The Journal of Educational Thought, 10 (1976), 49-61.

This article examines the relationship between the physical growth of a rapidly expanding urban community and the growth in complexity and bureaucratic organizational patterns of that community's public school system. In the generation preceding the First World War, Calgary grew from frontier setlement to mature urban, commercial centre. During the same period of time, formal schooling in Calgary passed through several stages of bureaucratic growth, from that of private-venture schooling in 1884 to that of a complex urban school system in 1914.

ROBERT M. STAMP*

The Response to Urban Growth: The Bureaucratization of Public Education in Calgary, 1884-1914

Speaking before a Calgary audience in the spring of 1971, Canadian historian Maurice Careless concluded his analysis of urban growth in western Canada with these words:

> Lifestyle in the western cities had very soon become largely a counterpart of eastern. This simply indicated the common conditions of modern urban living, for the urban West had virtually become contemporaneous with the urban East by 1914 . . . [Western cities] had in a few short decades compressed a century or so of eastern growth . . . [1]

The purpose of this paper is to test the Careless hypothesis on one facet of development in one western Canadian city — the public school system of Calgary. From rudimentary beginnings in the winter of 1884, public schooling in Calgary grew rapidly in both size and complexity in the thirty-year period leading up to the First World War. "A century or so of eastern growth" was indeed compressed "in a few short decades."

It is not difficult to document the physical growth of the Calgary Public School sysem during these years. Detailed records are readily available on the number of pupils, number of teachers, and number of school buildings which provide annual or even monthly comparisons. But an examination of the physical growth would satisfy only one of the two categories of urban history recently proposed by Gilbert Stelter. Stelter refers here to "those studies which deal with historical processes or events in an urban setting — anything that has happened in cities — without too much worry for what is 'urban' in the subject."[2] It is therefore an analysis of the growing *complexity* and bureaucratization of public schooling in Calgary, developments that re-

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*A paper presented by Robert M. Stamp, Professor of educational foundations, The University of Calgary, at the Frontier Calgary Conference, May 1975, sponsored by The University of Calgary and the Alberta Historical Society. The paper was subsequently published in the conference proceedings, *Frontier Calgary*, ed., A. W. Raspovach and H. C. Klassen (Calgary: McClelland and Stewart West, 1975). The author wishes to thank Maurice Careless of the University of Toronto and Henry Klassen of The University of Calgary for their helpful comments on an earlier draft of this paper.

[1]Maurice Careless, "Aspects of Urban Life in the West," in *Prairie Perspectives 2: Selected Papers of the Western Canada Studies Conferences, 1970, 1971*, ed. Anthony Rasporich and Henry Klassen (Toronto: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973), p. 38.

[2]Gilbert A. Stelter, "The Historian's Approach to Canada's Urban Past," *Histoire sociale — Social History* VIII (13) (May 1974), pp. 9-10.

sulted from the school board's response to the pressures of urban growth, that would best serve to test the Careless hypothesis. Thus Stelter's second category of urban history becomes the more crucial — "work in which the author has concerned himself with what is generically 'urban' in his subject. [Here] the city is usually considered as a special kind of environment with unique patterns of social organization."[3]

Between 1884 and 1914 public schooling in Calgary passed through five different stages of development. Each successive stage produced its unique "pattern of social organization" in response to the growing complexity of providing schooling in a rapidly developing urban centre. The first stage comprises the thirteen month period from February 1884 to March 1885, and is characterized by a voluntary approach to education through the vehicle of a small private school. Stage two lasts from 1885 to 1892 and witnesses the establishment of a public school board and a large central school. The third stage occupies the period from 1892 to 1903 and is highlighted by successive administrative regulations that increasingly remove the management of schools from the direct concern of ordinary citizens. Stage four spans the years from 1903 to 1911 and sees public schooling move from the casual and informal pattern of a nineteenth century frontier community to the more bureaucratic pattern of a twentieth century commercial centre. The final stage, evident in the three years preceding the First World War, ushers in the full flowering of a complex, urban school system. It was the "special kind of environment" produced by urban growth that led to the increasingly complex and increasingly bureaucratic five patterns of school system management.

I

It would be flattering to report that formal schooling arrived early in the little community huddled around Fort Calgary. But this is not the case. The town boasted several general merchants, grocers and dry-goods firms, livery stables and blacksmiths, doctors, jewellers and preachers, even a photographer and a sign and showcard writing firm, before the first school began in 1884. Schools were dependent on two ingredients — a sufficient number of white children and, even more important in the initial stages of support, a sizeable group of white women — wives, mothers and homesteaders — who saw certain advantages in the socializing and civilizing role that schools could play on the frontier.

Not till the spring of 1882 did the first white woman homesteader arrive from the East. But it was the women who soon added a tone to pioneer society that created the necessary climate for schooling. As W. B. Fraser writes in his history of the city:

> Many of Calgary's pioneer women . . . had come from good homes in the East. Although they were prepared to rough it for a while, they had no intention of allowing their new home to remain a frontier town forever. Women were active in every educational and cultural movement of the day . . . Often it was the pioneer women who first realized that a wholesome community needs more than just a healthy economy. They wanted, and they built, a better society in which their children could grow.[4]

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[3]*Ibid.*, p. 10.

[4]W. B. Fraser, *Calgary* (Toronto: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967), pp. 59-60.

The usual view of a frontier town is that women remained very much in the minority for years to come. Yet Max Foran's research on early Calgary shows that by 1891 "the town had a far more balanced proportion of women to men in the 20-to-40 age bracket" than did most of the North West Territories.[5]

By the beginning of 1884 Calgary was moving from the stage of frontier settlement to organized community. The arrival of the railway, the growth of the population to 500, and the continued influx of wives and families led community leaders to take the first step in organizing education. At a public meeting on February 6 a citizens' committee was formed and $125 subscribed towards the cost of a private school.[6] Less than two weeks later, on February 18, twelve children showed up for instruction at Calgary's first school.[7] The classroom was ungraded, the supplies scanty and the furniture home-made; but the trustees were able to boast that their teacher, J. W. Costello, possessed a "first class certificate from Ontario."[8]

Two months after opening day, the school celebrated with a public examination of the pupils. "A few friends of the children were present to witness the proceedings," reported the Calgary *Herald,* "and at the close expressed great satisfaction at the general proficiency of the pupils. The progress made by the pupils while under the tuition of Mr. Costello reflects great credit upon him."[9] It was good that the pupils had made progress during the two months. School was promptly dismissed after the examination, since there was no more money forthcoming from the "few friends of the children." But the *Herald* was not discouraged:

> Looking into the dim future when Calgary shall possess colleges, when degrees shall adorn the names of its citizens; when this town of the far west shall furnish statesmen, educated here, to administer the laws of our Province, it will be a pleasant reminisience to these children to remember their little rough school-house and this first examination within its walls.[10]

Thus ended, temporarily at least, the first stage in the institutionalization of schooling in Calgary. The establishment of a private school had been considered necessary to meet the learning needs of an increasing number of families arriving from the East. To progressive civic leaders of the day, a school was essential for attracting still more settlers to bolster Calgary's chances of replacing Fort Macleod as the major distributing centre for southern Alberta. Yet from the beginning, the management of education passed quickly into the hands of the "better classes" of the community. The three "trustees" of the private school were a lawyer, a government agricultural inspector, and a stage-coach owner. Ever present in the background was a fourth leading citizen — Colonel James Walker, onetime N.W.M.P. superintendent, former manager of the Cochrane Ranch, and presently establishing himself as a local timber baron. Walker's domination of schooling in Calgary began with his call for

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[5]Max Foran, "Urban Calgary, 1884-1895," *Histoire sociale — Social History,* V (9), April 1972, pp. 71-72.

[6]Calgary *Herald,* 13 February 1884.

[7]Most accounts locate the school in the old Boynton Hall, on the north side of Stephen (later 8) Avenue, east of 2 Street East, the site later occupied by the Variety Theatre, although there is one mention of a site further east, between 8 and 3 Avenues, east of 4 Street East.

[8]Costello later transferred his allegiance to the Calgary Separate School Board, first as secretary-treasurer, then trustee, and finally school inspector.

[9]Calgary *Herald,* 23 April 1884.

[10]*Ibid.*

the formation of a citizens' committee in 1884; it continued with his push for the establishment of a public school district the following year. Over the next thirty years Walker emerged as the most influential educational policy maker — member of the board for fourteen years, chairman for six. He was the one individual whose public involvement in education spanned the full sweep of urban growth, from the frontier learning of 1884 to the large school system of 1914.

II

The establishment of a public school district was the second stage in the institutionalizing of learning in the small town of Calgary. This grew naturally out of the work of the private school, which had re-opened in September 1884 in a new location, with a new teacher, and a total of fifty pupils. In January of the following year James Walker circulated a petition among the rate-payers which led to an affirmative vote for a school district. Accordingly, on March 2 the executive council of the North West Territories officially constituted Calgary Protestant Public School District No. 19.[11] Local boosters saw a rosy future for the board and the community. An 1885 town directory made this forecast:

> The school accommodation of Calgary is yet very limited. The expense so far has been borne by private subscription confined to a few friends of education . . . [But] last month voting took place on the erection of a school district and the district has been formally organized so that in a short time a fine school house will be built and a first-class school running.[12]

The new board simply took over the work of the private citizens' committee. The pupils must have noticed little change as they continued with their same teacher, their same meagre supplies and equipment, in their same building. This building — the second school house and the first private school — was located on the north-west corner of 9 Avenue and 5 Street S.E. Although some distance from other buildings at the time, the location midway between the old tent town east of the Elbow River and the new town centre around the C.P.R. station, proved acceptable to both sections of the community.[13]

The major challenge faced by the board in its early years was the rapid increase in the demand for schooling caused by urban growth in the late 1880's. Between 1884 and 1890 Calgary's population increased seven-fold, from around 500 to slightly over 3,500. Incorporation as a town, the completion of the transcontinental railway, and the planning of branch railway lines to Fort Macleod and Edmonton, enabled the community to consolidate its role as the marketing and distributing centre for southern Alberta. More people meant more children to be educated; by 1892 a total of 397 pupils appeared on the attendance roll of the Calgary Public School Board. The board's response to this growth was two-fold: the construction of a large central school and the beginning of high school instruction.

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[11]The word "Protestant" was not dropped from the official title until 1914. Today Calgary Public School District No. 19 is referred to as the Calgary Board of Education.

[12]Burns and Elliott, eds., *Calgary, Alberta: Her Industries and Resources* (Calgary: Burns and Elliott, 1885), p. 84.

[13]For a discussion of the rivalry between the two sections of early Calgary, see Max Foran, "The Birth and Expansion of Calgary, 1875-1895," a paper presented to the Urban History Conference, University of Winnipeg, October 1974, p. 2.

The one-room school at 9 Avenue and 5 Street provided sufficient accommodation for just one year. In the fall of 1886 a second classroom was opened in rented quarters on the second floor of the I. S. Freeze building on 8 Avenue S.E. But with 104 pupils on the register during the winter of 1887, and 171 that summer, it was obvious that the school system needed more than temporary accommodation. Civic pride was also at stake — Calgary's enrollment was second to Regina's among territorial towns, and Regina already boasted a large modern school. Debentures of $8,000 were promptly issued for the building of a four-roomed school. By November of 1887 the southern half of the "Old" Central School was in operation on 5 Avenue just west of Centre Street.[14] Central included many of the features associated with urban school development: the division of the curriculum into grades; the division of the children into rigidly graded classrooms; and the clear division of function — female teachers for the primary grades, supervised by a male principal who also taught the senior class.

Rising elementary enrollment led naturally to pressure for more advanced work at Central School. The first high school class began in 1891, with a second added three years later. For a ten-year period the two high school teachers taught the entire curriculum to their Standards VI through VIII pupils. It was a curriculum that included reading, dictation, composition, writing, arithmetic, ethics, drill, grammar, geography, history, literature, bookkeeping, drawing, algebra, geometry, agriculture, physiology, hygiene, Latin, botany and chemistry. But the provision of high school work, no matter how rudimentary or superficial, was a demand that had to be met by any urban school board of the day. Civic pride would not long tolerate children being sent away to Winnipeg or the East for an expensive secondary school education.

A sense of distance and remoteness soon developed between the board and the ratepayers of Calgary. Citizen interest in the formation of a school committee, then in the establishment of a public school board, quickly gave way to seeming indifference. Only three persons showed up at the first annual ratepayers meeting in November 1886 — the three trustees.[15] This situation is consistent with Careless's analysis of citizen participation in early western urban centres:

> The sense of common achievement in city-building often displayed at civic celebrations and community social occasions, did not go far enough to sustain a lively common interest or participation in municipal political affairs. In general, government in the cities was soon left in the hands of an elite in-group . . . who made a fairly regular profession out of directing government for a citizenry that normally preferred to be left alone.[16]

Part of the blame for the ever-widening gulf must rest with the trustees themselves. At least this was the view expressed by "A Citizen" in a letter to the Calgary *Herald* in 1891:

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[14]Four schools have included the word "Central" in their name at various times in the history of the Calgary Board of Education — "Old" Central School on 5 Avenue S.W.; "New" Central School, built in 1904 on the same block; Central High School, originally opened in 1908 as Calgary Collegiate Institute; and Central Memorial High School, constructed in the late 1960's.

[15]Calgary Public School Board, *Minutes*, November 6, 1886.

[16]Careless, "Aspects of Urban Life in the West," pp. 31-32.

> The School Trustees of this town have to do with important matters, the discussion of which should be open to the public. Thus far they appear to operate in secret; their proceedings at their meetings are a sealed book; and the people, who are most interested in these proceedings, seldom hear of the trustees' decisions until too late to modify their action . . . Certainly the citizens have a right to know from one meeting to another everything that is done by them in their official capacity . . . They are a public body dealing with weighty matters and with large funds and they should be most anxious to take the citizens into their counsels, as they go, instead of withholding this information . . . [17]

During the early 1890's Calgary moved from a relatively open and fluid society of the frontier period to a more stratified society of town and city. The school trustees continued to be drawn from the ranks of the middle and upper-middle classes of business and professional men. As with most urban school systems of the day, it was not unusual that a more formal and distant relationship developed between the board and the more socially mixed general population of the community.

III

The third stage in the evolutionary development of an urban school system in Calgary begins with the construction of the first "ward" school in 1892 and continues for the next eleven years. This period roughly coincides with a slowdown in the community's rate of growth. Calgary languished during the 1890's, despite the completion of rail lines to Edmonton and Fort Macleod, the coming of city status, and the beginnings of an industrial base built on the products of the surrounding agricultural region. Not till after the turn of the century would Calgary share in the prosperity of the "Laurier" boom. In the meantime the population crept from 3,876 to 4,091 between the census years of 1891 to 1901, quite a contrast with the preceding and following decades.

The slower rate of growth had its effects on the public school system. Unlike the 1885-1890 and 1904-1914 years, the trustees were not constantly pre-occupied with the problem of providing accommodation. The opening of the one-room East Ward (later Alexandra) School in 1892, and the two-room South Ward (later Haultain) School two years later, provided enough classroom space to house the additional children from newer homes east of the Elbow River and south of the C.P.R. railway tracks.[18] In fact the slowness of the population growth barely justified these two new schools. During most of the 1890's the now eight-room Central School was almost sufficient in itself; usually only one room at South Ward School was used, and occasionally the East Ward School was closed for brief periods.

But the construction and operation of the ward schools reveal two important aspects of institutional growth. First, the Calgary Public School Board now possessed three tracts of land, enough to make it a very visible property owner in the small town of the 1890's. In 1894 these three pieces of real estate were valued at a total of $10,850; with buildings valued at $13,000 and equipment at another $1,500, this gave the board tangible assets of $25,350 and placed additional responsibilities on the part-time, non-paid

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[17]Calgary *Herald*, 23 December 1891.

[18]South Ward School is the oldest school building standing in Calgary in 1975; its date-stone incorrectly reads "1892."

trustees.[19] Secondly, the operation of three schools led to the establishment of rigid attendance boundaries between the different institutions. School boundaries are but one example of increasing institutionalization of schooling during this period. The trustees passed a host of restrictive administrative regulations during the decade — regulations governing attendance and truancy, entry of beginning pupils, duties of teachers and teachers' contracts.

Staffing and financing were the major concerns of the Calgary Public School Board during the 1890's. There was certainly no shortage of applicants for teaching positions — forty-six applied for one advertised vacancy in 1892 alone. The problem arose over the board's preference for experienced Ontario teachers versus the insistence of the territorial administration on candidates possessing valid North West Territories certificates. Many eastern-trained teachers were at first given only temporary letters of authority; to renew their certificates, these teachers had to attend a session at the Regina Normal School. But costs deterred many from doing so, and the few graduates of the regular program in Regina could not begin to fill the territorial demand. In 1893, D. J. Goggin, superintendent of schools for the territories, warned the Calgary board that five of its nine teachers "were practically teaching without a certificate." This placed Calgary in a dangerous situation "for if any member of the Executive at Regina desired to do so, he would stop the payment of the grants on account of these teachers."[20]

Finances were, at best, shaky during these years. Territorial grants were small, and up to 70 per cent of operating costs had to be raised through the local property tax. Records from the period constantly attest to the backlog of unpaid taxes and the need for a "diligent collector of overdue moneys." The minutes for the March 1893 board meeting are particularly discouraging; at that time the trustees authorized the payment of certain accounts "as soon as there were sufficient funds in the Treasury." Again in January 1896 the mere breakdown of the furnace at Central School threatened to throw the trustees into a financial panic.[21] Not till the new century brought increased territorial and provincial grants and a broader local tax base, would the board be out of financial danger.

In 1893 the board adopted an organizational pattern that continued without major change during this third period of urban growth. On the first Thursday of each month, the five trustees gathered in the "library" of Central School for their regular monthly meeting. They were joined by a part-time supervising principal, whose duties also included teaching the senior class at Central School, and a part-time secretary-treasurer. To handle routine business between meetings, four standing committees were structured — finance, school management, school buildings, and property and supplies. Compared with the private citizens' committee of 1884, the management of education in Calgary had become more complex and efficient; but in terms of what would follow, it was still rather casual and simplistic.

IV

The fourth stage in the development of the Calgary Public School system lasts from approximately 1903 till 1911. This period coincides with years

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[19]CPSB *Minutes*, 15 August, 1894.
[20]Calgary *Herald*, 12 May, 1893.
[21]CPSB *Minutes*, 9 March, 1893 and 23 January, 1896.

of spectacular population growth; between 1901 and 1911, Calgary's population increased by eleven-fold — from 4,000 to 44,000. During this time Calgary changed from a frontier town to a commercial centre of major importance in the West. Not only was the city the marketing centre of a prosperous agriculture and ranching area, it also became the focal point to which new immigrants flocked. And the exploitation of such resources as coal, oil and natural gas in the surrounding countryside increased the possibilities of further urban growth.

Such a dramatic period of growth quickly rendered obsolete the casual and informal attitude towards education taken by the school board in the 1890's. A spirit of optimism and a vision of big-city status permeated Calgary's citizens; in 1903 this spirit and vision caught up with the trustees. As the *Morning Albertan* remarked:

> The schools of Calgary are in a transitory stage. They are not as popular as they should be, and whether there may or may not be a reason for it, people in Calgary have a habit of depreciating anything local which is unwestern and unwise. This is particularly the case with the schools and one hears on all sides, 'The schools here are no good.' Such a statement as that is unkind and untrue. Yet at the same time the schools of Calgary are not as preeminently in advance of those in other parts of the Territories as they should be in a city like Calgary.[22]

Were Calgary's schools lagging behind those of other Western centres? That same year a transplanted easterner, Mrs. G. W. Kerby, could remark that "the schools of Calgary are equally as good as our eastern counterparts, though somewhat hampered by their crowded conditions, owing to the rapid growth of the city."[20] Yet concerned citizens were also aware of the board's repeated failure to separate elementary and high school instruction, and the frequent departure of able principals for careers as rural school inspectors or lawyers. And citizens with friends on the board also heard rumours of critical inspectors' comments on the quality of teaching and school administration. To gauge public feeling and elicit support for future moves, board chairman A. L. Cameron called an open meeting for April 21, 1903.

That night marked a turning point in the history of the Calgary Public School Board. Comments from citizens present indicated unanimous support for a two-pronged response to the challenge of urban growth: a quantitative increase in accommodation and a qualitative improvement in instruction and administration. Some excerpts from the Calgary *Herald's* account of the meeting:

> Dr. Herdman: He felt that Calgary was not doing the educational work it could. They should get the best system, employ the best teachers and engage the best principal to work it out. A few hundred dollars should not stand in the way. Calgary should take a high stand in educational matters and make itself known as such and get on a right footing now.
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> R. J. Hutchings: The difference in cost between a good and poor school was so small that it was false economy to stop at a few dollars of proper expenditures. The best was none too good for growing Calgary, and we must have the best schools and the best system.[24]

What did it mean? "The board is evidently preparing for a progressive movement as regards the schools of Calgary," declared the *Herald*, "and from the

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[22]*Morning Albertan*, 24 April, 1903.

[23]Calgary *Herald*, 9 December, 1903.

[24]*Ibid.*, 22 April, 1903.

tenor of the speeches made by the citizens present, it will receive hearty and earnest support." And the editorial writer went on to warn: "If the expression of opinion of those present can form any gauge of public opinion, *the board will have to move.*"[25]

The first obvious manifestation of the board's shift to the next stage in its development was its decision to separate elementary and high school instruction. In September 1903 the high school classes were transferred to two adjoining frame buildings on 7 Avenue S.E. behind the old city hall. The school was officially known as City Hall School, although pupils always called it "Sleepy Hollow" High School. Perhaps the nickname was a means of masking the school's less than prestigious location, surrounded as it was by the police station, livery barn and dog pound. "It was like stepping backwards in time," recalled a student in later years. "Our schools in Woodstock, Ontario had all been big modern buildings. I wasn't prepared for the change when we moved to Calgary, but I soon got used to it. Sleepy Hollow had no inside toilets, no running water, no science labs. Students from outlying areas rode in on horseback, and they just tied their horses to the fence in the back yard."[26]

The primitive state of Sleepy Hollow High School in the early years of the century — four frame buildings joined by covered passageways — is indicative of the still light demand for secondary education in Calgary. The *Morning Albertan* attributed "low attendance in the higher grades" to the fact that "Calgary furnishes excellent business opportunities for boys of the High School age, and most youths are lured away from the paths of education for positions in offices and stores."[27] Yet the fact that Sleepy Hollow served the city's needs for only four years attests to the rapid increase in demand for secondary schooling during the first decade of the century. In 1907 Calgary's high school pupils moved into larger, more impressive accommodations at Calgary Collegiate Institute. This impressive sandstone building at 13 Avenue and 8 Street S.W. gave a new status to secondary education.

The construction of a new Central School — a three-storey, palatial sandstone structure costing $70,000 — was the second major step taken by the board during this period. At the laying of the cornerstone in 1904, chairman R. J. Hutchings reaffirmed that "it was the intention of the school board to be in front as far as educational matters were concerned. They would never be satisfied until they had everything of the best."[28] At least the problem of overcrowded classrooms had been temporarily solved; by 1905 the Calgary Public School Board could boast three large schools — the "Old" and "New" Central Schools plus Alexandra (an enlarged East Ward School) — and two smaller structures — Sleepy Hollow and South Ward.

The appointment of a full-time superintendent of schools was the third and most significant step taken during this fourth stage of development. The move was advocated in April 1906 by Winnipeg School Superintendent Daniel McIntyre, who had been commissioned to prepare an "independent" evalua-

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[25]*Ibid.*, 23 April, 1903. Italics added.
[26]Interview with Carrie Trotter Ross, Calgary, September 1974.
[27]*Morning Albertan*, 13 August, 1902.
[28]Calgary *Herald*, 25 May, 1904.

tion of Calgary schools. The *Morning Albertan* printed *verbatim* McIntyre's arguments for a superintendent:

> However well the plan of combining the duties of superintending and teaching may have worked when the city was smaller . . . your school system has passed the stage when such provision for direction can be held to be sufficient . . .
>
> The duty of such an official would be to direct the whole work of organization, classification, teaching and discipline of all the schools, to determine the standard of attainment in the several grades, guide the pedagogical reading the teaching staff . . . and be a leader in everything that would make for the efficiency of the schools.[29]

Just two days after McIntyre's report was released, the *Morning Albertan* ran a page one photograph of Melville Scott, announcing his appointment as superintendent of Calgary public schools. It was obvious that McIntyre had been used to lend outside credibility to the board's decision to employ a full-time administrator. Scott was a surprise choice to many Calgarians; a professor of chemistry at the University of New Brunswick, he had had but three years teaching experience in rural Ontario schools, and no previous contact with western Canada. Yet Scott possessed those characteristics the trustees felt were lacking in the primitive Calgary school system of 1906. Scholarship: an honours degree from the University of Toronto and a doctorate from Goettingen. Authority: pupils and teachers were terrified of him and hesitated to question his word. And above all, respectability: as a staunch Victorian Methodist, Scott gave his full support to the civilizing and moralizing mission of the public school on the prairie frontier.

In his study of the municipal reform movement in early twentieth century Canada, Paul Rutherford describes the impact of the full-time professional administrator:

> This was the beginning of the age of the specialist and the professional . . . To a degree, this appeared to be a devolution of authority; in fact it was a centralization of authority in the hands of professionals, well-nigh independent of the electorate . . . The latent authoritarianism was tempered by the assumption that the bureaucrat would move in accordance with a right-thinking public.[30]

The appointment of Melville Scott was the most dramatic indication to date of urban complexity and the increasing bureaucratization of public schooling in Calgary. Scott's presence represented a further level of executive and administrative decision-making between the ratepayers who elected trustees to formulate educational policy, and the teachers who were charged with executing those policies at the classroom level. The fact that Scott was an outsider who had not come up "through the ranks" added a further degree of isolation and remoteness to the situation.

V

The fifth and final stage in the institutionalization of public schooling in pre-First World War Calgary was evident by 1911. Calgary was in the midst of the greatest economic boom in its history, sustained initially by wild speculation in real estate and then by early oil discoveries in the Turner Valley area. Between 1910 and 1912 Calgary had the largest percentage increase in population and construction of any Canadian city. The value of building

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[29]*Morning Albertan*, 10 April, 1906.

[30]Paul Rutherford, "Tomorrow's Metropolis: The Urban Reform Movement in Canada, 1880-1920," Canadian Historical Association, *Historical Papers, 1971*, p. 214.

permits in the latter year was more than $50 million, a figure not exceeded until 1950. In the years immediately preceding the war, Calgary had become a commercial centre of major importance in western Canada.

During these hectic years the trustees of the Calgary Public School Board faced a constant battle in providing accommodation; new classrooms and new buildings for the expanding school enrollment did not materialize out of nowhere. Scott's monthly report for September 1911 is typical of the period:

> Considerable numbers of pupils have been unable to gain admittance in some parts of the city. In Hillhurst there are three rented rooms, and yet no adequate relief can be given until the new school is ready. In Riverside and Crescent Heights it is imperative that some steps be taken to meet requirements which will be pressing long before new schools are built.[31]

It would have been easier if all the new pupils had been Grade One beginners enrolling on the first school day in September. But they were entering at all grade levels, in every month of the year. "One-third of our present pupils are new to Calgary schools this year," Scott lamented in April 1913.[32] Only one-quarter of our Grade Eight pupils began school in the primary grade in Calgary," he reported two years later.[33]

Second only to the problem of accommodation was the task of staffing every classroom with a qualified teacher. Applicants appeared regularly, especially from eastern Canada, but they left the board's employ with almost equal speed. As the *Herald* remarked in 1913: "There are many conditions about Calgary which serve to attract young women teachers from Eastern centres, but . . . the opportunities of matrimony are so many and so attractive that it is a somewhat difficult matter to maintain permanent staffs."[34] Consequently, anyone with a year or two of experience in the Calgary system was regarded as a veteran. Of the 122 teachers in January 1912, for example, fifty-nine had been employed by the Calgary board for less than a year, while only twelve had been on staff more than five years. "The work of the teacher here is much more trying than in a settled community," reported Scott. He listed the problems as: "the never-ceasing interruptions owing to the opening of new classes, the removal of pupils from one school to another to avoid overcrowding, the coming into the city of new families, and the incessant moving from one part of the city to another."[35]

Problems of providing classrooms and teachers are certainly indices of urban growth, but more fundamental indices of urban complexity were two additional challenges facing trustees in the 1911-1914 period: bureaucratic remoteness and the extension of the traditional role of the school. Board minutes for August 8, 1911 contain in one short paragraph a revealing commentary on how the growth of the school system had changed the management of education:

> The Chairman expressed a wish that the members of the Board endeavour to visit the schools and become acquainted with the teachers, and Colonel Walker very kindly placed his car at the disposal of the Board when they desired to visit the schools together as a Board.[36]

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[31]CPSB *Minutes*, Superintendent's Report for September 1911.
[32]*Ibid.*, Superintendent's Report for April 1913.
[33]*Ibid.*, Superintendent's Report for January 1915.
[34]Calgary *Herald*, 28 February, 1913.
[35]CPSB *Minutes*, Superintendent's Report for November 1912.
[36]*Ibid.*, 8 August, 1911.

Only eight years before, board chairman Herb Sinnott had been principal of tiny Sleepy Hollow High School. At that time he and his elementary school counterpart, Hugh Parker, had felt no isolation from the trustees. On the contrary, their major complaint concerned the constant meddling of the trustees in the daily business of running the schools. But the situation had changed dramatically by the time Sinnott returned as a trustee. Even more dramatic were the changes observed by veteran decision-maker James Walker in his thirty-year involvement in Calgary education.

Three decades of urban growth had forced the public school system to radically change its pattern of operation. Between 1884 and 1914, pupil population grew from twelve to 7,451, teaching staff from one to 198, and school buildings from one to thirty-four.[37] The policy setting and executive functions of this sprawling enterprise grew into a complex organization of paid trustees, endless board and committee meetings, and full-time administrators, supervisors and secretaries. A symbolic move occurred in 1911 when the board transferred its offices from crowded quarters in Central School to a modern suite on the third floor of the new city hall. Increasingly, one found a board of trustees and a supervisory staff removed from the lives of the average citizen and similarly removed from the day-to-day concerns of the schools.

Further evidence of growing complexity is found in the response of the Calgary Public School Board to three early twentieth century urban challenges. The challenge presented by the city's growth as a commercial and industrial centre was met by the introduction of courses in business and technical education; that of urban crime and juvenile delinquency by the appointment of a full-time truant officer; and that of urban poverty and slum living conditions by the establishment of a medical inspection department.[38] Each of these moves significantly expanded the role of the school system beyond that of catering solely to the academic needs of its clients. But in each case the board's decision met with a favourable community response; the majority of citizens gave at least tacit support to the idea that an urban school system should address itself to the needs and problems of an urban community.

By 1914 Calgary had risen to become an "economically affluent, technologically advanced, and socially fast-maturing urban centre." Rapid growth and the increasing complexity of city life forced its school system, along with other public services, to move quickly beyond the frontier stage of the 1880's and 1890's and into the urban stage of the twentieth century. In this sense, the former social differences between Calgary and eastern cities diminished quickly. The Calgary Public School system between 1884 and 1914 illustrates perfectly the Careless hypothesis:

> Lifestyle in the western cities had very soon become largely a counterpoint of eastern. This simply indicated the common conditions of modern urban living, for

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[37]Seventeen of these thirty-four buildings were four to twelve-room imposing sandstone structures, so representative of pre-1914 Calgary. The remaining seventeen were temporary two-room "cottage" schools, hastily erected during the 1910-1912 boom years.

[38]Calgary's decision to use the schools as the major vehicles for accomplishing the aims of the public health movement is coincident with similar steps in eastern urban centres. See Neil Sutherland, "To Create a Strong and Healthy Race: School Children in the Public Health Movement, 1880-1914," *History of Education Quarterly*, XII (3) (Fall 1972), pp. 304-333.

> the urban West had virtually become contemporaneous with the urban East by 1914 . . . [Western cities] had in a few short decades compressed a century or so of eastern growth . . . [39]

With the exception of a provincially dictated curriculum, the Calgary Public School system manifests this similarity with its eastern counterparts. Complete with its large school buildings, well-trained teaching staff, a hierarchy of full-time administrators, and constantly confronted by the problems of urban life, it had "compressed a century or so of eastern growth" in three short decades. It had become increasingly bureaucratic by acquiring those characteristics which sociologists would generally agree mark bureaucracy: for instance, hierarchy, division of function, specialization, precision, continuity, rule-following and discretion.[40] And increasingly, the pupil populations of the neighbourhood elementary schools reflected the socio-economic divisions and the class structure representative of large urban centres. By 1914 the Calgary Public School system had more in common with school boards in Toronto, Hamilton and Ottawa, than with boards in Trochu, High River and Okotoks.

RESUME

"La Réponse à la Croissance Urbaine: La bureaucratisation du service de l'éducation publique à Calgary de 1884 à 1914."

Cet article étudie la relation entre l'accroissement physique d'une communauté urbaine en rapide expansion et l'accroissement en complexité des modèles d'organisations bureaucratiques du systàme d'école publique de cette communauté. Durant la génération précédant la première guerre mondiale, Calgary a évolué du stade de colonisation éloignée à celui de centre urbaine et commercal adulte. Pendant cette même pèriode, l'enseignement conventionnel à Calgary est passé par différentes étapes dans la naissance de cette bureaucratie, allant de l'enseignement privé tatonnant en 1884, à un complexe système d'éducation urbain en 1914.

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[39]Careless, "Aspects of Urban Life in the West," p. 26.

[40]See Michael Katz, "Class, Bureaucracy and Schools," in *The Failure of Educational Reform in Canada*, ed. Douglas Myers (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1973), p. 18.