote in women's hands would "purify" politics.<sup>23</sup> Complaints by students over their heavy work-load led to their withdrawal both from the debating society and from the Young Men's Christian Association.<sup>24</sup> These complaints were part of a heated newspaper debate at this time over the abnormal increase in subjects on the public school curriculum and on the stringency of the teachers' examinations, both of which cut down on the number of male teachers who were winning certification.<sup>25</sup> Superintendent A.H. MacKay resolved these issues by introducing his New Education reform measures of 1908, which reduced the number of papers required for high school and for teachers' examinations. In effect, the "affective discipline" promoted by evangelical Presbyterians and by the politically active maternal feminists at the end of the nineteenth century was changing the social efficiency culture promoted earlier by MacKay and by many of his urban, male colleagues. The long-range effect on the students, however, was to further segregate them into vocational, academic and later special education

streams, their placement firmly in the hands of the powerful (male) school administrator.

Despite these bureaucratic strategies, however, control of the socialization of adolescents was slipping out of the hands of these middle-class Presbyterian leaders. They began to misconstrue even reasonable attempts by students to govern their own recreational activities. A 1913 request by female students to use the convocation hall to play basketball, in imitation of their male colleagues who began using the YMCA for gymnasium classes beginning in 1911, was denied by the Pictou Academy board, "apparently not caring to have the followers of the young ladies roaming around and through the Academy while waiting for their lady loves to turn from Mars to Venus."<sup>26</sup> A number of students, who commuted by train from the New Glasgow area after 1890 and who were unable to participate in the social culture of the town students because of their train schedule, formed their own group; unwittingly the Academy exacerbated the stratification of lower-class students from their middle-class seatmates.<sup>27</sup> School officials at this time attempted to quell the fighting between east and west-end Pictou town students by establishing a consolidated upper elementary school which was affiliated with the Academy. But attempts to draw out the talents of individual rural female students, such as Elizabeth Tibbel who greatly enjoyed the art program while

studying in Grades 10 and 11, did not allay their growing feelings of alienation in the face of the town socialites.<sup>28</sup> More assertive students, such as Hazel Corbin (1908-9), who dared to pass a note in class and was briefly expelled for this, left the academic environment in disgust.<sup>29</sup>

Through extra-curricular activities,<sup>30</sup> through school sports and through church and school-sponsored social events, school authorities had attempted to construct a cohesive school society and thereby morally to temper the side-effects of the excessive competition engendered by the meritocratic program at Pictou Academy. But the prevailing culture of possessive individualism defeated these efforts. Students recognized that their community rewarded material success and intellectual ability. The debating society stars, such as Dewitt Young, Frank Patterson and Frank Johnson, were admired by socialite females, such as Jean Ferguson. She easily recalled outstanding classmates, such as Emmaline MacDonald, one of the few females who became lawyers.<sup>31</sup> Neither in their interviews nor in their debating topics did the students mention the economic and social dislocations of their region as Pictou County began to experience serious de-industrialization.<sup>32</sup> The competitive individualism stressed by their school culture focussed students' attention on their own successful accreditation, or on

escapism via their new youth culture.

The First World War brought a change to these trends. As the 1916 centennial of its founding drew nearer, townspeople, local historians and alumni across the continent began to organize a great celebration to mark the founding of Pictou Academy. Letters poured in as the publicity campaign mounted. Over \$8,000 was raised for students' scholarships and bursaries. The two-day celebration featured a parade of tribute to MacKay and Maclellan, the two surviving principals, ceremonies at both Presbyterian churches and a large convocation of the 500 alumni on the lawn of the Academy grounds to hear speeches by their eminent peers.<sup>33</sup> One of the most significant addresses was delivered by President Stanley MacKenzie of Dalhousie University. He dwelt on the heroic past of Pictou's early Scottish pioneers, who had courageously fought against poverty and educational discrimination by the Anglican establishment. Because of his poverty, the Pictou "lad of parts" worked hard, lost no time and emerged "a scholar, a thinker and a doer, master of his subject, and with his powers of intellectual industry trained to the fighting point. . . .Self-reliance was the product of industry and of mastery of the subject, and aggressiveness was the dower of the Scot." Reifying the secularism afflicting Presbyterianism, MacKenzie considered schools to be "spiritual and enlightening" temples which led the individual away from

the everyday world "the sordid and ephemeral, [and drove the imagination] to the higher and the beautiful and the real. . . .With higher aspirations and loftier ideals come those spiritual blessings which give character and moral fibre to a people."<sup>34</sup>

MacKenzie and his colleagues were constructing a Scottish myth<sup>35</sup> of a virtuous past which all Academy students were to emulate. Personal influence and activism, exacerbated by the wartime realities, were to be channeled into community service. Activist leaders, such as Frank Parker Day or John W. MacLeod, epitomized this new idealism because of their war-time service and public health campaigns respectively.<sup>36</sup> While the idealism of MacKenzie and his platform colleagues was shared by a world-wide Anglo-Saxon Protestant community and would form part of the philosophy of the social gospel movement and the progressive education movement,<sup>37</sup> the Scottish myth was Pictou's unique construction. Idealism and Scottish mythology would prove to be the twentieth century moral replacements for Presbyterianism, which throughout the nineteenth century primarily had grounded the socialization efforts of family and school.

Jackson Lears describes this emerging liberal, secularizing culture as a form of antimodernist discontent which avoided the tragic contradictions within capitalistic-Protestant culture by sentimentalizing vitality and

social usefulness.<sup>38</sup> Eric Hobsbawm, on the other hand, considers invented tradition to be "a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past."<sup>39</sup> The implicit message of Pictou Academy's centenary ceremonies, as far as female alumni were concerned, was that the construction of traditional Scottish culture meant a return to paternalistic control. In a series of acid newspaper letters, a number of female community leaders recounted how their efforts to participate with the executive committee in planning the celebrations had been rebuffed, how the Local Council of Women then conducted its own bursary campaign, how outstanding women graduates of Pictou Academy were ignored and, finally, how no place on the platform had been given to women. One writer concluded, "One cannot of course expect to find the feminist movement strongly emphasized in a town so deeply entrenched [sic] in old-fashioned conservatism as Pictou, but one might have hoped for at least the Scottish-Presbyterian principle of justice."<sup>40</sup>

While this exchange illustrates how competing interest groups vied for control of the process of defining the emerging Scottish mythology, further events illustrate how the myth was translated into institutional forms. In

1919 the centenary committee incorporated itself as the Pictou Academy Augmentation Fund. Under the dynamic leadership of its secretary and Pictou Town Councillor, D.A. Cameron,<sup>41</sup> the organization decided to build a boys' residence in order to reform "in a new way the ancient link between the Presbyterian body and the Pictou Academy." The Town of Pictou agreed to donate twenty acres of land on the shore of the harbour (the old Yorston property) for this purpose. The Presbyterian Synod of the Maritime Provinces was to nominate the resident master and have a representative on the Board of Trustees. In this way, it was hoped "that the students, while pursuing their studies, may be brought under those moral and religious and social influences which conduce to the development of the highest ideals of life and citizenship."<sup>42</sup>

Scottish-Presbyterian ideals and cultural symbols were used increasingly by political and religious leaders in Pictou and in Nova Scotia to establish a new sense of community.<sup>43</sup> The Hector celebrations of 1923 and 1973 brought thousands of successful Pictonians home; the publicity "kept alive the high standards of religion and education that characterized the Scots through the long years since the first arrivals in Pictou County."<sup>44</sup> The town's market square was re-named Hector Park and a monument unveiled during the 150th anniversary to the "Landing of the Highlanders." Several years later, led by

John A. Stewart from Scotland, Nova Scotia changed its coat of arms back to the original ancient Scottish arms.<sup>45</sup> In reality the school culture which Pictonians had constructed had successfully displaced the strong family culture of these Highlanders and, in whig fashion, it had taught their children the organizing principles of capitalism and modernization, rather than their historical past. Pictonians had learned that a credentialising school system, which they had largely designed, enabled their children to be mobile and to enter the professions and the middle-class in large numbers.

The force of the myth in the collective unconscious of these Pictonians, however, can be seen in their 1924-5 overwhelming vote against joining the United Church of Canada. As Keith Clifford writes, their strong defence was not a reactionary act but rather a conserving movement "which had no purpose other than the preservation of the Presbyterian Church in Canada from what was perceived to be an unwarranted attack upon its continued existence."<sup>46</sup> Largely led by elders, such as Pictou's D.A. Cameron and John McKeen, who felt acutely betrayed by their ministers, their actions can be seen as a last-ditch effort by Pictonians to regain control of their community as central Canada took over more and more decision-making power. These strongly individualistic Scottish-Canadians deplored the abandonment of their church for nationalistic ends and

refused to be directed or controlled by their ministers, by their theology professors or by theological bureaucrats. Despite the schooling policies of MacKay, despite their capitalistic tendencies to strive for material success and status, despite the tensions between their affective and social-efficiency forms of discipline, these Pictonians continued to have a strong sense of place and of their vision of the historical past.<sup>47</sup> Perhaps their creeping doubts about the promise of a progressive world order after World War One made them more prone to accept idealistic myths about their virtuous Scottish past; constructed history buttressed their family and community relations and helped to quash any residual Calvinistic anxieties.<sup>48</sup>

As Hobsbawm concludes, invented tradition can be categorized as having three overlapping types, those establishing or symbolizing social cohesion or the membership of groups, those establishing or legitimizing institutions, status or selections of authority, and those whose main purpose was socialization, the inculcation of beliefs or value systems as "conventions of behaviour." Pictou Academy's tradition of whig historiography; A.H. MacKay's bureaucratic re-organization of the school system, supposedly based on a Scottish principle of democratic opportunity for poorer people; the meritocratic practices of Pictou Academy, justified on the Scottish principle of academic excellence; the voluntary extra-curricular

activities, especially in natural science, based on the Scottish common-sense providential outlook; and finally, the centenary celebrations, conducted by eminent male graduates, all were designed to foster not only a community ideal, but also "the corporate sense of superiority of [male] élites."<sup>49</sup> In this construction process the Pictou élite demonstrated their considerable success in achieving middle-class cultural hegemony, not only in Pictou County but in the province at large, between 1880 and 1920.

#### NOTES FOR CHAPTER SIX

1. I would like to thank John Reid, Eric Ricker, my husband, Connla Wood, and the two anonymous readers of Historical Studies in Education/Revue d'histoire de l'éducation for their constructive criticisms of an earlier draft of this paper, which was presented to the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Association for Foundations in Education at Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, June 6, 1992 and which, in more extended form, has just been published in HSE/RHE 6, 2, 1994: 281-302.

2. J.M. Bumsted, "Scots," in James H. Martin (ed.), The Canadian Encyclopedia [CE] Edmonton: Hurtig, 1988. Between 1770 and 1815 Bumsted estimates that over 15,000 Highland Scots came to Canada, most settling in Prince Edward Island and Upper Canada. By 1817 the population of the Pictou district was estimated to be 8,737.

3. Ibid.: 1960. And see, B. Anne Wood, "The Significance of Evangelical Presbyterian Politics in the Construction of State Schooling: A Case Study of the Pictou District, 1817-1866," Acadiensis 20, 2, Spring 1991: 62-85.

4. John G. Reid, "Beyond the Democratic Intellect: The Scottish Example and University Reform in Canada's Maritime Provinces, 1870-1933," in Paul Axelrod and John G. Reid (eds.), Youth, University and Canadian Society, Essays in the Social History of Higher Education Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989: 276; and see, Ibid.: 280-1, for the importance of the myth.

5. A.A. MacKenzie, review essay on Gilbert Foster,

Language and Poverty: The Persistence of Scottish Gaelic in Eastern Canada St. John's: Institute of Social and Economic Research, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1988, in The Canadian Historical Review 71, 3, September 1990: 428.

6. T.J. Jackson Lears, "The Concept of Cultural Hegemony: Problems and Possibilities," American Historical Review 90, June 1985: 590. And see, Michael Gauvreau, "Beyond the Half-Way House: Evangelicalism and the Shaping of English Canadian Culture," review essay in Acadiensis 20, 2, Spring 1991: 158: "the old [Canadian] national history and the new social history were united in marginalizing the religious experience and in failing to recognize its creative role in shaping cultural traditions, social forms, and political ideologies;" and, Ibid.: 159: "American historians have shown little reticence in explaining not only how the changing religious experience provided much of the ideological underpinning of the American 'middle class' in the early decades of the 19th century, but also how Protestant religion, in both the formal sense and in terms of the cultural values it promoted, contributed to an ongoing process of institutional and state formation."

7. J.H. Meacham and Company, Illustrated Historical Atlas of Pictou County, Nova Scotia Philadelphia, Pa.: Meacham, 1879: 12, 11. In 1874 Pictou was the second town in the province to be incorporated, Dartmouth being the first in 1873. In 1879 the County Incorporation Act was passed. In 1884 the province passed a general bill for the incorporation of towns with the objective of facilitating the municipal taxation of banks and insurance companies throughout the province. These pieces of legislation led to the gradual centralization of provincial government capital expenditures in such areas as bridges and roads, and the gradual loss of control by municipal and town councils over their own officials. The latter increasingly asked for protection as professionals against partisan strife in their local communities: see, J. Murray Beck, The Evolution of Municipal Government in Nova Scotia, 1749-1973 Nova Scotia Royal Commission on Education, Public Services and Provincial-Municipal Relations, Sept. 1973. A number of Pictou Academy graduates were provincial and town council leaders, directly involved in this professionalization process. Many served on the Pictou Academy Alumni Association, formed in November 1893. Of the 114 members in 1896, 93 could be traced: 37% (42) were professionals, 26% (30) small businessmen, 9% (11) administrators, 4% (4) skilled craftsmen, 3% (3) students and 3% (3) politicians. All were male. Eighteen (15%) had moved to other parts of Canada or to foreign countries. See, Pictou Academy, Course

of Study for the Year 1896-7 and Catalogue For the Years 1894-5-6 Pictou: The Advocate, 1896: 19-21.

Meacham cites the 1871 census figures regarding the religious break-down of Pictou County:

Presbyterian Church of the Lower Provinces	14,105
Church of Scotland [Kirk]	12,250
Roman Catholic	2,965
Church of England	1,470
Wesleyan Methodists	797
Baptists	345
all others	193

Del Muise estimates that by 1881 79.7% of the population of Pictou County was Presbyterian and 82.3% was of Scottish origin: see, "Elections and Constituencies, Federal Politics in Nova Scotia, 1867 - 1878," Ph.D. thesis, University of Western Ontario, 1971, Appendix II.

8. First-year students (103 in number) studied reading, rhetoric, elocution, composition, music, arithmetic, algebra, geometry, modern geography, British-American history, physics and the keeping of accounts. A smaller number (65) of first-year students took the rudiments of Latin, French collections (45), botany (67) and physiology (78). Similar courses were prescribed for second, third and fourth-year students (class added after the opening of the new building in 1882), whose prescribed courses had increasing amounts of mathematics, science and botany.

9. Table 17, AR 1889, Appendix 5, Journals of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly [JHA] 1890.

10. Register of the Attendance, Studies and General Standing of Pupils in School Term Ending April 1889, Public Archives of Nova Scotia [PANS], Micro: Pictou Academy Register. There were 14 females and 32 males, whose ages varied from 15 to 44 years.

11. See, Randall Collins, Credential Society: An Historical Sociology of Education and Stratification New York: Academic Press, 1979, and, Magalli Sarfatti Larson, The Rise of Professionalism: A Sociological Analysis Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977.

12. David Hogan, "Examinations, Merit, and Morals: The Market Revolution and Disciplinary Power in Philadelphia's Public Schools, 1838-1868," HSE/RHE 4, 1, Spring 1992: 43.

13. For Australian parallels see, Marjorie R.

Theobald, "Discourse of Danger: Gender and the History of Elementary Schooling in Australia, 1850-1880," *Ibid.*, 1, 1, Spring 1989: 29-52.

14. Fred Yorston, President of The Montreal Standard, vividly described MacKay's authoritarian regime, disciplinary and classroom practices in "Academy Memories," The Pictou Advocate [PA], December 25, 1896.

15. Pictou Academy, Pictou, Nova Scotia, Course of Study for the Year 1894-95, Catalogue 1893-94 Pictou: The Advocate, 1894: 28.

16. *Ibid.*: 16. To underscore their professional qualifications the New England Conservatory masters under whom they were continuing to study were listed in the catalogue.

17. PA, July 20, 1894.

18. PA, December 18, 1896.

19. When Miss Adela Henderson gave her graduating piano recital in 1912, she was given a serious review in the Pictou Advocate and two small girls presented her with beautiful bouquets of roses and carnations: see, PA, June 15, 1912. Roland Sherwood and several people I interviewed mentioned "the smugness" of Pictonians before World War II: see, Roland H. Sherwood, "Landing of the Hector," Nova Scotia Historical Quarterly 3, 2, June 1973: 96.

20. PA, December 8, 1899; PA, December 15, 1899; PA, December 22, 1899. This customary parade began in 1887 during the town's celebration of Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee.

21. PA, December 30, 1898. Over 400 people participated in this event which included food, decorations, games and dancing. By 1911 the voting contest had changed from the prettiest to the most popular girl at Pictou Academy; this poll raised over twenty dollars, which was used to purchase a set of dishes for the Academy. The victor was awarded a prize by the committee: see, PA, March 4, 1911.

22. PA, January 13, 1899; and see, PA, February 10, 1899: the debating club was dwindling because skating held more of a pull than either debate meetings or academic studies.

23. PA, December 23, 1898.

24. PA, January 27, 1899.

25. PA, September 20, 1895.

26. PA, December 6, 1913. As Brian McKillop notes, the introduction of organized sports on Canadian campuses at this time was justified because it prepared male students for the harsh world of business, which they were shortly to enter, and dispelled the wimpish, book-work image of the Victorian academic: A.B. McKillop, "Marching as to War: Elements of Ontario Undergraduate Culture, 1880-1914," in Axelrod, Youth, University and Canadian Society: 82.

27. Transcript of interview Mr. James Douglas by Murrin Leim, 1973, Hector Centre, Pictou, OH 16-6.

28. Transcript of interview Elizabeth Tibbel by Murrin Leim, Pictou, 1977, Ibid., OH 23-2. Tibbel had more success with her writing, publishing a number of poems later in The Pictou Advocate. When asked whether she had ever shown her poems to the Academy masters, she replied that she never had the courage to do so.

29. Transcript of interview with Jean Ferguson by Hazel, [1970s] Ibid., OH16-2, p. 18-19. Corbin went to New Glasgow, took a business course, earned money by working for the Evening News, then went to New York where she trained as a nurse. She became a noted maternity-infant care specialist among wealthy New Yorkers and had two popular books published: How to be a Mother and How to be a Father.

30. See, B. Anne Wood, God, Science and Schooling: John William Dawson's Pictou Years, 1820-1855, Truro: Nova Scotia Teachers College, 1991; and, B. Anne Wood, "Thomas McCulloch's Use of Science in Promoting a Liberal Education," Acadiensis 17, 1, Autumn 1987: 56-73.

31. Interview of Ferguson by Hazel. Patterson and Johnson subsequently became judges. Ferguson's account abounds with anecdotes about Pictou's social élite, their teas, parties, homes and the clever male students she admired.

32. See, Janet Guildford, "Coping with De-Industrialization: The Nova Scotia Department of Technical Education, 1907-1930," Acadiensis 16, 2, Spring 1987: 69-84. Although A.H. MacKay was very instrumental in creating these structural changes at a bureaucratic level and in introducing a New Educational "affective individualism" ethic at the common school and popular level, his

meritocratic policies at the secondary school level continued to promote an academic élite.

33. PA, September 1, 1916.

34. A.S. MacKenzie, cited in Ibid.

35. A similar invention regarding Highland history and tradition occurred in Scotland during the nineteenth century. See, Hugh Trevor-Roper, "The Invention of Tradition: The Highland Tradition of Scotland," in Eric Hobsbawm, et al (eds.), The Invention of Tradition Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983: 15-41.

36. See, Gwendolyn Davies, "Afterward," in Frank Parker Day, Rockbound Toronto: University of Toronto Press [1928], 1989: 317. And see, L.G. "Bud" White, "The history of Pictou County War Memorial," PA, November 6, 1991; and, George H. Cox, M.D., and John W. MacLeod, Consumption: Its Cause, Prevention, and Cure London: Eyre and Spottinwode, 1912. MacLeod, a Pictou Academy graduate of 1898, persuaded Lord Strathcona to underwrite the publication costs of the book, 42,000 copies of which were published and distributed free to people in eastern Nova Scotia.

37. See, Brian J. Fraser, The Social Uplifters: Presbyterian Progressives and the Social Gospel in Canada, 1875-1915 Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier Press, 1988, and B. Anne Wood, Idealism Transformed: The Making of a Progressive Educator Kingston and Montreal: McGill Queen's University Press, 1985.

38. T.J. Jackson Lears, No Place of Grace: antimodernism and the transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920 New York: Pantheon Books, 1981: xiv: "By exalting 'authentic' experience [promoted by New Educators, such as A.H. MacKay, and by progressive educators, such as Henry Munro] as an end in itself, antimodern impulses reinforced the shift from a Protestant ethos of salvation through self-denial to a therapeutic ideal of self-fulfilment in this world through exuberant health and intense experience." This new ethos complemented the consumer culture of the bureaucratic corporate state. It also formed a major element in citizenship acculturation in Canadian schools: see, B. Anne Wood, "The right ordering of our several loyalties": Canadian Citizenship for a Progressive State," in Keith A. McLeod (ed.), Canada and Citizenship Education Toronto: Canadian Education Association, 1989: 19-26.

39. Hobsbawm, The Invention of Tradition: 1.

40. PA, September 8, 1916. Subsequent letters supported her viewpoint. See, *Ibid.*, September 22, 1916. The writer claimed that 2/3 of current enrolment at the Academy was female and that the majority of alumni at the reunion were women.

41. Cameron was a graduate of Pictou Academy and Dalhousie University (1904), where he had been an outstanding football player. In 1919 he was Halifax Manager of the Sun Life Assurance Company. He was appointed Provincial Secretary in 1923 under the E.H. Armstrong Liberal government.

42. PA, February 20, 1920. The name was subsequently changed to the Pictou Academy Educational Foundation, an organization which still exists. In 1923-4 Dr. W.C. Ross was appointed resident master and sports director at the Academy. He became a general proselytizer for the Academy cause throughout the province. Interview Dr. C.B. Smith, Pictou, June 18, 1986. During World War II the navy took over the residence and it was sold to the government in 1945.

43. See the different type of mythology constructed for the promotion of tourism, as suggested by Ian McKay in "Tartanism Triumphant: The Construction of Scottishness in Nova Scotia, 1933-1954," Acadiensis 21, 2, Spring 1992: 5-47. See also, Michael Boudreau, "Ship of Dreams" [reconstruction of the Hector], New Maritimes, 11, 1, September/October 1992: 6-15. And see, *Ibid.*, "'A Rare and Unusual Treat of Historical Significance': The 1923 Hector Celebration and the Political Economy of the Past," Journal of Canadian Studies 28, 4, Winter 1993-4: 28-48.

44. Roland H. Sherwood, "Landing of the Hector," Nova Scotia Historical Quarterly 3, 2, June 1973: 94; and see, J.M. Bumsted, "Hector," in CE, Vol. II: 975-6.

45. Conrad Swan, Canada: Symbols of Sovereignty Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1977: 124. The ancient arms were reinstated by King George V in January 1929.

46. N. Keith Clifford, The Resistance to Church Union in Canada 1904-1939 Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1985: 2.

47. This thesis supports Gwendolyn Davies' assertion that "home place" is "a [Maritime] symbol of cultural continuity and psychological identification in the face of social fragmentation, outmigration, and a continuing

hardscrabble economy." At the same time, it argues with McKay that cultural construction was constantly occurring and imitated similar trends throughout the western world. See, Gwendolyn Davies, Studies in Maritime Literary History, 1760-1930 Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 1991: 194.

48. See, Toby A. Foshay on J.D. Logan: Canadian Man of Letters Hantsport: Lancelot Press, 1982: 19: "Logan [by 1896] has come a considerable distance from the Calvinistic Presbyterianism of his youth. There is neither sin nor the consequent necessity of grace in Logan's idealism (whereas in Calvinism they are determinate in man's relation to God). Tension between his newly-developed philosophical views and traditional religious doctrines appear in Logan's writings. . . . and results in a serious life-crisis in the years 1892-1902."

49. Hobsbawm, The Invention of Tradition: 9 and 10. Underlining in original.

## CONCLUDING COMMENT

Throughout the six chapters, or intellectual essays, this thesis has elucidated the current interpretive stance of cultural historians. In Chapter One the types of questions asked of evidence and its context revealed multiple layers of meaning embedded in answers dealing with the central focus of the study, namely what was the relationship of schooling to power. Pictou Academy became an important symbol in the early contest for moral/intellectual leadership of Scottish immigrants in the Pictou district. By asking specific questions of a significant piece of evidence, Chapter One argues that political and religious contexts provide the keys to understanding why Pictou Academy's initial success was halted and why the monopoly of power held by Secessionist Presbyterians in the Pictou district was broken by the skilful tactics of evangelical Scottish and Nova Scotian Kirk leaders.

In contrast to the cultural approach taken in Chapter One, Chapters Two and Three analyze earlier whig and more recent structural interpretations. While whig historians took account of the relationship of Pictou Academy to the province's emerging reformist political platform in the first half of the nineteenth century, they portrayed Pictou's Secessionist leaders as heroes and the professional success of the Academy's graduates as proof of the worth of the institution's liberal program of studies.

By ignoring the social context and by denying/castigating dissenting voices in the community, the whig interpretation reduced Pictou Academy's nineteenth-century history to a black-and-white portrayal. The complexity of the early power struggles and the significant school policy changes by Kirk leaders was not brought out by these whig interpreters.

Structural historians of recent times also would have missed significant elements of the professionalizing ideal widely being disseminated throughout the Pictou district in this pre-industrial era. By concentrating on the early economic transformation of the Pictou region from commercial to industrial capitalism, these historians would have attempted to link school developments to economic progress. They would concentrate on common schooling, rather than on the significant élite leadership of Pictou Academy. The cultural historian, in contrast, by paying close attention to rhetoric used by leaders in defining the professional ideal, by examining institutional practices which exemplify professional values, and by analyzing the effects of these practices on classroom methodology, on students, on teachers, and on the community generally comes closer to answering current academic questions about the relationship of schooling to power. Pictou Academy played a key role in modelling the professional ideal for Nova Scotians. In the process it disseminated bourgeois

cultural norms, which became embedded in many community practices and in voluntary societies. Above all, Pictou Academy graduates succeeded in breaking the attempted cultural monopoly by the Halifax merchantocracy over governmental policy, including the design of schooling.

Chapters Four to Six trace the subtle ways in which bourgeois discipline, professional credentialism and Scottish/progressive myths were promulgated throughout Pictou County and Nova Scotia. From the early intellectual leadership of Dr. Thomas McCulloch to the later academic and professional success of nineteenth-century Pictou County students, this thesis argues that the mentality of school leaders, the power of their rhetoric on their students and on the community, and the specific institutional forms taken by their disciplinary practices need to be analyzed in order to understand the complex relationship of schooling to power. The chapters review stages of development of disciplinary power and the professional ideal from early institutional forms, in which leadership was contested, to later more hidden bureaucratic forms. A wealth of evidence, both public and private, is necessary even to begin this type of cultural analysis. But the questions asked of the evidence are even more critical. While conclusions drawn in this thesis apply to the distinct culture constructed in Pictou during the nineteenth century, the cultural insights gleaned by this study

can provide school historians and the educated general public with a more sophisticated understanding of the meanings of schooling held by their nineteenth-century forebears.

Since the inculcation of culture is a constructive process and power is often contested in the initial stages of school development, the historian should pay particular attention to voices of dissent, often buried from public historical records. These voices reveal policy alternatives, divergent forecasts of possible directions for schooling. For North Americans currently concerned about the future of public schooling, they illustrate the complex social experiences of the past, which could be contrasted with our own understanding of schooling today.

By mid-century secondary schooling in Nova Scotia was well established, but vigorous competition existed between institutions in order to attract students and to remain solvent. While the security of teachers was tenuous and their work-load punishing by today's standards, Pictou's Union Academy board of trustees ran an efficient institution that appeared to meet the varying needs of the population. Power was controlled by representatives of local constituents. School credentials were earned by the talented few, who used them to gain access to professional status, especially after the opening of Dalhousie

College in 1863. At the same time, as Chapter Four argues, hidden bourgeois forms of power were spreading throughout the Pictou district and moderate leaders were successfully convincing the population at large that years of feuding in the community was impeding its economic and moral development. By mid-century people in the district appeared to acquiesce to McCulloch's initial justifications for liberal education; college-level schooling was necessary for adequate professional leadership in significant policy areas--education, government, the ministry, law and medicine.

Throughout the thesis it was maintained that, aside from successful rhetorical campaigns by various Presbyterian clergy, one reason Pictonians were so quickly enamoured of bourgeois cultural norms and institutions was that they could see immediate gains accruing to early graduates of Pictou Academy, who used their talents and their school credentials to achieve political and professional power. These graduates modelled the professional ideal and experienced few impediments, either from state regulation or from other competing ethnic or religious groups in the province, to their spectacular rise from modest beginnings to positions of power. Whig rhetoric advanced their claims that only the meritorious should be deemed worthy of leadership. When Dalhousie College reopened and when the state school system began to be

constructed, it was significant that Pictou professionals quickly sought key policy positions in government. They clearly understood the importance of establishing cultural institutions embedded with their meritocratic norms in order to maintain their professional monopoly of power. Their professional ideal had enabled these Presbyterians to overcome their own marginalized status on the periphery of power in Nova Scotia. In the context of the province's weak control of its scattered population and vulnerable financial state as it entered the railway era, the professional promise of order, of social discipline, and of expert leadership appeared to be substantially believed by Nova Scotians in the 1880s. Pictou Academy's provincial leadership in the final stages of this professionalization-credentialising process was signalled by the appointment of A.H. MacKay and subsequently Henry Munro as major superintendents of education between the 1890s and the 1930s. Power by this time was firmly in the hands of central-office administrators; last-ditch efforts by local boards to regain control of school policy proved largely ineffective. While school policy was now protected from the political feuding of earlier local interest groups, it had now become completely monopolized by professional experts. McCulloch's professional ideal was successfully embedded in a wide range of institutional, cultural and social forms. Embourgeoisement had been achieved primarily

by means of a school culture that was meritocratic, credentialised and largely controlled by professional schoolmen.

With hindsight and widespread public understanding of such notions as empowerment, the construction of culture, hidden agendas and the weight of tradition/myth, one could address the problems of power and of multiple cultural meanings and apply them to school policy today. Billions of dollars of public money is vested in state schooling. It is time that rigorous public debate take place to question such matters as the hidden power of school administrators, the rationality of credentialism, and the role of institutional discipline in our society. While many school practices, bureaucratic procedures and regulatory power structures were considered justifiable in the context of the nineteenth century, are they rational today? If so, the public should understand why. It behooves us to emulate the courage of our forebears and to construct school cultures appropriate for the twenty-first century.

How could history be used in this constructive process and what role should schooling play in this important endeavour? From history we can learn that one of the most effective methods to pursue understanding is to allow claims to be challenged and contested. Necessary conditions, which evolved during the nineteenth century,

for arriving at this understanding are those of freedom of speech, the rational consideration of a wide assortment of evidence, and the training of people to distance themselves from their own experience/self-interest in assessing which ideas are appropriate for particular contexts. This liberal educational goal, as William Hare writes, is "a process of gradually improving our understanding through the exercise of judgment and an on-going reflection on the judgments we make. . . [leading to tentative 'truths', which are supported by] facts and reasons and [which. . .] convey to the students the idea that judgments are important, evidential, and revisable."<sup>1</sup>

The serious pursuit of history teaches students methods of disciplined study which deal with argumentation, with problems of sifting and weighing evidence and with testing the reliability of facts. Students learn to have a respect for evidence and they acquire a critical, questioning attitude towards the interpretation of meaning. In this post-modern global context, students and the public at large are beginning to understand the complexity of the process of interpreting past actions, the complicated reasons for people's behaviour and the often illogical or accidental factors which affect outcomes. History is an ideal subject to introduce issues such as credibility, plausibility and degrees of certainty.

Historians, book publishers, curriculum specialists

and teachers increasingly realize the importance of communication skills. From their varying perspectives they should guide the public debate on our schools in such areas as what kinds of meaning/understanding matter and why? What history should be taught which would cultivate this type of understanding? How could these realities be adapted to the appropriate conceptual levels of students and of the public at large? What types of time constraints/administrative roadblocks/limitation of resources must be overcome to reach the desired levels of judgment and/or understanding? A first priority of historians and school leaders, therefore, like Thomas McCulloch at the beginning of the nineteenth century, should be to arouse political consciousness concerning the importance of educational issues for our culture and for its survival in a global context. This thesis attempts to promote this debate both in educational and in public settings.

#### NOTES FOR CONCLUDING COMMENT

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Canada Council Doctoral Fellowship	1973
Canada Council Doctoral Fellowship extension	1975
FWTAO Writer's Award	1976
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Social Science Federation of Canada subvention for <u>MSS: IDEALISM TRANSFORMED: The Making of a Progressive Educator</u>	1985
Dalhousie University Research Grants	1983-9
Pictou Academy Educational Foundation	1983-8
Canadian History of Education Association, Founders' Prize awarded for the "best book published on the history of education in Canada, between 1983 and 1986"	1986
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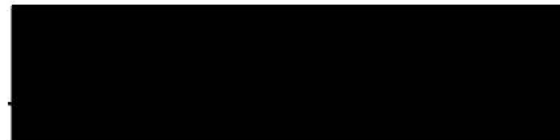
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MEANINGS OF SCHOOLING:

Cultural Interpretations of Pictou  
Academy in the Nineteenth Century

Author:



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22 April, 1995