COLONIALISM, CAPITALISM, AND THE RISE OF STATE SCHOOLING IN BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1849-1900

A Thesis Submitted to the Committee on Graduate Studies in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Arts and Science

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ABSTRACT

Colonialism, Capitalism, and the Rise of State Schooling in British Columbia, 1849-1900

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This dissertation examines the historical relationship between settler colonialism, capitalism, and the rise of state schooling in what is now known as British Columbia between 1849 and 1900. It aims to “unsettle” conventional views of Canadian schooling history by bringing accounts of Indigenous and non-Indigenous education into one analytical frame, and it shows how the state used different forms of schooling for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous children—company, common, public, mission, day, boarding, and industrial schools—to assist colonial-capitalist social formation in the Pacific Northwest. In combining interdisciplinary insights from Indigenous studies, historical materialism, political economy, and critical pedagogy, the dissertation highlights the ways in which state-supported schooling facilitated capitalist accumulation by colonial dispossession. The central argument of the dissertation is that between 1849 and 1900, colonial, provincial, and federal governments strategically took on greater responsibility for schooling as a way of legitimizing the state and supporting the emergence of a capitalist settler society.

KEYWORDS: Settler Colonialism; Capitalism; Education; Indigenous Peoples; Violence; Indian Residential Schools; History; Political Economy; British Columbia; Canada.
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CHAPTER 1: UNSETTLING CANADA’S SCHOOLING HISTORY

On 9 June 1847, James Edward FitzGerald, an advocate of British colonization working for the British Museum, wrote to the Colonial Office in London, England to propose a scheme for colonizing the west coast of North America. FitzGerald, who later became a prominent politician in the British colony of New Zealand, rationalized the colonization of the Pacific Northwest as being of “extreme importance” for political and economic reasons. He stressed the need for “possessing some strong dependency” on the west coast to “counterbalance the influence of the United States and to watch the interests of Great Britain in the Pacific Ocean.”1 FitzGerald maintained that because of its good harbours, Vancouver Island, and specifically Victoria, could become a vital centre for Pacific trade.2 He explained, “The Pacific Ocean is studded with islands, teeming with tropical productions in all directions. For these productions, there is no natural channel of exchange. But the North West Coast of America is the only country within reach, which

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1 James Edward FitzGerald to Benjamin Hawes, 9 June 1847, The National Archives (TNA), Colonial Office (CO), 305/1, 474. By the mid-nineteenth century, Britain possessed a number of colonies in the South Pacific including New South Wales, Western Australia, Victoria, Tasmania, Queensland, and New Zealand. In the Pacific Northwest of North America, Spanish, Russian, and British traders had been competing over furs and trade with Indigenous peoples since the mid-1700s. The Hudson’s Bay Company had, by the 1840s, established a network of forts in “New Caledonia” as part of the area was known at the time; however, the emphasis of these exploits was on private profit rather than the extension of British sovereignty. In the 1840s, the United States (US) rapidly claimed new territory in North America as it pursued a new policy of Manifest Destiny. In 1846, the US started the Mexican-American War. In the same year the US and Britain signed the Oregon Treaty which divided the Pacific Northwest in half and assigned the northern portion to Britain. There was concern, though, that without proper colonization the US would try to annex the entire area. These events had people like FitzGerald convinced of the need to effectively colonize the Pacific Northwest as a countermeasure. For more on Pacific Northwest politics see Jean Barman, French Canadians, Furs, and Indigenous Women in the Making of the Pacific Northwest (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2014), 193–217.

2 For more on the imperial imaginings of Vancouver Island see Daniel W. Clayton, Islands of Truth: The Imperial Fashioning of Vancouver Island (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2000).
is capable of exchanging the productions of a colder for those of a tropical climate.”

Moreover, he reasoned, effective colonization would facilitate even greater trade: “It seems difficult to over rate the rapidity with which trade might increase if an industrious and persevering race were to establish themselves on the northern shores of the Pacific Ocean.” Thus, FitzGerald promoted colonization in the Pacific Northwest as being both politically strategic as well as commercially advantageous for the growing British Empire, and he did so in ways that fused the interests of Empire and race.

FitzGerald argued, however, that successful British colonization would require the creation of an “organized” settler society to attract permanent colonists. Dismissing the existing Indigenous societies in the region, FitzGerald was adamant that colonists not be sent “to a desolate territory—without means—without organization.” In terms of

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3 James Edward FitzGerald to Benjamin Hawes, 9 June 1847, TNA, CO 305/1, 474-475.
4 In this dissertation, I use the term “Indigenous peoples” to refer to “First Peoples,” “Native Peoples,” “First Nations,” and “Aboriginals.” Māori scholar Linda Tuhwai Smith (Ngāti Awa and Ngāti Porou) argues that while all of these collectivized terms are problematic, for various reasons, the term “Indigenous” is argued for vigorously by many Indigenous peoples because it enables “the collective voices of colonized people to be expressed strategically in the international arena. It has also been an umbrella enabling communities and peoples to come together, transcending their own colonized contexts and experiences, in order to learn, share, plan, organize and struggle collectively for self-determination on the global and local stages.” See Linda Tuhwai Smith, Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples (Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 1999), 7. Kanien’kehá:ka (Mohawk) scholar Taiaiake Alfred similarly defends the term “Indigenous peoples” in the Canadian context, rather than state-imposed terms such as “Aboriginal.” See Wasá: Indigenous Pathways of Action and Freedom (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2005), 23.
5 James Edward FitzGerald to Benjamin Hawes, 9 June 1847, TNA, CO 305/1, 495. FitzGerald, like many Europeans, had little interest and certainly little understanding of the sophisticated network of Indigenous nations already inhabiting the Pacific Northwest. He suggested that the prospects for a settler society in the Pacific Northwest were good because the region was, unlike other British colonies such as New Zealand and Australia, free of hostile “natives.” He reasoned that this was because the HBC, active in the area since the 1820s, had pursued a “wise and generous policy” of cultivating friendly trade relations with Indigenous groups in the region, which effectively contained the threat of Indigenous violence and thus primed the Pacific Northwest for settlement. This assessment, though, proved to be more imperial fantasy than colonial reality, as the following pages will demonstrate. It is important to note that not all Indigenous peoples responded to colonization in the same way. For more on the diversity of Indigenous responses to colonization in British Columbia see John Lutz, Mač: A New History of Aboriginal-White Relations (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2008), 49–162. It is also important to point out that while the US and Britain divided the Pacific Northwest in half with the Treaty of Oregon in 1846, Indigenous peoples, particularly Coast Salish peoples, continued (and continue) to span both sides of the colonially imposed border. For more on Indigenous peoples in the Pacific Northwest see Vine Deloria Jr.,
what “means” might be used to lure settlers to the Pacific Northwest, FitzGerald emphasized the need to establish important social institutions such as schools for children. Schools could entice Irish and English labourers to emigrate with their families to help establish a settler economy. To support this idea, he cited Earl Grey, Britain’s Secretary of State for War and the Colonies, on the subject of social formation in the colonies, “Much of the pain which must ever attend the breaking up of the ties that bind men of their native country would be spared to those who could emigrate in company with a considerable number of their friends and relations for the purpose of finding on the other side of the Atlantic new societies composed in a great measure of the same elements as those to which they had previously belonged. Both morally and politically great benefits would I think result from the formation of such societies.” FitzGerald also quoted Grey as saying that “those facilities for obtaining religious instruction and the means of education for their children” should be provided. While British officials disagreed with certain aspects of FitzGerald’s proposal, they nonetheless agreed that political and economic benefits would flow from the colonisation of the Pacific Northwest. As well, British officials shared FitzGerald’s belief that social organization, including the establishment of schools, could play a key role in colonisation.

This dissertation provides a historical examination of the close relationship between settler social formation and schooling in what is now known as British Columbia.


Earl Grey quoted in James Edward FitzGerald to Benjamin Hawes, 9 June 1847, TNA, CO 305/1, 495.
between 1849 and 1900. It begins by showing how state-supported schools helped bolster British control in the Pacific Northwest during the colonial period. In the 1840s and early 1850s, Britain’s possession of the Pacific Northwest was tenuous. To counter US annexation, the Colonial Office established the crown colony of Vancouver Island in 1849 and awarded the Hudson’s Bay Company temporary control over the trading area, but with the important caveat that it must also support colonization. At first, only a handful of settlers, mostly with ties to the HBC, travelled to the area and clustered around the southern tip of Vancouver Island. Early colonists were vastly outnumbered by a diverse Indigenous population of more than 30,000, which was spread out across the island and the adjacent mainland of what is now British Columbia. In the mid-to-late 1850s and throughout the 1860s, as the settler population increased and spread to the mainland colony of British Columbia, which was established in 1858 in response to the discovery of gold, settlers pushed for representational government. The emerging settler

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8 For more on the politics of population in British Columbia see John Douglas Belshaw, *Becoming British Columbia: A Population History* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 2009). The number of Indigenous peoples in the Pacific Northwest at the time of contact is contested. Political scientist Paul Tennant argues that whites, like FitzGerald, consistently underestimated the size of the Indigenous population. Until the 1990s, the accepted estimate was less than 100,000; however, Tennant contends that the pre-contact Indigenous population was perhaps as great as 300,000 or 400,000. Paul Tennant, *Aboriginal Peoples and Politics: The Indian Land Question in British Columbia, 1849-1989* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1990), 3.
The economy started to shift from one based on merchant capital and the fur trade, and exclusively controlled by the HBC, to one increasingly organized around industrial capital and wage labour related to resource extraction and agriculture. At the same time, the nascent colonial state, backed by the British Colonial Office, gradually supported the creation of basic common schools to facilitate social formation and to attract and retain new settler families. Colonial governments also aided missionaries in hopes that mission day schools for Indigenous children could cultivate friendly relations with Indigenous peoples and contain the possible threat of colonial violence to ensure the safety and stability of a still fragile settler society. By the 1870s, the balance of power in the Pacific Northwest was starting to shift in favour of settlers, and state-supported schooling was used as a lever.

After British Columbia joined Canadian confederation in 1871, the state used new forms of schooling for Indigenous and non-Indigenous children to help transform the isolated settler colony of British Columbia into a prosperous province within the

9 As will be discussed later in this chapter, in his analysis of the writings of Edward Gibbon Wakefield, a contemporary of FitzGerald, Karl Marx identified the importance of colonization and wage labour to capitalism. Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy* (New York: Vintage, 1977), 931–940. Mercantile capitalism is characterized by traders exchanging commodities of a capitalist mode of production, such as blankets, cooking utensils, guns etc., for Indigenous economic products like fish and furs. Industrial capitalism, on the other hand, is a system whereby wage labourers produce commodities for capitalists who own the means of production. The key difference, argue sociologists Rennie Warburton and Stephen Scott, is the way in which each form acquires surplus value. Using British Columbia as a case study, they argue, “Industrial capital creates and retains its own surplus in the production process as wage labourers produce more new value in the form of commodities than they consume in wage goods. Merchant capital acquires surplus in the circulation process by means of exchange of commodities….The merchant buys commodities not for his own use but in order to sell them again. His goal is to increase his monetary wealth through a process of unequal exchange.” See Rennie Warburton and Stephen Scott, “The Fur Trade and Early Capitalist Development in British Columbia,” *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies* 5 (Winter 1985): 28. On how Indigenous peoples navigated the coming of capitalism in British Columbia, see for example, Hugh Brody, *Maps and Dreams: Indians and the British Columbia Frontier* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1981); Andrew Parnaby, “‘The best men that ever worked the lumber’: Aboriginal Longshoremen on Burrard Inlet, BC, 1863–1939,” *The Canadian Historical Review* 87, no. 1 (2006): 53–78. John Lutz argues that many Indigenous groups established a mixed or “moditional” economy that selectively combined aspects of Indigenous subsistence and gift-giving economies with capitalist wage labour. See Lutz, *Makúk*, 23.
Dominion of Canada. By the turn of the twentieth century, the settler population outnumbered the Indigenous population 5 to 1, increasing from just a few hundred in the 1850s to almost 150,000.\textsuperscript{10} Similarly, an emerging capitalist economy, focused on large-scale staples extraction, grew exponentially by the 1890s and generated 16.4 million dollars in mineral extraction alone by 1900.\textsuperscript{11} British Columbia’s accelerated social development was facilitated, in part, by the provincial government’s support for social institutions such as schools. To aid social formation, the government created a centralized system of public schools to better train settler children for the duties of citizenship in an increasingly industrialized society. Simultaneously, the Dominion government, which assumed responsibility for the welfare of Indigenous peoples in British Columbia after 1871, partnered with missionaries to expand existing mission day schools and to create new boarding and industrial schools—now known as Indian Residential Schools—to try to assimilate Indigenous peoples into the emerging capitalist settler society.

After just fifty years of active colonization, it was clear that a great transformation was taking place in the Pacific Northwest. As FitzGerald suggested in the late 1840s, social organization, such as education, proved to be an effective catalyst for colonization. In the 1850s, there were only a few schools for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous children in the region and these were characterized by extremely low attendance. By

\textsuperscript{10} These population figures are taken from Jean Barman, \textit{The West Beyond the West: A History of British Columbia} (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 429. It is interesting to note that while the settler population grew during the nineteenth century, so too did the Indigenous population, though it did so disproportionately. By 1901, the Indigenous population was 28,949 compared to the non-Indigenous population (composed of British, European, and racialized Asian peoples) of 149,708. I note that Indigenous peoples were greatly depopulated by European’s introduction of disease. For more on the devastating effects of disease see, Kiran Van Rijn, “Lo! the Poor Indian” Colonial Responses to the 1862-63 Smallpox Epidemic in British Columbia and Vancouver Island,” \textit{Canadian Bulletin of Medical History/Bulletin canadien d’histoire de le médecine} 23, no. 2 (2006): 541–560.

1900, there were over 20,000 children regularly attending 298 public schools, and an additional 1,500 Indigenous students attending 42 schools—28 day, 7 boarding, and 7 industrial schools—expressly established for Indigenous children. This dissertation demonstrates how these different forms of state schooling, considered together, played an important role in colonial-capitalist social formation in British Columbia.

This dissertation aims to “unsettle” Canada’s schooling history by bringing accounts of Indigenous and non-Indigenous education in British Columbia into one analytical frame to highlight the connections between the rise of state schooling and colonial-capitalist social formation.12 In the pages that follow, I show how the state used different forms of schooling—company, common, public, day, boarding, and industrial schools—to teach Indigenous and non-Indigenous children to take up new, and profoundly unequal, social roles integral to the making of British Columbia. Education scholar M. Kazim Bacchus has illustrated how various forms of schooling in the British West Indies were used by colonial governments to justify asymmetrical social relations in the mid-to-late nineteenth century.13 Shifting the focus to Canada, and to British Columbia specifically, the central argument of this dissertation is that between 1849 and 1900, colonial, provincial, and federal governments took on greater responsibility for schooling in order to strategically legitimize the state and to support colonial-capitalist social formation. The remainder of this chapter will outline the framework used to demonstrate this argument.

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12 Political theorist Paulette Regan uses the concept of “unsettling” to refer to challenging common or taken-for-granted understandings of Canada’s settler-colonial past. Paulette Regan, Unsettling the Settler Within: Indian Residential Schools, Truth Telling, and Reconciliation in Canada (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2010), 13.
13 M. Kazim Bacchus, Education as and for Legitimacy: Developments in West Indian Education between 1846 and 1895 (Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1994).
Unsettling Canada’s Schooling Historiography

I begin by acknowledging that while there is perhaps less than 200 years of state schooling in what is today known as Canada, education for many Indigenous societies in the northern half of Turtle Island/North America has existed from time immemorial. Indeed, a distinction should be made between education and the much more recent phenomenon of Western state schooling that spread around the world as a colonizing agent during the age of European empires. In the 1930s, noted Sḵwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish) leader and activist Andy Paull commented on the differences between Indigenous education and settler schooling as they related to his experiences growing up between Indigenous and white worlds in what is now Vancouver:

It was the duty of the more responsible Indians…to see that the history and traditions of our race were properly handed down to posterity; a knowledge of our history and legends was of similar importance as an education is regarded today among white men; those who possessed it were regarded as aristocrats; those who were indifferent, whether adults or children, were rascals. Being without means of transmitting it into writing, much time was spent by the aristocrats in imparting this knowledge to the youth; it was the responsible duty of responsible elders.

14 For more on the distinction between education and schooling in relation to Indigenous history, see J.R. Miller, *Shingwauk’s Vision: A History of Native Residential Schools* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996). While I begin by acknowledging this distinction, throughout the dissertation schooling and education are used interchangeably to avoid repetition. For more on the relationship between education and empire, see John Willinsky, *Learning to Divide the World: Education at Empire’s End* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998). Willinsky argues that in the nineteenth century “the investment in colonial schooling signalled a move from imperial adventure to colonial consolidation” (89). He also points out the great irony that while colonial schooling was extended throughout the empire as a way of regulating and training the colonized, it also contributed to the empire’s undoing because “colonized students tend to learn more than the teacher seeks to teach. The master’s tools, it may be fair to suggest, can take down the master’s house” (90). Willinsky also addresses the counterargument that colonial schooling, while oppressive, created spaces to protect and lift up colonized youth in the age of empire: “The flimsy schoolhouse was unable to redeem the empire. If educators did prove, on occasion, protectors of their charges, they offered a teacher’s patronage that rarely amounted to an exchange among equals. The schoolhouse was far too often the site of abuse. And whatever ideals the schools instilled of the European nation-state, the young often sought to repay this instruction with articulate, defiant, and sometimes violent expressions of a home-grown nationalism. Fanon, Mandela, and Said, without unduly crediting their schooling for their achievements, represent something of the unforeseen redress afforded by colonial education. Education remains an unpredictable force, and although it is more a source of insight and hope….than of wariness, it is a source of wariness nonetheless” (92–93).
When I was a youth, my father took me fishing with him. I was young and strong, and pulled the canoe while he fished, and as we passed along the shore – you know progress when one is rowing is very slow – it gave him ample time as we passed a given point for him to explain to me all about the various matters of interest of that location, which it was his delight to do. It was in this manner that the history of our people was preserved in the past; it was a duty for elders to attend to equally as important as the schooling of our children is today.¹⁵

Indeed, for many Indigenous nations, education is indistinguishable from the practices and rhythms of everyday life. While many aspects have changed over time, generally children learn cultural, spiritual, and economic teachings and responsibilities from adults and elders on the land through practice and ceremony. Ceremony is curriculum and land is pedagogy.¹⁶ Thus, the first act of “unsettling” Canada’s schooling history is acknowledging that settlers used different forms of state-supported schooling to try to displace traditional teachings in an effort to disconnect Indigenous peoples from the land and fold them into the emerging capitalist settler society.

Unsettling Canada’s schooling historiography, then, requires us to challenge the conventional celebratory narrative of schooling. Until recently, Canada’s schooling history has been written as a story of progress. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, settler historians, educators, and politicians adopted an “evolutionary” approach that took organized schooling for granted as a necessary part of civilized nation building.¹⁷ As such, early Canadian historians mostly focused on documenting schooling’s seemingly natural development as a significant social institution which

¹⁶ For more on the pedagogy of land see the special issue of *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education, Society* 3 (Fall 2014) on “Indigenous Land-Based Education.”
required little, if any, explanation. Similarly, historical treatments of British Columbia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries mostly downplayed the role of schooling in social formation or briefly praised the role of educational pioneers. With many professional historians ignoring education in favour of more stimulating subjects like war and politics, it fell to professional educators to write the first historical accounts of schooling in Canada. Naturally, these assessments praised public education,

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18 Arguably, the first written accounts of schooling in “Canada” are the Relations des jésuites or Jesuit Relations published in the seventeenth century. These are essentially compilations of missionary documents from New France, which frequently reference religious education in the context of efforts to convert Indigenous peoples to Christianity. Reuben Gold Thwaites edited 73 volumes as The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents, Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France 1610-1791 (Cleveland: The Burrows Brothers Company, 1896-1901). One of the first attempts to sketch out a coherent historical narrative of Canada was John McMullen’s The History of Canada: From the First Discovery to the Present Time (Brockville: J. M’Mullen, 1855), which only makes passing mention of schools. In the late nineteenth century, Francis Parkman and William Kingsford both endeavoured to write multi-volume histories of Canada that, again, largely focused on war, trade, and politics and gave scant attention to issues such as education aside from talking about the Jesuits and praising the development of schools as a sign of colonial progress. In the early twentieth century, historians took to more co-operative projects to write histories of Canada—with different authors completing one book in a larger series—while professional historians like George M. Wrong continued to produce synthetic overviews of the country’s history for use in public schools, which I analyze in more detail in Chapter Four. Again, most of these works either ignore schooling or mention it briefly to comment on its usefulness to social development. For more on the writing of history in Canada see Carl Berger, The Writing of Canadian History (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1976); Donald Wright, Professionalization of History in English Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005).

19 The first detailed account of education in British Columbia is found in Hubert Howe Bancroft, The Works of Hubert Howe Bancroft, Volume XXXII, History of British Columbia, 1792-1887 (San Francisco: The History Company, 1887). In his almost 800-page tome, which was part of a much larger series of writings on the Pacific Northwest, Bancroft devotes only a few pages to schooling in a chapter entitled, “Settlements, Missions, and Education, 1861-1881.” His brief references mainly trace the evolution of education in British Columbia up to the 1880s in a positive manner and explain that the state gradually supported common schooling for settler children. In the same chapter, Bancroft also discusses the role of missionaries in trying to “civilize” Indigenous peoples by providing industrial training but he does not connect these efforts to colonization. Similarly, F.W. Howay’s British Columbia: The Making of a Province (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1928) contains only two brief mentions of education. Even Margaret Ormsby’s well-respected British Columbia: A History (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1958) says little about the role of schooling in the province’s history. Donald Leslie MacLaurin, a teacher and for many years an educational bureaucrat in British Columbia, wrote the first detailed history of education in the province for his PhD dissertation at the University of Washington. See Donald Leslie MacLaurin, “The History of Education in the Crown Colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia and in the Province of British Columbia,” PhD Dissertation, University of Washington, 1936. While not historical in nature, George Hindle also completed a doctoral dissertation examining British Columbia’s public school system that he subsequently published. See George Hindle, The Educational System of British Columbia: An Appreciative and Critical Estimate of the Educational System of the Mountain Province (Trail, BC: Trail Printing and Publishing Co, 1918).
particularly in Ontario, and eulogized early school promotors like Egerton Ryerson. Other writers, such as Florence B. Low in the 1920s, outlined the development of schooling in different Canadian provinces for more practical reasons. Low used her account to try to entice immigrants to Canada, as she made clear with the title of her book, *Education in Canada: A Handbook for Intending Settlers*. As late as the 1950s, writers such as Hilda Neatby continued to utilize an evolutionary approach to educational history to defend state schooling as a crucial civilizing tool. Overall, early writers presumed schooling to be a progressive feature of Canadian society, and they documented and praised its expansion and development uncritically.

With studies of politics, trade, and war still dominating the Canadian historical profession in the 1950s and early 1960s, F. Henry Johnson, an education professor at the University of British Columbia, suggested that the history of education could be considered “Clio’s neglected child.” He wondered if schooling’s short shrift by historians was due, in part, because “the muse of history had disliked her school.” To remedy this marginalization, writers such as Johnson and Charles E. Phillips tried to popularize

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21 Florence B. Low, *Education in Canada: A Handbook for Intending Settlers* (London: Canadian Pacific Railway, 1923). Low was a British author who, after visiting Canada, wrote a series of books on Canada to appeal to possible British emigrants. *Education in Canada* was geared to parents and potential teachers, particularly women. See also Low, *Openings for British Women in Canada* (London: Canadian Pacific Railway, 1920).


education history by publishing more detailed studies of Canadian schooling. Yet, these authors, like those who had written before them, still understood education from an “evolutionary” or “onward and upward” linear perspective that simply documented the so-called natural development of public schooling. As well, these mostly celebratory studies tended to highlight the influential roles played by school promoters and male politicians such as Egerton Ryerson in Ontario, Jean-Baptise Meilleu in Québec, and John Jessop in British Columbia in ways that ignored the larger social, economic, and cultural contexts of their times. In doing so, these authors offered more detailed but still largely romanticized portrayals of education that failed to question the basic premises of state schooling. Moreover, these studies gave little attention to how critical issues such as gender, race, and class profoundly shaped schooling’s development. In fact, in A History of Public Education in British Columbia, Johnson ignores women entirely and his brief treatment of education for Indigenous peoples is found in a chapter on “Minority Problems.”

Starting in the 1960s, and blossoming in the 1970s with the rise of social history, scholars developed more critical approaches to the study of education history. In the US, Bernard Bailyn, Laurence E. Cremin, and Paul H. Mattingly revised celebratory

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schooling histories to show how schools performed the important functions of social control and labour force production.\(^{27}\) These “radical revisionists,” as they were often called by their liberal opponents, were critiqued for their apparent “maleficent obsession” with revealing the nefarious influences of capitalism, racism, and sexism on the development of North America’s educational system.\(^{28}\) In terms of education’s relationship to capitalism and patriarchy, Anne Marie Wolpe, Rosemary Deem, and Madeleine Macdonald developed feminist reproduction theory to highlight the ways in which sexist practices in schools produced and reproduced gender inequalities and women’s subordination in society.\(^{29}\) More specifically, these scholars examined the ways in which schools prepare young girls to accept their supposedly inevitable future roles as low-paid workers or unpaid domestic labourers. Although criticized for being overly mechanistic and leaving little room for human agency, the works of the radical revisionists and reproduction theorists were influential and signalled a scholarly shift toward more critical analyses of schooling as a contested site of socialization. In Canada,


historians such as Michael B. Katz and sociologists such as John Porter questioned education’s role in maintaining class inequality while activists such as Cree author Harold Cardinal drew attention to the links between racism and schooling, particularly relating to Indigenous peoples.  

Influenced by the first critical studies of education, a new cohort of Canadian historians brought education history into the mainstream in the late 1970s and early 1980s with innovative studies that sought to understand the conflicts and tensions that defined the imposition of schooling in Canada. Far from being a unified group, this cohort included historians who maintained a more positive outlook, supporting the belief that battles over school reform could continue to result in improved public education. Others in this contingent critically examined the intentions of school administrators and reformers and focused on the implementation of state schooling from a social control perspective.  

Yet further works posited an increasingly complicated picture of

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educational history that emphasized the agency of parents in pressuring for political reform in regards to education.\footnote{Wilson calls this interpretative framework the “families strategies” approach to educational history and suggests as representative of this stream R.D. Gidney and D.A. Lawr, “Egerton Ryerson and the Origins of the Ontario Secondary School,” \textit{The Canadian Historical Review} 60, no. 4 (December 1979): 442–465.} Taken together, the more critical works of education history from the 1970s and 1980s effectively challenged the traditional celebratory and evolutionary approach to the field and cleared a path for more critical studies of Canadian schooling.

Historical studies of Canadian education since the late 1980s have, from a variety of perspectives and theoretical positions, shown how schooling, broadly understood, was consistently resisted and refashioned over time and in relation to changing social circumstances as a form of subject and citizenship formation. New works have reinterpret the rise of state schooling in different parts of the country with a focus on the state’s goal of making subjects.\footnote{Other works examine the changing politics of education and the diverse experiences of teachers, parents, and children.\footnote{Some studies...}}

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investigate the link between gender and schooling while others examine the racist underpinnings of Canada’s educational systems. Because education in Canada is a provincial jurisdiction many scholars have maintained a regional focus, and British Columbia, in particular, has its own well-developed body of critical schooling scholarship. What has emerged in the last three decades, then, is a rich and diverse field of critical educational scholarship that is largely interested in complicating the


conventional notions of schooling as a progressive force by emphasizing both the complexity of the schooling process as well as its continuing complicity in various forms of oppression.

In showing how schooling is linked to the political projects of subject, state, and social formation, education history shares many similarities with another large body of scholarship that examines the relationship between schooling and Indigenous peoples in Canada. The majority of this literature is published not as education history *per se* but rather as Indigenous history, it examines government policies and Indigenous children’s experiences in mission, day, and residential schools as part of the larger history of colonialism in Canada. The earliest scholarly work on federally-funded schools for Indigenous children emerged in the late 1970s and early 1980s and corresponded with the official end of the system in 1996 as well as the increased profile of Indigenous issues

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37 Admittedly, the distinction between historians of education and of Indigenous peoples is somewhat arbitrary. “Education” historians did not ignore schooling for Indigenous peoples. For example, see Jacqueline Gresko, “White ‘Rites’ and Indian ‘Rites’: Indian Education and Native Responses in the West,” in *Shaping the Schools of the Canadian West*, eds. Nancy Sheehan, J. Donald Wilson, and David C. Jones (Calgary: Detselig Enterprises Limited, 1979), 84–106; E. Brian Titley, “Indian Industrial Schools in Western Canada,” in *Schools in the West: Essays in Canadian Educational History*, eds. Nancy Sheehan, J. Donald Wilson, and David C. Jones (Calgary: Detselig Enterprises Limited, 1976), 84–106; Jean Barman, Yvonne Hébert, and Don McCaskill, eds., *Indian Education in Canada, Volume 1: The Legacy* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1986). However, mission, day, and residential schooling for Indigenous peoples did not occupy the same prominent position within the field of education history, as did the rise of public schooling. Moreover, many historians who, since the 1980s, have examined schooling for Indigenous peoples have done so squarely in the field of Indigenous history as I will outline below.

38 This is not to suggest that works of Indigenous history ignore mission and residential schooling completely. Early histories did, in fact, trace the contours of colonial schools; however, education was briefly discussed as it related to other seemingly more important topics such as trade and politics. See, for example, Robin Fisher, *Contact and Conflict: Indian-European Relations in British Columbia, 1774-1890* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 1977); James Axtell, *The Invasion Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985); Bruce Trigger, *Natives and Newcomers: Canada’s “Heroic Age” Reconsidered* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1985); J.R. Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens: A History of Indian-White Relations in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989). More recently, works of Indigenous history/colonial history grapple, in different ways, with aspects of schooling as they relate to colonialism. See, for example, Kelm, *Colonizing Bodies*; Carlson, *The Power of Place, the Problem of Time*; Mary Jane Logan McCallum, *Indigenous Women, Work, and History, 1940-1980* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2014); Adele Perry, *Colonial Relations: The Douglas-Connolly Family and the Nineteenth-Century Imperial World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).
and the emergence of Native Studies—now First Nations and Indigenous studies—at the post-secondary level. These ground-breaking works firmly placed the sordid history of residential schooling and its deep and destructive consequences under academic and public spotlights. The first major historical monographs on residential schooling were published using previously inaccessible government and church documents in the mid-to-late 1990s. Studies by Indigenous authors and school survivors have also added personal accounts of the horrifying residential schools system that has deeply scarred Indigenous communities. As well, in the past two decades new academic and popular

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studies have added further layers to our understanding of the close connections between colonialism and schooling for Indigenous peoples.\(^{42}\)

Taken together, the histories of schooling for Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples offer a host of critical insights about schooling and colonialism; however, there are a number of key limitations to these studies. First, many historians ignore early missionary schools in operation in Canada prior to the 1880s and instead focus specifically on the Indian Residential School system. This trend obfuscates the continuity between mission and residential schooling as oppressive forms of colonial schooling. Second, scholars examining residential schooling mostly agree that cultural assimilation was the state’s ultimate objective without adequately considering the socio-economic roots of the schools in colonial-capitalist social formation. Indeed, the majority of studies focus on how residential schools functioned and thus fail to provide an adequate answer to why they were established in the first place and how they served a nation-building

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Third, major scholarly monographs approach their examinations of residential schools from a national perspective and provide brief and, at times, incomplete treatments of the development of the schools in provinces such as British Columbia. Moreover, the works that do closely examine missionary and residential schooling in British Columbia tend to focus only on one school or an individual missionary and thus neglect a broader provincial perspective. Finally, with some notable exceptions, the educational literature mostly segregates schooling histories of Indigenous and non-Indigenous children as detached subjects of entirely separate fields of study. Not only does this tend to ignore examples where Indigenous and non-Indigenous schooling overlapped, which can complicate conventional historical narratives, but it also makes it difficult to see how, overall, state schooling for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous children played a role in colonial-capitalist social formation in Canada. By examining how colonialism, capitalism, and different forms of state schooling for Indigenous and non-Indigenous children overlapped and informed each other in the making of British Columbia as a capitalist settler society, this dissertation aims to “unsettle” the status quo of Canada’s schooling historiography.

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43 In the preface to “A National Crime”, Milloy explains that it would be up to new generations of historians to “go further, to answer the question, Why did it happen.” Milloy, “A National Crime”, xix. Emphasis added.

44 Furniss, Victims of Benevolence, Hare and Barman, Good Intentions Gone Awry.


46 Regan, Unsettling the Settler Within, 11.
Theoretical Engagements

To better understand the complicated and multifaceted connections between colonialism, capitalism, and the rise of state schooling in British Columbia, I draw on a variety of theoretical tools. I aim to synthesize interdisciplinary insights from Indigenous studies, historical materialism, anti-colonial theory, political economy, and critical pedagogy. I begin by acknowledging the centrality of land and dispossession to discussions of colonialism, specifically settler colonialism.47 As Patrick Wolfe argues, “Whatever settlers may say—and they generally have a lot to say—the primary motive [of settler colonialism] is not race (or religion, ethnicity, grade of civilization, etc.) but access to territory. Territoriality is settler colonialism’s specific, irreducible element.”48 We must pay close attention to settler colonialism’s spatial dimensions.49 As a result, in recent years Indigenous scholars and activists have focused on the land as an integral aspect of Indigenous praxis.50 In advocating a place-based perspective that he calls “grounded normativity,” Dene scholar Glen Sean Coulthard argues that land must not be understood crudely as a “thing” that settlers simply stole—and continue to steal—from Indigenous peoples. There is much more at stake. From an Indigenous perspective, land

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47 Throughout this dissertation, I use the terms “colonialism” and “settler colonialism” interchangeably to avoid repetitiveness. I do so, though, acknowledging the distinction numerous scholars have made between these concepts. See Lorenzo Veracini, Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010). I understand settler colonialism to be a form of territorial domination predicated on the dispossession of Indigenous peoples’ lands and the organization of a settler society to maintain this dispossession.


is not a resource or a commodity; it is a reciprocal relationship as well as an ontological framework. As such, Indigenous scholars like Coulthard and Leanne Simpson maintain that the land sustains life in ways that impart crucial lessons about interconnection, interdependence, and reciprocity. These lessons can teach people to live in harmony with the earth and each other in nonexploitative and nondominaing ways. Indeed, Kanien’kehá:ka (Mohawk) scholar Taiaiake Alfred argues, “what is colonization if not the separation of our people from the land, the severance of the bonds of trust and love that held our people together so tightly in the not-so-distant past, and the abandonment of our spiritual connection to the natural world?” Thus, in starting by acknowledging the innumerable ways in which land shapes Indigenous lifeways, it is possible to begin to comprehend how devastating the deliberate severing of this relationship through colonial dispossession was—and still is—for Indigenous peoples.

Colonial dispossession has a bloody and violent global history. Yet, as Fanon pointed out, colonizers largely write their own history and, as such, they tend to downplay or dress up their own nation’s violent past in more comforting narratives about civilization and progress. Since the 1970s, however, various Indigenous studies scholars have debunked the myth of peaceful colonization in North America. In the United States, writers from Dee Brown to Ned Blackhawk have chronicled the constant conflict,

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51 Glen Sean Coulthard, Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), 60. Anti-colonial scholars like Frantz Fanon also understood the centrality of land. In The Wretched of the Earth, Fanon argued, “For a colonized people, the most essential value, because it is the most meaningful, is first and foremost the land: the land, which must provide bread and, naturally, dignity.” Frantz Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth (New York: Grove Press, 1963), 9.


54 Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth, 15.
violence, and genocide basic to the “winning” of the American west. But aside from several accounts of the War of 1885, the literature on colonial violence and land dispossession in Canada is significantly less developed. In British Columbia, there exists a number of excellent works on the “Indian Land Question,” but few works that actually focus on the colonial conflict that constantly surrounded it. More recently, Indigenous studies scholars are devising new ways to contest Canada’s myth of “benevolence” that suggests French and British colonizers were somehow generous in establishing a new settler society in the northern half of North America. Indeed, in drawing on works by Fanon as well as thinkers such as Karl Marx, Indigenous scholars like Coulthard argue that violent dispossession must be understood as a fundamental aspect of colonial-capitalist social formation in Canada.

In terms of the relationship between colonial dispossession and capitalist accumulation, I, like Coulthard, am influenced by historical materialism and specifically Marx’s ideas on the processes of “so-called” primitive accumulation articulated in Part 8

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of *Capital.* In this often neglected section, Marx argues that capitalism did not come about simply as a result of miserliness or frugality, as earlier bourgeois political economists such as Adam Smith posited. Instead, Marx turns to history to show how capitalism was actually brought about through the forced destruction of subsistence and peasant economies, or the separating of original producers from their lands by the coercive means of theft, robbery, and enslavement. These “idyllic” methods, as the “chief

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59 The relevance of historical materialism to the study of Indigenous peoples has been fiercely debated. See, for example, the essays in *Marxism and Native Americans,* edited by Ward Churchill (Boston: South End Press, 1983). More recently, Ts’msyan (Tsimshian) anthropologist Charles R. Menzies argues that the relationship between Marxism and Indigenous nations has been less hostile and more “ambivalent.” Nevertheless, he argues that the Marxist approach “merits the attention of Indigenous organizers, activists, and political leaders” because it offers a political analysis of power in colonial-capitalist society as well as a theory of political action that “has as its end goal the achievement of a society that respects difference, honours collective relations, and places a priority on humane relations between people.” See Charles R. Menzies, “Indigenous Nations and Marxism: Notes on an Ambivalent Relationship,” *Journal of Marxism and Interdisciplinary Inquiry* 3 (June 2010): 5–6. Historically, there have been a number of important activists and scholars in Canada, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, who have used historical materialism to examine colonialism and capitalism. See for example, Stanley Ryerson, *Unequal Union: Confederation and the Roots of Conflict in the Canadas, 1815-1873* (Toronto: Progress Books, 1963); Adams, *Prison of Grass*; Murray Dobbin, *The One-and-a-Half Men: The Story of Jim Brady and Malcolm Norris, Métis Patriots of the 20th Century* (Vancouver: New Star Books, 1981); Bryan D. Palmer, “Social Formation and Class Formation in Nineteenth-Century North America,” in *Proletarianization and Family History,* ed. David Levine (New York: Academic Press, 1984), 224–308; Peter Kulchyski and Frank Tester, *Tammarniit (Mistakes): Inuit Relocation in the Eastern Arctic, 1939–63* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1994); Himani Bannerji, *The Dark Side of the Nation: Essays on Multiculturalism, Nationalism, and Gender* (Toronto: Canadian Scholars’ Press, 2000); Parnaby, “‘The best men that ever worked the lumber’”; Joan Sangster, *Transforming Labour: Women and Work in Post-war Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010); Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks.* A brief note on terminology is required regarding the term “primitive accumulation.” In addressing the birth of capitalism, Adam Smith assumed the existence of an original or “previous” accumulation of capital and relegated it to a mythical past unencumbered by any unsavoury elements. To distance himself from Smith’s mythology, Marx ascribed the pejorative “so-called” to his discussion of “previous accumulation” to call attention to the brutality of the origins of capitalism. Marx argued: “In actual history, it is a notorious fact that conquest, enslavement, robbery, murder, in short, force play the greatest part. In the tender annals of political economy, the idyllic reigns from immemorial....As a matter of fact, the methods of primitive accumulation are anything but idyllic” (874). Marx translated Smith’s word “previous” as “ursprunglich” in German, which many of Marx’s English translators have since rendered as “primitive.” This translation has caused some confusion and can be used, out of context, to show that Marx somehow thought lesser of Indigenous societies or was insensitive to their plight as a result of dispossession. While it is possible to challenge certain aspects of Marx’s writings on colonialism, as I discuss below, it is important to understand that Marx’s goal in contesting Smith’s idea of “previous” accumulation was actually to create space for an alternative historical analysis of violent dispossession as it related to capitalist accumulation. Therefore, when I use the term “primitive accumulation” I do so with the spirit of Marx’s pejorative “so-called” affixation. For more on “so-called” primitive accumulation and debates around the birth of capitalism and classical political economy see Michael Perelman, *The Invention of Capitalism: Classical Political Economy and the Secret History of Primitive Accumulation* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000).
moments” of primitive accumulation, argued Marx, combined with the enclosure acts—the “clearing of estates”—in seventeenth and eighteenth century Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and England and established the necessary force relations to turn producers into a landless proletariat with nothing left to sell but its labour-power. \(^{60}\) While focusing mostly on Europe, Marx noted that “the discovery of gold and silver in America, the extirpation, enslavement and entombment in mines of the indigenous population of that continent, the beginnings of the conquest and plunder of Indians….are all things which characterize the dawn of the era of capitalist production.” \(^{61}\) Marx demystified the destructive forces of primitive accumulation, revealing this process to be one of dispossession and proletarianization on a global scale, thus providing invaluable insight into how acts of “ruthless terrorism” actually created the social conditions necessary for the capitalist mode of production. \(^{62}\)

Marx’s findings in *Capital* are helpful in clarifying the linkages between colonial dispossession and capitalist accumulation. Yet, many scholars, in an effort to distance themselves from historical materialism politically and theoretically, often take samples of Marx’s writings on colonialism out of context and chastise them for being “racist,”

\(^{60}\) In the *Grundrisse*, Marx argued that “the positing of the individual as a worker, in this nakedness, is itself a product of history;” in *Capital* he clarified that this transformation was the product of a violent history. Karl Marx, *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy* (New York: Penguin Books, 1973), 472.


\(^{62}\) Marx, *Capital*, 895.
“orientalist,” and complicit in the “myth of progress.”

In defending historical materialism against its superficial critics, Coulthard argues that Marx’s writings remain essential for shedding light on the dynamics of colonial dispossession and capitalist accumulation in Canada. Nevertheless, he does identify a number of problematic aspects of Marx’s work that need to be addressed. First, Coulthard points out that in challenging political economy’s “idyllic” theory of “previous” or primitive accumulation by highlighting the brutal processes of violent dispossession, Marx unfortunately relegated dispossession to the distant past. To rectify this temporal limitation, Coulthard argues that dispossession must be understood as playing a persistent role within the capitalist mode

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63 For a rebuke of the standard criticisms of Marx’s thinking on colonialism see, for example, Vivik Chibber, *Postcolonial Theory and the Spectre of Capital* (New York: Verso, 2013). See also, Aijaz Ahmad, “Marx on India: A Clarification,” in *In Theory: Classes, Nations, Literatures* (London: Verso, 1992), 221–242. Ahmad argues that within mainstream scholarship the usual way of marginalizing Marx’s work on colonialism is “to ignore it altogether or to declare it simple-minded and propagandistic” or to use a few quotes out of context to show that it is “not much more than a ‘modes-of-production narrative’ and that its opposition to colonialism is submerged in its positivistic ‘myth of progress’” (221–222). Ahmad does not contend that Marx’s work is beyond reproach. However, he suggests that many of the standard critiques of Marx, including those levied by scholars such as Edward Said in *Orientalism*, flatten his conceptualizations and, somewhat ironically, “reduce” the complexities of his thought on colonial power structures. For an example of an otherwise illuminating Canadian study that engages in such a reductionist approach to justify its disavowal of Marxism see Keith D. Smith, *Liberalism, Surveillance, and Resistance: Indigenous Communities in Western Canada, 1877–1927* (Athabasca: University of Athabasca Press, 2009), 2–3. For more on debunking the standard myths about Marx see, for example, Terry Eagleton, *Why Marx was Right* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012).
of production. Next, Coulthard shows how Marx was really only interested in colonization in as far as a historical survey of dispossession helped to clarify the process of proletarianization so crucial to the emergence of the capitalist mode of production.

As a result, Coulthard shifts the focus back onto the devastating consequences of colonial dispossession so as to better focus on Indigenous peoples. Lastly, he contests the “normative developmentalism” in many of Marx’s early writings that, intentionally or not, fixed non-Western societies at the lower end of a scale of human development and lent an air of inevitability to their progression, through colonization, from savagery to

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64 David Harvey, however, argues that it is imperative that we understand the historical writings found in Part 8 of Capital: A Critique of Political Economy in relation to Marx’s larger project and its structure. In short, Harvey argues that Marx’s fundamental aim with the three volumes of Capital, as first sketched out in the Grundrisse during the winter of 1857-58, was to critique classical or bourgeois political economy on its own terms using its weak and “shallow” syllogistic structure that viewed production, distribution, exchange and consumption separately. Capital, then, is not so much Marx’s historical outline of a theory of capitalism as it is an exercise in critiquing the limitations and contradictions of political economics such as Adam Smith and David Riccardo to point out the general laws of motion of capitalism. Thus, while Marx saw the different facets of capitalism operating as a totality, he chose to critique production, distribution, exchange and consumption separately too. Harvey argues that this general framework “constitutes a straitjacket” which limits the applicability of certain parts of Marx’s insights. Concerning Part 8, this means that Marx is really only interested in using the history of violent dispossession to critique Smith’s conception of an “idyllic” original accumulation. Thus, we can critique Marx for not tracing the historical relationship between dispossession and accumulation further, but we must do so fully cognisant that this was not his objective in Capital. For more on the tensions between Marx’s historical analysis and his critique of political economy see, for example, David Harvey, “History versus Theory: A Commentary on Marx’s Method in Capital,” Historical Materialism 20, no.2 (2012): 3–38.

65 See Marx, “Chapter 33: The Modern Theory of Colonization,” Capital. Here, Marx attacks Wakefield’s thesis of “systematic colonization.” Ignoring the rights of Indigenous peoples in places such as New Zealand and Australia, Wakefield argued that colonies could provide work for the unemployed of Britain. However, he argued that because land would be cheap and rents low, government measures, specifically a restrictive price on land, were necessary to prevent labourers from simply buying up land and becoming independent producers instead of working for capitalists. Marx explained this logic: “This ‘sufficient price for land’ is nothing but a euphemistic circumlocution for the ransom which the worker must pay to the capitalist in return for permission to retire from the wage-labour market to the land. First he must create for the capitalist the ‘capital’ which enables him to exploit more workers; then, at his own expense, he must pay a ‘substitute’ in the labour-market, who is dispatched across the sea by the government, again at the worker’s expense, for his old master, the capitalist” (939). Marx thus argues, “It is the great merit of E.G. Wakefield to have discovered, not something new about the colonies, but, in the colonies, the truth about capitalist relations in the mother country. Just as the system of protection originally had the objective of manufacturing capitalists artificially in the mother country, so Wakefield’s theory of colonization, which England tried for a time to enforce by Act of Parliament, aims at manufacturing wage-labourers in the colonies” (932).
capitalist civilization to eventual freedom. In addressing these issues, Coulthard clears a new path for scholars to use historical materialism to better illustrate the links between settler colonialism and capitalism in Canada.

While I agree with many of Coulthard’s points, I draw on works by other Marxist writers, specifically Rosa Luxemburg and David Harvey, to challenge Coulthard’s cordonning off of dispossession from accumulation to focus his analysis solely on the former. I emphasize the importance of understanding the dialectical relationship

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66 Coulthard emphasizes that in the last decade of his life, Marx revisited these beliefs and stepped outside of a kind of abstract developmentalism. See, for example, Marx’s notes on Iroquois democracy in The Ethnological Notebooks of Karl Marx (Assen: Van Gorcum & Comp, 1974). Ahmad argues that Marx’s critique of pre-colonial India is often used by scholars to fashion a “rhetoric of dismissal” without realizing the sharpness of his “denunciations of Europe’s own feudal past, or of the Absolutist monarchies, or of the German burghers; his essays on Germany are every bit as nasty.” Ahmad, “Marx on India,” 224. Coulthard himself slips into this “rhetoric of dismissal” by casually quoting Hegel and Marx to point to their Eurocentrism without adequately offering a deep contextualization of their formulations. Coulthard argues, “Just as Hegel had infamously asserted before him that Africa exists at the ‘threshold of World History’ with ‘no movement or development or exhibit,’ Marx would similarly declare that ‘Indian society has no history at all, at least no known history.’” Coulthard concludes, then, “Clearly, any analysis or critique of settler-colonialism must be stripped of this Eurocentric feature of Marx’s original historical metanarrative” (10, my emphasis). Marx, as a European, was certainly steeped in certain Eurocentric views of the world; however, the quotation from Marx on India that Coulthard uses, and that many others have used to discredit Marx’s writings on colonialism, does not in fact make the case as clearly as he thinks. Indeed, on the surface, and without any context, Marx simply appears to utter a derogatory slight against all Indian society. His actual intent, though, is more complicated and should be understood in the context of his historical project of understanding the contours of capitalist development. As such, Marx, like Hegel, was less interested in, say, an Indian spinning wool using a charkha for local village use and more interested in “world historical events” that mattered on a global scale and as they related to the rise of capitalist conditions, such as the invention of the spinning jenny and the steam engine to transport its products on a mass scale. This, admittedly, is a narrow view of “history” but not necessarily a Eurocentric one. Thus, when Marx says that “Indian society has no history,” what he means is that it has no “history” in as much as it relates to the rise of capitalist production. Marx can be critiqued for only being interested in India, and other parts of the world, including England, as it helped him to understand the laws of motion of capitalism, but this does not mean that he was Eurocentric in any straightforward sense. For more on Marx, Hegel, and History see Ahmad, “Marx on India;” Crystal Bartolovich and Neil Lazarus, eds., Marxism, Modernity, and Postcolonial Studies (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Susan Buck-Morss, Hegel, Haiti, and University History (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2009), 87–152; Kevin B. Anderson, Marx on the Margins: On Nationalism, Ethnicity, and Non-Western Societies (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010); Chibber, Postcolonial Theory and the Spectre of Capital.

67 Coulthard, Red Skin, White Masks, 6–15.

68 Coulthard argues that “by making the contextual shift in analysis from the capital-relation to the colonial-relation the inherent injustice of colonial rule is posited on its own terms and in its own right.” Coulthard, Red Skin, White Masks, 11, original emphasis. While I understand the power of “repositioning the colonial frame as our overarching lens of analysis” and see its value in Coulthard’s study, which focuses specifically on Indigenous peoples, I contend that the “capital-relation” and the “colonial-relation” must be shown as working together.
between dispossession and capitalist accumulation. I use the notion of the dialectic, as the generative process of the negation of the negation, to contend that, in Canada and elsewhere, colonial dispossession fed capitalist accumulation but also that new forms of capitalist expansion constantly require renewed dispossession. In *The Accumulation of Capital*, Rosa Luxemburg makes a similar point. She argues that Marx’s historical analysis in Part 8 is limited to refuting Smith’s “idyllic” conception of previous accumulation and thus stops prematurely. As a result, Luxemburg argues, Marx fails to adequately show how the ruthless methods of theft and coercion are, as Coulthard and others contend, not just a one-time handmaiden of capitalism but rather a persistent feature of the accumulation process. Marxist geographer David Harvey agrees and argues that we can build on the insights of Part 8 but must push them further to show that, in fact, “accumulation by dispossession” is not bound to the past but is rather an inherent feature of capitalism. Accumulation by dispossession was—and is—an ongoing dialectical process and thus dispossession and accumulation should be considered

69 I also point out that modes of dispossession need to be understood historically and in relation to modes of production. Marx makes this point in the *Grundrisse*: “It is received opinion that in certain periods people lived from pillage alone. But for pillage to be possible, there must be something to be pillaged, hence production. And the mode of pillage is itself in turn determined by the mode of production. A stock-jobbing nation, for example, cannot be pillaged in the same manner as a nation of cow-herds. To steal a slave is to steal the instrument of production directly. But then the production of the country for which the slave is stolen must be structured to allow of slave labour (as in the southern part of America etc.) a mode of production corresponding to the slave must be created.” Marx, *Grundrisse*, 98.


71 Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, 159.
simultaneously rather than in isolation. In drawing on Marx and on Coulthard, Luxemburg, and Harvey, I argue that a dialectical view of “accumulation by dispossession” is essential to understanding the creation and ongoing development of Canada’s capitalist settler society.

I also combine the ideas of Marxist thinker Antonio Gramsci with anti-colonial theory to guide my understanding of how the “ensemble” of unequal social relations produced by the processes of primitive accumulation are continually legitimized and normalized in colonial-capitalist societies. I use Gramsci’s notion of hegemony, as a strategy of rule organized by the state by winning consent from the ruled, to conceptualize how different colonial governments deployed cultural strategies, including schooling, to try cultivate consent among Indigenous peoples and non-Indigenous peoples in the Pacific Northwest in the mid-to-late nineteenth century. I am particularly interested in expanding on Gramsci’s focus on the role of the capitalist state, “as an ‘educator,’” to legitimize particular social formations in a colonial setting. To do so, I will borrow from the insights of anti-colonial theorists such as C.L.R. James, Aimé Césaire, Albert Memmi, and Fanon, all of whom show how colonizers use techniques of rule, such as racism and the policing of exclusionary categories of difference applied to the “colonizer” and “colonized,” in schools and everyday life to normalize otherwise illegitimate economic relations derived from dispossession. In colonial contexts, Memmi

72 Antonio Gramsci, Selections from the Prison Notebooks (New York: International Publishers, 1971 [1930s]), 247. For more on how Gramsci’s idea of hegemony can be applied to a study of Canadian schooling see, for example, Allan Sears, Retooling the Mind Factory: Education in a Lean State (Aurora, ON: Garamond Press, 2003). Sears argues that formal educational institutions founded on the authority of the state have come to claim a unique position in learning processes so that, at the level of common sense, education is often identified specifically with state schooling. The identification of state schooling as the unique source of education contributes to the development of hegemony, a form of rule that relies on the consent of the ruled” (33–34). For more on how hegemony can be used in the Canadian context, see Peter Kulchyski, “Aboriginal Peoples and Hegemony,” Journal of Canadian Studies (Spring 1995): 1–9.
argues that it is “impossible for […] colonizers] not to be aware of the constant illegitimacy of [their] status,” and so colonizers, often by way of the state, continually invent new ways to degrade and dehumanize the colonized to fortify hegemony and justify their power and privilege. Memmi dialectically determines that in this way the colonial relationship “is thus destructive and creative. It destroys and re-creates the two partners of colonization into colonizer and colonized” in ways that facilitate continued accumulation by dispossession. Combining Gramsci’s notion of hegemony with insights from anti-colonial theorists will help me to better analyse how the state uses important social institutions, such as schools, to manufacture and manipulate categories of difference to rationalize colonial-capitalist social formation as natural and inevitable.

To understand the role played by the state in legitimizing relations of rule in a capitalist settler society, I will engage directly with works of political economy, particularly feminist political economy and the political economy of schooling. I use political economy’s central guiding question of “who benefits the most” to interrogate connections between the state and colonialism, capitalism, patriarchy, and education in Canada. The close relationship between the state and capitalists has been traced and analyzed by Canadian political economists such as Harold Innis, Wallace Clement, Leo Panitch, and Leah Vosko. Panitch, in particular, draws on influential Marxist political

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73 Memmi, *The Colonizer and the Colonized* (Boston: Beacon, 1965), 8. For more on how Memmi’s ideas are applicable to the Canadian context see Alfred, Wasáse, 24–26.
74 Memmi, *The Colonizer and the Colonized*, 89.
theorist Ralph Miliband’s work to argue that the state plays a distinctly interventionist role in the economy in order to support capitalist accumulation. Miliband clarifies that the state, “is not a thing, that it does not, as such, exist. What ‘the state’ stands for is a number of particular institutions which, together, constitute its reality, and which interact as parts of what may be called the state system.”

I understand “the state,” then, as a network of institutions and organizations that includes, but is not limited to, the government, judiciary, and the military; Miliband groups the media, political parties, and schools together as important agencies of legitimacy that, in the face of struggle, seek to cultivate hegemony by rationalizing state power and the capitalist status quo as commonsensical. Traditionally, political economy has identified only the state, capital, and labour as the central agents of study; however, in a capitalist settler society Indigenous peoples must also be considered as an important power group in social struggle. Thus, combing Panitch’s Marxist theory of the state with the decolonizing insights from Indigenous studies outlined above, it is possible to see the state in Canada...
as playing two important roles: ensuring the continued legitimacy of a capitalist settler society and creating an environment to assist accumulation by dispossession.\textsuperscript{79}

My analysis of colonial schooling is informed by insights from feminist political economy and the political economy of schooling. I borrow from feminist political economy the idea that the state must be understood as “contested terrain” which simultaneously creates political possibilities while also defending patriarchal practices that reinforce women’s subordination.\textsuperscript{80} In understanding the role the state plays in manufacturing and policing patriarchy, I highlight how gendered social policy exacerbates inequality and defends social hierarchies that decidedly disadvantage women from non-hegemonic and marginalized groups. Thus, an intersectional approach that takes into account the various ways in which gender is also profoundly shaped by class, race, ethnicity, ability, religion, and other relations of difference will aid me in outlining the asymmetrical nature of colonial-capitalist social formation as it influences Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.\textsuperscript{81} Political economists of schooling show how the state, through educational institutions, produces and legitimizes various forms of social power and inequality in ways that tend to “restrict our willingness and ability to challenge the


\textsuperscript{80} \textit{Feminism, Political Economy, and the State: Contested Terrain}, edited by Pat Armstrong and M. Patricia Connelly (Toronto: Canadian Scholars’ Press Inc., 1999). Such an approach acknowledges the power of the state but also emphasizes women’s agency to act as agents of social transformation. For more on the contradictory nature of feminist political economy see M. Patricia Connelly and Pat Armstrong, “Feminist Political Economy: An Introduction,” \textit{Studies in Political Economy} 30 (Fall 1989): 5–12.

world in a meaningful way.” However, political economists also argue that state schooling is contested in society and should be understood as a key site of struggle. Indeed, Terry Wotherspoon argues, “Education, like any process which involves human activity, is grounded in the realm of possibility. It is not only what we do, but what we can do. Educational change has repeatedly borne the mark of struggle by groups which have had alternative visions.” Borrowing from political economy the dual view of education, as both a form of domination and a site for struggle and liberation, will allow me to better understand the unique contours of the rise of state schooling in Canada in the nineteenth century.

Lastly, and closely related to the political economy of education, to illustrate the myriad ways in which schooling is used by the state to legitimize asymmetrical social relations in colonial-capitalist society, the works of critical pedagogy, a praxis-oriented variant of educational philosophy, are useful. In ways similar to Indigenous conceptions of education, critical pedagogy views Western mass “schooling” as being counter to an empowering kind of teaching and learning necessary for meaningful participation in society. Indeed, since the 1970s, a number of international critical pedagogues have examined the project of state schooling as a complicated site of political struggle with the aim of raising critical consciousness and constructing transformative strategies for social change. While studies of critical pedagogy mostly focus on contemporary educational

83 Wotherspoon, The Political Economy of Canadian Schooling, 2.
84 On radical Indigenous pedagogy see, for example, Sandy Grande, Red Pedagogy: Native American Social and Political Thought (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2004); Marie Battiste, Decolonizing Education: Nourishing the Learning Spirit (Saskatoon: Purich Publishing Limited, 2013).
issues, their analyses of how schools function are insightful and the concepts they use can be historized. For example, many critical pedagogues draw connections between social organization and the transmission of informal knowledge by highlighting what is called a “hidden curriculum,” or lessons about social values and norms that are learned in the classroom environment but are not necessarily made explicit in the curriculum. Based on the educational materials available and how different teachers engage them in the classroom, as well as other factors, a hidden curriculum can reinforce certain social inequalities by educating students according to specific expectations about their class, race, and gender as shaped by larger social circumstances. 86 I use the “hidden curriculum” concept historically and in combination with insights from Indigenous studies and anti-colonial theory outlined above to explore the ways in which schools sought to provide children with lessons, both overt and covert, about social hierarchies that structured their participation in a capitalist settler society. Drawing on works of critical pedagogy help me to establish that mass education in British Columbia was not a natural, inevitable, or neutral phenomenon; instead, state schooling should be studied as a profoundly political project aimed at normalizing and legitimizing hierarchies of capitalist settler rule.

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While it is important to account for the connections between the processes of colonialism, capitalism, and state schooling, I will avoid viewing their relationship as linear and mechanistic. I combine critical pedagogy with political economy to make it clear that schooling should not be studied simply as a plot carried out by the state on direct orders from capitalist elites. Indeed, Panitch points out that the colloquial citing of Marx and Engels’s statement that the state is nothing but “a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie,” often “conjures up a grotesque image in certain minds.” Panitch thus calls on scholars to make the important differentiation between the state acting on behalf and not at the behest of capitalists, and I would add settler-colonial, interests.\(^87\) Critical pedagogues such as Michael W. Apple and Paul Willis similarly warn against making straightforward and tidy conclusions about the nature of state schooling. In particular, Willis argues that state schools often “maintain spaces and potential oppositions, keep alive issues, and prod nerves which capitalism would much rather were forgotten. Their personnel are in no simple sense servants of capitalism. They solve, confuse or postpone its problems which are finally and awkwardly independent from the functional needs of capitalism.”\(^88\) As much as possible, I try to highlight instances of resistance and negotiation by teachers, students, and parents to show the ways in which state schooling was a contested project. Overall, engaging with insights from Indigenous studies, historical materialism, anti-colonial theory, and different streams of political economy and critical pedagogy provides a variety of theoretical tools to examine the complex relationship between colonialism, capitalism,

\(^87\) Panitch, “The Role and Nature of the Canadian State,” 3.
and the rise of state schooling in nineteenth-century British Columbia in ways that emphasize state power as well as individual agency and resistance.

**Methodological Considerations**

As an interdisciplinary historian and as a Settler, I acknowledge the importance of reflecting on research methodology, especially as it relates to the study of Indigenous peoples. In this dissertation, interpreting causality and tracing the contours of change over time—the hallmarks of historical research—are central to my study, but so too is “decolonizing methodology.” Māori scholar Linda Tuhwai Smith (Ngāti Awa and Ngāti Porou) points out that “research” is “inextricably linked to European imperialism and colonialism.” In Indigenous contexts, she suggests that even mentioning the word research “stirs up silence, it conjures up bad memories, it raises a smile that is knowing and distrustful…. [Indeed,] the ways in which scientific research is implicated in the worst excesses of colonialism remains a powerful remembered history for many of the world’s colonized peoples.”

Smith argues that not only has Western research on Indigenous peoples rationalized colonialism, in a straightforward sense, but it also served—and continues to serve—as a technique of colonial rule itself. Knowledge is (colonial) power.

As a countermeasure, Smith suggests a number of decolonizing methodological “projects” for researchers including “connectedness,” “reading,” and “reframing” that I use to guide my historical practice. It is important to be clear about my methodological

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89 Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, 1.
decisions and research intentions because they ultimately frame the questions asked and the analysis offered in the pages that follow. My methodology emphasizes “connectedness.” As referenced above, I connect the history of Indigenous peoples to the land and show how settlers have historically used a variety of strategies, including schooling, to try to sever this relationship in making a capitalist settler society. In doing so, I aim to create further space for Indigenous peoples’ demands for land and decolonization today. Moreover, by focusing on the overlapping nature of colonial and capitalist oppression in the past, my work strives to better connect the struggles of Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples for greater social justice in the present. Overall, in linking dispossession and capitalist accumulation historically and showing the interrelationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in the context of schooling policy and practice, I hope to strengthen connections between anti-colonial and anti-capitalist social movements.

Smith’s project of “reading” against the colonial grain usefully explores ways in which colonial school records can be examined. In the last twenty years a number of scholars have discredited the perception of colonial archives as neutral repositories of dusty documents waiting to be “discovered” and documented by researchers. Scholars such as Smith as well as Thomas Richards, Ann Laura Stoler, and John Lutz have instead suggested that researchers approach and engage the archives as producers of colonial knowledge and power. Stoler argues that scholars must “read against the archival grain” to understand how the archive is epistemically coded in colonial common sense and how

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91 Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, 148
it subsequently makes available some knowledges while serving to bury others.\textsuperscript{93} In the context of British Columbia, Lutz similarly argues that the archival record is “suspect” and largely privileges settler conceptualizations of history.\textsuperscript{94} As such, Indigenous peoples, if they appear at all, are often depicted in ways that rationalize colonial power. Thus, Lutz argues that historians must not take archival representations of Indigenous peoples at face value and should learn to read against the colonial grain.

How can a variety of colonial sources be interrogated “against the grain”? Correspondence records, reports, and policy papers related to education produced by the Hudson’s Bay Company, Britain’s Colonial Office, different missionary orders active in the Pacific Northwest, the Department of Indian Affairs, and British Columbia’s colonial and provincial administrations are crucial sources that must be read as complex documents of a developing ideological project with material consequences of importance. Curriculum documents and textbooks authorized for use in schools as well as such underutilized sources on education as school inspector reports, newspapers, and biographies of government officials, teachers, and former students can similarly be questioned and read in ways that reveal hidden and not-so-hidden agendas. Perhaps most illuminating, photographic evidence of Indigenous peoples attending British Columbia’s early public schools can complicate standard demarcations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous schooling.\textsuperscript{95} Thus, I aim to “read” and “see” colonial sources in ways that challenge colonial common sense and the erasure of Indigenous peoples.

\textsuperscript{93} Stoler, \textit{Along the Archival Grain}, 22.
\textsuperscript{94} Lutz, \textit{Makúk}, 42.
\textsuperscript{95} For more on the politics of photographs and colonialism see, for example, Carol Williams, \textit{Framing the West: Race, Gender, and the Photographic Frontier} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).
Lastly, engaging Smith’s project of “reframing” can offer a different perspective on Canada’s schooling history. Instead of examining colonial sources to document the progress of state schooling, I choose to emphasize a different set of questions to frame my study. In analyzing the assortment of sources outlined above, this dissertation asks: How was schooling used as an agent of colonial dispossession? How did HBC and colonial officials, missionaries, provincial administrators, school trustees, teachers, parents, community members, and students debate the purposes and forms of schooling in the mid-to-late nineteenth century Pacific Northwest? How were different forms of state schooling continually reformed and refashioned over time by a variety of historical actors to, consciously or unconsciously, adapt to and reflect the changing circumstances of an emerging capitalist settler society? What factors influenced the shift from essentially voluntary educational methods in the 1840s, 50s, and 60s, to the state-sanctioned compulsory schooling of the 1870s, 80s, and 90s? Why did segregated schools for Indigenous children emerge in the 1880s and 1890s and how was attendance attained? What were the differences, similarities, and connections between forms of schooling targeting Indigenous and non-Indigenous children? How were relationships between and hierarchies of colonial, patriarchal, and capitalist rule normalized but also resisted and subverted in schools? In answering these questions in ways that link the histories of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous education together and to project of settler colonialism, this dissertation makes a vital scholarly contribution to Canada’s schooling historiography.
Chapter Outline

Informed by the historiographical, theoretical, and methodological considerations outlined above, this dissertation critically examines the close relationship between colonialism, capitalism, and state schooling in British Columbia between 1849 and 1900. To present my evidence, I borrow the literary device of alternating chapters. Authors such as Thomas King and Joseph Boyden use interchanging chapters to depict different or competing narratives that, taken together, offer a broader perspective on an event or happening. I trace the development of schools for Indigenous and non-Indigenous children in separate but overlapping ways. Chapters Two and Three explore the creation of schools for Indigenous and non-Indigenous children respectively between 1849 and 1871. Chapters Four and Five examine change and continuity in schooling for settler and Indigenous students respectively between 1871 and 1900. Overall, I place competing chronological narratives of “white” and “Indigenous” schooling alongside one another to emphasize differences and similarities and to demonstrate the fluid connections between colonialism, capitalism, and state schooling.

Chapter Two explores the emergence of schooling as a colonizing strategy in the Pacific Northwest colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia between 1849 and 1871. During this period schooling shifted from education for the offspring of elite HBC officers to the creation of a state-supported form of common schooling open to all classes. Yet, despite the benefits of schooling for social formation, the colonial state resisted bankrolling an expanding educational system and continually asked parents and community members to cover the majority of the costs associated with colonial common

schools. By the 1860s, however, many settlers openly opposed the state’s *laissez faire* attitude towards schooling. Popular demands for state-funded non-denominational schooling pressured the state to create and pay for an organized non-denominational system of common schooling in 1869 that laid the foundations for mass state schooling in British Columbia. While the state reluctantly accepted greater financial responsibility for education, it quickly saw the advantages of controlling schooling to further colonial-capitalist social formation.

Also looking at the colonial period, Chapter Three examines the state’s role in inviting, directing, and shaping early missionary work among Indigenous peoples, especially in regards to education. Throughout this period, the state selectively supported missionary work as part of a larger strategy of containment; it tried to neutralize the perceived violent threat posed by Indigenous peoples in order to ease settler anxiety and encourage further settlement and economic development. The colonial state was particularly interested in supporting missionaries to create and run schools for Indigenous children in hopes that they could train Indigenous peoples to accommodate to an emerging capitalist settler economy. Between 1849 and 1871, the state and religious bodies entered into a number of different arrangements that reflected shifting colonial priorities. State assistance ranged from grants of free land to the provision of pecuniary funds. Overall, in ways similar to the common schooling system, the colonial state supported missionary schooling for Indigenous pupils to try to bolster British control in the Pacific Northwest.

British Columbia’s common school system was transformed into a centralized system of public education by the newly formed provincial state between 1871 and 1900.
Chapter Four examines how the debates, struggles, and conflicts concerning the scope and form of mass education in British Columbia from the colonial era were redirected as the provincial state used public schooling to support greater colonial-capitalist social formation. The state compromised with parents and the public by agreeing to cover the entire cost of the new system in exchange for total control. The state then installed its new schooling machinery in ways that supported social formation and then, once the machinery was firmly in place, began to download financial responsibility back onto communities, all the while maintaining control. By 1900, the state used its control to authorize materials and programs that aimed to further justify colonialism and train children for their roles as citizens in an industrialized society. The “success” of public schooling was not simply limited to settler students. Indigenous children were caught up in this process during the entire period as they attended, and at times were even encouraged to attend, British Columbia’s early public schools. Indeed, the presence of Indigenous children in provincial schools played a crucial role in the expansion of public education in British Columbia as a colonial tool.

Chapter Five examines why the federal government of Canada created a separate system of education for Indigenous children in the 1880s and 1890s and how it was constructed in British Columbia. I situate the rise and expansion of “residential” schools in the context of continuing colonial anxiety about Indigenous resistance and retaliation, particularly in the North West Territories and British Columbia, and the desire of the newly established federal government to complete, secure, and legitimize Canada’s capitalist confederation in the late nineteenth century. I explore how missionaries, with increased support from the Government of Canada, played a key role in extending
education to Indigenous peoples. I also trace how Indigenous peoples – parents and students – resisted the new residential schools in the Pacific province. I conclude by showing how, by 1900, incidents of resistance made it clear that residential schools in British Columbia were ineffectual and conditions in many of the institutions were horrific. Nevertheless, the Department of Indian Affairs, aware of these conditions, decided to continue to expand the new schooling system as a key feature of accumulation by dispossession.

The conclusion, Chapter Six, highlights the contributions of this dissertation in light of contemporary efforts for reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. It begins by deconstructing Stephen Harper’s 2008 apology to the survivors of Indian Residential Schools as a form of ideological containment that aims to recognize the sordid colonial past in strategic ways that continue to safeguard colonial-capitalist power and privilege in the present. Returning to Coulthard’s Red Skin, White Masks, I explain how spectacles like the 2008 apology and the 2015 report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission actually serve to bolster colonial hegemony. While these reconciliation efforts have merit, they also distort the history of residential schooling by disconnecting it from capitalist social formation. As a result, the solutions they suggest (specifically, more and better schooling) for contemporary social ills continue to be couched in a capitalist logic that, at its core, defends accumulation by dispossession. By reviewing the historical connections between colonialism, capitalism, and the rise of state schooling outlined in the previous chapters and connecting their insights to contemporary issues, I conclude with a call to question the role of state-controlled schooling today.
Conclusion

In this dissertation, I build on Canada’s schooling historiography and draw selectively on a range of theoretical and methodological tools to offer an alternative historical analysis of the rise of state schooling in nineteenth-century British Columbia. In linking the rise of state schooling to the creation of a capitalist settler society, this dissertation “unsets” our understandings of the past in order to create theoretical and analytical pathways that can more closely connect the contemporary political struggles of Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples for meaningful reconciliation and against colonial and capitalist oppression. As such, it also challenges us to rethink the role of “schooling” in social transformation for the future.
CHAPTER 2: EDUCATION ON THE EDGE OF EMPIRE: COMPANY AND COMMON SCHOOLING IN VANCOUNTER ISLAND AND BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1849-1871

Britain’s colonization of the Pacific Northwest started with controversy. While the Colonial Office agreed with many of James Edward FitzGerald’s colonization proposals, including his insistence on social organization to attract new settlers, officials disagreed with his notion that the Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC) was not well suited to protect British interests in the Pacific Northwest. Accordingly, Britain granted the HBC a ten year lease over Vancouver Island in 1849, with the caveat that it was contingent on the company’s active promotion of colonization in the region. FitzGerald was furious. He spoke out publicly against the decision, arguing that the HBC could only be trusted to seek higher profits for its small group of British shareholders to the detriment of

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1 Note that the HBC had already been the de facto stewards of Vancouver Island since the signing of the 1846 Oregon Treaty. The treaty between Britain and the United States set the border at the 49th parallel with the exception of Vancouver Island which was awarded in its entirely to Britain. FitzGerald was so incensed that he decided to write a book outlining his objections to the HBC’s continuing control of Vancouver Island. In a brief opening statement, he wrote: “At a time when the attention of all thinking men is directed to the commercial and colonial policy of the empire, it is impossible that a Corporation can escape notice whose principals and conduct are diametrically opposed to those doctrines and theories which it seems to be the great task of our age to develope and to carry into action” (xi). He continued, “I can see no reason why we should any longer tolerate [the HBC’s] usurped and mischievous authority; or, why we should hesitate to put the countries now under its sway, upon a better social, commercial, and political system.” (xii-xiii). James Edward FitzGerald, An Examination of the Charter and Proceedings of the Hudson’s Bay Company, with References to the Grant of Vancouver Island (London: Trelawney Saunders, 1849). For a historical sketch of the debate, see J.S. Galbraith, “James Edward FitzGerald Versus the Hudson’s Bay Company: The Founding of Vancouver Island,” British Columbia Historical Quarterly 16 (1952): 191–207. FitzGerald also enlisted a number of influential figures to his position of opposition, including future British prime minister William E. Gladstone. See Paul Knaplund, “Letters from James Edward FitzGerald to W.E. Gladstone Concerning Vancouver Island and the Hudson’s Bay Company, 1848-1850,” British Columbia Historical Quarterly 13 (January 1949): 1–22. In the end, FitzGerald lost the battle for Vancouver Island and soon directed his attention to the colony of New Zealand where his ideas were better received.
extending British sovereignty in the Pacific Northwest. Colonial Office officials saw things differently. They countered that because the HBC was already established in the area it was simply the best agent of immediate colonization: “the Hudson’s Bay Company are better fitted than any association of individuals can be to form a settlement in Vancouver’s Island.”

The HBC benefited from being in the right place at the right time, having in 1843 moved its operations north from Fort Vancouver on the Columbia River to Fort Victoria at the southern tip of Vancouver Island. However, the company now had to deliver on its promise to promote colonization, and to do so it turned to means of social organization such as schooling.

This chapter shows how schooling promoted early social formation and became part of the colonizing strategy in the Pacific Northwest colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia between 1849 and 1871. During this period, education shifted from HBC initiatives for the offspring of elite officers to basic state-supported common schools open to all classes. However, education on this edge of empire was highly erratic and the nascent state only reluctantly took on greater responsibility for colonial schooling. Most schooling was of an ad hoc nature with parents, teachers, and community members struggling to find the necessary finances, appropriate buildings, and adequate teaching materials required to provide children with a proper education. Teaching was a precarious vocation taken up by those with few other means of support and by a select few who were particularly inspired by pedagogy. As well, colonial common schools were not restricted to white children, but instead reflected the region’s racially heterogeneous

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2 British Foreign Office, March 1849, TNA, CO 305/1, 3.
population during the period. The early schools in the colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia were contact zones that accommodated a diverse student body including white, black, and Indigenous children.

3 I use the term “race,” as does Chris Andersen, to refer to the socially constructed process through which “certain physical and cultural features of individuals and groups are emphasized, elevated, and distinguished in the context of producing and sustaining social hierarchies of dominance and inequality.” Andersen stipulates that “racialization” refers to the “hierarchical processes through which races are produced and legitimized.” See Chris Anderson, Métis: Race, Recognition, and the Struggle for Indigenous Peoplehood (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2014), 15. Working within a similar configuration that challenges the biological fixedness of “race,” Constance Backhouse argues that “[r]ace’ is a mythical construct. ‘Racism’ is not.” Indeed, she shows how socially constructed notions of “race” were “pressed into service” to legitimize the dispossession of Indigenous peoples’ lands as well as other acts of violence and discrimination against peoples of colour throughout Canada’s history. See Constance Backhouse, Colour-Coded: A Legal History of Racism in Canada, 1896-1994 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1995), 6 and 7. For more on “race,” “racism,” and British Columbia history, see Patricia Roy, A White Man’s Province: British Columbia Politicians and the Chinese and Japanese, 1858-1914 (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1989); Kay Anderson, Vancouver’s Chinatown: Racial Discourse in Canada, 1875–1980 (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1991); Renisa Mawani, Colonial Proximities: Crossracial Encounters and Juridical Truths in British Columbia, 1871-1921 (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2009). For more on “race” and schooling in British Columbia, see Timothy J. Stanley, Contesting White Supremacy: School Segregation, Anti-Racism, and the Making of Chinese Canadians (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2011). While British Columbia’s educational historiography does not expressly state that all children attending early schools were white, many studies do not specifically address racialization in regards to education unless referencing separate schooling for Indigenous or Chinese peoples. The effect, whether intentional or not, is a tendency to portray early schools as being attended solely by the children of white settlers. As the following pages will show, the reality was much more complex. For an example of this whitewashing tendency, see F. Henry Johnson, A History of Public Education in British Columbia (Vancouver: The Publications Centre of British Columbia Press, 1964). Johnson notes that some HBC officers and servants “took Indian wives and fathered half-white children” but continually refers to early schooling efforts as being for the “white population.”
Throughout the colonial era, the state saw education as an important agent of social formation. Schools encouraged settlers to put down roots and helped establish the kind of “industrious and persevering” population that FitzGerald and others suggested.

4 As noted in Chapter 1, I use the term “Indigenous” broadly and in an international context. In the following pages, I use the term “Indigenous” to refer to peoples recognized by the Canadian state today as “Aboriginals,” including Métis, or those born of unions between mostly Indigenous women and non-Indigenous men and with some ancestral connection to the Red River colony. I also include in the term “Indigenous” “métis” peoples—those born of unions between Indigenous women and non-Indigenous men in colonies such as Vancouver Island and British Columbia—that do not necessarily have specific cultural, political, and economic ties to the Métis Nation and that are not recognized by the state as being “Aboriginal.” Historically, the term “métis” was used broadly and often negatively to classify a “half-breed” person of “mixed-race” ancestry. Mawani argues that in the 1876 Indian Act state officials created the new non-Indian category of “half-breed,” or “métis,” to deny a segment of the Indigenous population rights and status and thus encourage children of so-called “mixed-race” relationships to deny their Indigenous identity and assimilate more fully into the emerging white settler society. On the complications of métissage in Canada see Maria Campbell, Half-Breed (Halifax: Goodread Biographies, 1973); Andersen, Métis; Jean Barman, French Canadians, Furs, and Indigenous Women in the Making of the Pacific Northwest (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2014). Barman argues that in the context of the Pacific Northwest the term “Métis” should be understood in relation to a “self-conscious separate identity characterized by a distinct outlook, economic basis, and language” while métis refers to persons “biologically of mixed descent, being most often French and indigenous” from fur-trading relationships (Barman, 368). I work within this configuration, though I acknowledge it is imperfect and incomplete. In British Columbia, such distinctions are complicated. Some of the children of fur traders, including the children of Governor James Douglas, could be classified as being Métis (as his wife Amelia Douglas was Métis) while others, the children of unions between fur traders or settlers with local Indigenous women, could be understood as métis. On these complications see, Adele Perry, Colonial Relations: The Douglas-Connolly Family and the Nineteenth-Century Imperial World (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015). Where possible I try to avoid such colonial distinctions based on “race,” or try to deploy them critically, and use the more inclusive term “Indigenous.” I also use the term “Indigenous” in an international context to include Hawaiians who travelled to British colonies for work, often referred to as Kanakas. On Indigenous Hawaiian workers, or Kanakas, in the Pacific Northwest see Tom Koppel, Kanaka: The Untold Story of Hawaiian Pioneers in British Columbia and the Pacific Northwest (Vancouver: Whitecap Books, 1995); Jean Barman and Bruce McIntyre, Leaving Paradise: Indigenous Hawaiians in the Pacific Northwest, 1787-1898 (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2006). While I encountered little evidence of the children of Asian settlers attending common schools, given that racialized “Asians” accounted for over 1,500 people in 1871 it is likely that some Asian children went to school. On Chinese education in British Columbia, see Stanley, Contesting White Supremacy.

5 On the development of the settler state in British Columbia, see Adele Perry “The State of Empire: Reproducing Colonialism in British Columbia, 1849–1871,” Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History 2 no. 2 (2001). In tracing the contradictory contours of state formation in the Pacific Northwest, especially in the eyes of the Colonial Office, Perry nevertheless argues that it is “impossible to disaggregate the history of colonialism from the history of the colonial state.” Moreover, she contends, “The fragile hybrid and forever disappointing character of the state in British Columbia bears witness to the significance of the local in creating the imperial and, ultimately, in challenging it....The point is thus not that colonial theory and colonial practice were polar opposites: the point is that they made and ultimately unmade each other. Britain aimed to bring hegemonic definitions of racial and gendered respectability to its administrators and administration in British Columbia but often found itself forced to work with local practices that were themselves created by the practical administration of empire in this context.” While the settler state can be viewed as failing to produce the kind of society envisioned by Imperial officials in Britain, the state was, nevertheless, successful in combining and marshalling settler power in ways that disadvantaged Indigenous peoples. Schooling was part of this process.
would protect Britain’s interests in the Pacific Northwest. Yet, despite the apparent benefits of common schooling, the state mostly refused to pay for an expanding education system. Instead, parents and community members shouldered the financial burden of schooling by paying school fees. By the late 1860s, however, many settlers opposed the state’s reluctance to fund education, and prominent school promoters pressured the state to create an organized non-denominational system of common schooling. This chapter shows how schooling helped anchor a settler population in British Columbia, but it also argues that the changes made to education in the late 1860s are best understood as a compromise. The state realized that if schools were to be used most effectively as agents of colonization, they would need to be broadly supported by the general population, and the public increasingly demanded that the state pay for a non-denominational system of schooling. As a result, the state agreed to take on more financial responsibility for providing education and it conceded on the religious issue despite the preference of many state officials for denominational schooling. There was, though, a hidden cost to state-funded schooling. The state agreed to pay for a non-denominational educational system in exchange for centralized control over it so that it could better use schooling as an agent of legitimation to extend its rule throughout the emerging capitalist settler society. This

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6 Jean Barman champions British Columbia’s implementation of a non-denominational school system as an educational “consensus.” She contends, “institutions were not imposed by a minority group within British Columbia; nor were those already in place elsewhere merely reproduced. Rather, educational structures emerged out of the needs of families living in British Columbia for schools that were universally accessible by virtue of being non-sectarian and free of cost. While this growing consensus of opinion was usefully informed by events elsewhere, in particular the geographical areas from which settlers came, it rapidly acquired its own impetus and direction in response to conditions within British Columbia” (241). According to Barman, the educational consensus was fully implemented by the completion of the CPR in 1886. While Barman’s goal is to rightly challenge the notion that British Columbia’s educational structures were simply transplanted from Ontario or elsewhere by highlighting the agency of local actors, her choice to frame the rise of state schooling as a “consensus” rather than a “compromise” negates the power of the state, which sought to use schooling strategically to facilitate social formation in its own image. See Jean Barman, “Transfer, Imposition or Consensus? The Emergence of Educational Structures in Nineteenth-Century British Columbia,” in *Schools in the West*, ed. Nancy M. Sheehan, J. Donald Wilson, and David C. Jones (Calgary: Detselig Enterprises, 1986), 241–264.
compromise laid the foundations for state schooling as a hegemonic force in British Columbia.

“Map of Part of the British Possession to the West of the Rocky Mountains,” circa 1858. TNA, CO 700/5.
The HBC and Early Education in Vancouver Island

The HBC was well positioned to offer educational services in Vancouver Island as it had provided similar services in other British North American colonies. By the early 1800s, the number of Métis children in the Red River colony in what is today Manitoba had grown to such an extent that the London Committee of the HBC saw the need for providing means of education.\(^7\) Initially, the committee sent out a number of spelling books and primers to forts around Hudson Bay and the task of teaching fell to parents. John Matheson opened a formal school in the colony as early as 1815. By 1836, the HBC passed a resolution that the fathers in the company “be encouraged to devote part of [their] leisure hours to teach the children their ABC and Catechism, together with such further elementary instruction as time and circumstances permit.”\(^8\) Most educational initiatives, however, were short lived and deeply wrapped up in existing class divisions designed to reaffirm rank and distinction within the dynamics of an already established class structure.\(^9\) The HBC also supported missionary work by offering grants-in-aid to both Catholic and Protestant societies willing to establish schools near forts.\(^10\) Grants of up to £200 for educational purposes were made to the colony in Red River and to other

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10 More about missionaries and private religious schooling will be discussed in Chapter 3.
trading stations in the west. The HBC, then, was not neglectful of education, but the company’s principal concern remained the trade of fur.

Based on past practice, the HBC also made provision for education in the Pacific Northwest. Starting in November 1832, there was sporadic schooling at Fort Vancouver, and employees in the new fort at Victoria desired similar educational facilities. In 1848, a year before Vancouver Island officially became a Crown colony, the HBC selected Anglican clergyman Robert John Staines to fill the dual office of company chaplain and schoolmaster at a salary of £200 and £340 per year respectively. In September, Staines, who had teaching and tutoring experience in England and Ireland, sailed out from London with his wife, Emma. On 17 March 1849, the Staineses arrived in Victoria on board the Columbia and quickly encountered the colony’s rough conditions. In speaking of the Staineses’ arrival, HBC clerk Roderick Finlayson said, “At this time there were no streets and the traffic cut up the thoroughfares so that everyone had to wear sea boots to wade through the mud and mire….It was my duty to receive the clergyman, which I did, but felt ashamed to see the lady come ashore. We had to lay planks through the mud in order to get them safely to the fort. They looked wonderingly at the bare walls of the building, and expressed deep surprise, stating that the Company in England had told them

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12 Donald Leslie MacLaurin, “Education Before the Gold Rush,” British Columbia Historical Quarterly 2 (October 1938): 247. See also G. Hollis Slater, “New Light on Herbert Beaver,” British Columbia Historical Quarterly 6 (January 1942): 13–29; Pollard, “Growing up Metis.” Pollard points out that of the first five students to attend the school at Fort Vancouver, four were recognized, using the language of the day, as “half-breeds” or métis.
13 Alex Colville to Sir John Pakington, 1 December 1852, TNA, CO 305/3, 477.
this and that, and had promised them such and such. At all events the rooms were fitted up as best could be done.” Clearly, Victoria was not what the Staineses had expected.

The Staineses had their work cut out for them. Initially, no independent church or school had been built for their purposes. The early teaching of approximately 20 children, a mix of boys and girls, thus took place in the rooms of Fort Victoria including the bachelors’ hall; church service was held in the mess hall. The Staineses’ “school” was envisioned as a kind of boarding school where elite officers, including those in the field, could send their children for a proper English education. In addition to the funds promised to Staines, each child was charged a fee of upwards of £20 for their room and board per year. The company wanted to reproduce the social structure of the Old Country in Vancouver Island through a solid British education. As historian Jean Barman notes, “In the new colony as in England, education was perceived as having two prime functions: preparation to maintain existing place within the social order, and inculcation of denominational religious beliefs.” Moreover, schooling also ordered rank and class through the prism of race. Like in other parts of what is now known as Western Canada,

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14 Roderick Finlayson quoted in MacLaurin, “The History of Education in the Crown Colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia and in the Province of British Columbia,” (PhD diss., Seattle, University of Washington, 1936), 12. For more on white women, social class, and colonialism in British Columbia see Adele Perry, On the Edge of Empire: Gender, Race, and the Making of British Columbia, 1849-1871 (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2001), 139–193. Perry talks specifically about Emma Staines’s arrival in Colonial Relations, 133-135. Perry contends that “Emma Staines’ status within this social world was predicated on small continuous acts separating her from the elite Indigenous women who lived within the fort. Her arrival demanded a shift in the physical space of the fort and the meanings it conveyed…Emma Staines established her distance from the elite Métis women at the fort including Amelia Connolly Douglas….For Staines, as for White women engaged in the work of empire elsewhere, creating and maintaining a distinction between White women and elite women of color was a critical, demanding, and never complete or stable project” (135).
15 According to Johnson, “Mrs. Staines taught the girls and acted as matron to the boarders, who slept upstairs. The little rascals sometimes poured water through the cracks of the flooring upon the heads of the celebrating bachelors below.” Johnson, A History of Public Education in British Columbia, 16.
the colony of Vancouver Island was racially heterogeneous as many male officers and servants of the HBC, as well as many settlers, established intimate relationships with Indigenous women.\textsuperscript{17} HBC schooling, however, was restricted to elites. As such, Staines’ early pupils were not only elites but also partly Indigenous. This was the case with the children of HBC officers James Douglas and John Tod, who attended Staines’ school and were widely acknowledged, at times to their detriment, to be of Indigenous descent.\textsuperscript{18} Class divisions, it seems, died hard, but racial categorizations were certainly of a more fluid and flexible nature in the early Pacific Northwest.

Despite their many challenges, the Staineses quickly established a culture of schooling in the fort. In terms of evaluating the school, Fort Victoria chief factor James Douglas wrote in October 1850 to A.C. Anderson, the Chief Trader at Fort Colville in Washington who also sent his children to the Staineses’ school:

\begin{quote}
The school is doing as well as can be expected in the circumstances. More assistance in the way of servants of respectable character is required than we have at our command; so many children give a great deal of trouble and I often wonder how Mrs. Staines can stand the fag of looking after them. She is invaluable and receives less assistance than she ought from her husband, who is rather lazy at times.

The children have greatly improved in their personal appearance and one thing I particularly love in Staines is the attention he bestows on their religious training. Had I a selection to make he is not exactly the man I would choose; but it must be admitted we might find a man worse qualified for the charge of the school.\textsuperscript{19}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{17} For a discussion of race and gender in Vancouver Island, see Perry, \textit{On the Edge of Empire}. See also Sarah Carter, \textit{The Importance of Being Monogamous: Marriage and Nation Building in Western Canada to 1915} (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2008).

\textsuperscript{18} Perry, \textit{Colonial Relations}, 133–136.

\textsuperscript{19} Quoted in MacLauren, “Education Before the Gold Rush,” 247. For more on Emma Staines see Perry, \textit{Colonial Relations}, 134–135.
While certainly not a glowing review, Douglas’ assessment expressed his confidence in the school and commented on his “love” for the religious training Staines was conferring on the children.

At the same time that the Staineses were acclimatizing to their new surroundings, a Roman Catholic missionary named Father Honoré Timothy Lempfrit travelled north to Victoria from Oregon territory. On 6 June 1849, Lempfrit arrived in Victoria with the intention of setting up a school for the children of French Canadian HBC servants. It is clear that Lempfrit and Staines were contemporaries. In fact, a letter written by Rear Admiral Fairfax Moresby suggests the two attended a dinner at his house which was shared by both with “mutual cordiality.”

By September of 1849, only a few short months after his arrival, Lempfrit wrote to his superior stating, “I have begun my school, they gave me a sort of shed where I live and where I have put up my altar.” On 9 February 1850, Lempfrit described his efforts in more detail:

... We arrived here on June 6th. The fort was truly crowded and they could give me a lodging only after a few days. Since there was no church, I was obliged to set up my chapel in a large shed at the edge of the water. But since it was too far from the fort, I obtained a place where I was able to set up a more decent chapel and to start a little school. For on arriving here I found the poor children of our French Canadians in the deepest ignorance, not knowing even how to make the sign of the Cross. I announced that I was going to take charge of their instructions without at the same time neglecting my poor Indians. From the beginning I have had from 20 to 25 pupils. Lately, I have fewer because several have gone to other forts.

I think that within a short time they will build me a house outside the fort, where I shall be freer, since the poor Indians are a bit fearful and since nearly all our French Canadians are living outside (the fort).

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20 Rear Admiral Fairfax Moresby to Secretary of the Admiralty, 7 July 1851, TNA, CO 305/3, 228.
21 Father Honoré Timothy Lampfrit quoted in Johnson, A History of Public Education in British Columbia, 17.
It is difficult to say with exact precision, but it seems plausible that Lempfrit’s teachings were the first lessons that labouring children received in the colony; he also taught the wives of company servants.22 Again, because many HBC servants married Indigenous women, some of Lempfrit’s “20 to 25” pupils were surely Indigenous.23 Lempfrit’s efforts were also quite possibly the first organized education in the new colony of Vancouver Island and his “school” was definitely the first freestanding educational facility in the colony. Overall, Douglas recognized Lempfrit as a “very zealous and energetic” teacher.24 However, Lempfrit soon left Victoria to continue his teachings among the Kw’amutsun (Cowichan) peoples on the eastern part of Vancouver Island. Regardless, within one year of the establishment of Vancouver Island as a British colony schooling had started.

If Staines was not the first schoolmaster, he was assuredly the most controversial. Staines’ stay in Vancouver Island was short and contentious. According to physician John Sebastian Helmcken, who married Douglas’ Métis daughter Cecilia in 1852 and later became a prominent politician, a “fairly rigid class structure” emerged in Vancouver Island. This structure was known to some as the colony’s “family-company-compact” because, for the most part, it privileged HBC officers and their offspring over the company servants and employees, such as the Stainses, as well as the small group of

23 Jean Barman has recently reassessed the French Canadian presence in the Pacific Northwest. In turning her attention to Lempfrit’s school, she suggests that many of his students would have been French Canadian with Indigenous ancestry. Moreover, she points out that some labourers were Iroquois and others would have married local Indigenous women and thus challenge traditional conceptions of Métis peoples. See Barman, French Canadians, Furs, and Indigenous Women in the Making of the Pacific Northwest, 245.
settlers working on the company farms around Fort Victoria.\textsuperscript{25} Staines quickly became associated with James Cooper, a disgruntled former HBC employee, and settlers such as Thomas Blinkhorn who were similarly frustrated with the power and influence the HBC had over the colony. As a dissident, Staines frequently wrote and signed petitions calling for the HBC’s lease over Vancouver Island to be revoked and imperial control asserted over the colony. Richard Blanshard, the colony’s first governor, shared many of these frustrations with the HBC’s management of Vancouver Island and subsequently resigned from his post after only one and a half years. A vacuum of power was created. In 1851, Staines helped draft a petition opposing James Douglas’ as successor to Blanshard as governor. However, Britain appointed Douglas as Governor of Vancouver Island in 1851. Bad blood developed between Staines and Douglas.

Staines’ political activity soon became too much of a distraction in the eyes of some parents who felt he was neglecting his proper duties. In May 1853, parents criticized Staines’ conduct and petitioned Douglas, as governor, for his removal. Their pleas were successful. Douglas likely needed little persuasion to silence Staines. On 1 February 1854, Douglas and HBC chief factor James Work relieved Staines of his duties as HBC chaplain and schoolmaster.\textsuperscript{26} Staines was outraged. A few short days later, Staines was selected to carry two petitions to England outlining the many grievances of


\textsuperscript{26} Douglas would later write, “Mr Staines unfortunately for himself was a violent party man, and was prudent neither in his conduct nor associations.” James Douglas to Sir George Grey, 11 December 1854, TNA, CO 305/5, 134–135. It is difficult to discern whether the attacks on Staines’ teaching were warranted or whether he was purged for his political opposition. From all accounts, it was likely a combination of Staines’ personality and oppositional stands that turned parents and the HBC against him. Regardless, historian Hollis Slater suggests that, in the end, “pioneer priest, pedagogue, and political agitator” is the label best suited for Staines. See G. Hollis Slater, “Rev. Robert John Staines: Pioneer Priest, Pedagogue, and Political Agitator,” \textit{British Columbia Historical Quarterly} 14 (1950): 187–240.
the colony’s dissatisfied settlers. At the beginning of March 1854, Staines boarded the Duchess of San Lorenzo at Sooke bound for San Francisco en route to London to deliver the petitions; however, the vessel foundered in the Salish Sea and quickly sank. All on board, including Staines, drowned. Given the hard feelings between her husband and the HBC, Emma Staines soon left Vancouver Island and travelled back to London, and so ended the first sustained schooling experiment.

**Common Schooling in the Colony of Vancouver Island**

In the early 1850s, Douglas expanded educational opportunities in the colony of Vancouver Island to children of the labouring classes. His change of heart in regards to schooling for those outside the HBC elite is best reflected in two letters. In considering the future development of the town of Victoria, he suggested to Archibald Barclay, Secretary of the HBC, on 16 May 1850: “The site I proposed for the town was immediately around Fort Victoria, which would at once serve as a nucleus and a protection. It was however no part of my plan that the company should be put to the charge of providing churches and school-houses. I would recommend leaving such matters to the inhabitants themselves, the company merely furnishing the sites and such pecuniary assistance as they may deem necessary, but by no means to act as principals.”

A year and a half later, on 8 October 1851, Douglas, now Governor of the colony, explained to Barclay, “I will also take the liberty of calling the attention of the Governor and Committee to the subject of education by recommending the establishment of one or two elementary schools in the colony to give a proper moral and religious training to the

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children of settlers who are at present growing up in ignorance, and the utter neglect of all their duties to God and to society.” Douglas continued, “One school at Victoria, and one at Esquimalt will provide for the present wants of the settlements and a fixed salary of £50 a year to be paid by the colony with an annual payment by the parents of a certain sum not to exceed thirty shillings for each child with a free house and garden is the plan and amount of remuneration I would propose to the committee.” 28 The new form of schooling proposed in the second letter was more or less implemented and would be partly paid for by the colony. However, like the private HBC school for officers’ children, parents would still be asked to shoulder some of the financial burden of providing schooling through subscriptions or the levying of tuition fees.

Douglas envisioned the new system of common schooling, steeped in religious education, mostly for the children of the lower classes. Indeed, according to Congregationalist minister and author Mathew MacFie, the common schools were “designed for families unequal to the expense of a first-class education.” 29 Church of England bishop George Hills confirmed as much in a diary entry suggesting that he and Douglas agreed that the common schools “were only for charity children.” 30 Douglas himself explained, “In regard to the character of the teachers, I would recommend a middle-aged married couple for each school, of strictly religious principles and unblemished character, capable of giving a good sound English education and nothing more, these schools being intended for the children of the laboring and poorer classes, and children of promising talents, or whom their parents may wish to educate further,

29 Mathew MacFie quoted in Barman, “Emergence of Educational Structures,” 22.
30 Bishop George Hills quoted in Barman, “Emergence of Educational Structures,” 22.
may pursue their studies and acquire the other branches of knowledge at the company’s school conducted by the Rev. Mr Staines.” Essentially, Douglas envisioned a two-tiered education system based on class distinction and predicated on payment by parents. Common schools would be lightly subsidized by the colony for the “laboring and poorer” classes while the HBC officers, and labouring parents who could afford to send their children of “promising talent,” would have the advantage of sending their children to be schooled with a private schoolmaster.

Early in the spring of 1852, Douglas opened the first common school in the colony, a temporary day school for boys of HBC servants in Fort Victoria. Charles Bailey, a company labourer, was appointed schoolmaster. Douglas wrote Barclay in March to explain, “Mr. Charles Bailey the young man who acted as schoolmaster for the Emigrants during the outward voyage of the Tory having conducted himself with great propriety since his arrival here and not being particularly useful as a mere labourer I have opened a day school for boys, the children of the Company’s labouring servants at this place, who are growing up in ignorance of their duties as men and Christians. It is now attended by 18 boys, who are making fair progress in learning. The parents furnish Books and stationary and pay £1 annually, for each child who goes into a fund for the support of the schoolmaster and he also receives his wages and provision from the Company, who are put to no other expense for the institution.” Even the early schools for labourers collected fees from parents. Mr. Barr soon replaced Bailey at the Victoria school, which in September 1853 moved from its temporary quarters to the first purpose-built schoolhouse in Minie’s Plain just outside of Victoria. Barr, who was originally recruited

to teach a new school at nearby Maple Point but was subsequently diverted by Douglas, continued on as schoolmaster. In October, Douglas informed Newcastle that “Mr. Barr resides on the premises, and has 33 pupils, who are making satisfactory progress.”

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32 James Douglas to Duke of Newcastle, 24 October 1853, TNA, CO 305/4, 92.
Subsequent common schools planned for Esquimalt and Maple Point were put on hold by Douglas, who deemed the coal mining community of Nanaimo to be the next educational priority. Thus, the second common school in the colony was opened in the coal mining town of Nanaimo in 1853, and Bailey was transferred from Victoria as schoolmaster. The HBC, recognizing the potential profit in coal mining, encouraged upwards of eighty labourers from England, and their families, to emigrate to Nanaimo to begin mining operations. Upon their arrival, miners demanded provisions for the schooling of their children. Douglas wrote to the Secretary of State for the Colonial Department, the Duke of Newcastle, explaining, “While at Nanaimo I had much conversation with the Miners, and other married servants of the Company, on the subject of opening an elementary school, for their children, who have been much neglected, and are growing up in ignorance of their duties as Christians and as men….Seeing that they all expressed an ardent wish to have the means of educating their children, I transferred Mr. Baillie, who has for some time been employed as Teacher of the Victoria Day School, but who is not now required here, to the Establishment of Nanaimo where he has since opened school.” Alex Colvile further explained that “the Hudson’s Bay Company have erected about 50 substantial houses at Nanaimo for the Colliers employed at the Coal Mines, and their families; and it is proposed to send out, in the course of this year, a clergyman to attend to the spiritual wants of these people. In the meantime a School is successfully conducted there by Mr Bayley, who was selected and sent out, as specially qualified for the duty, by the Hudson’s Bay Company.” However, historian John Belshaw argues that while many miners were initially enthusiastic about the idea of

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33 James Douglas to Archibald Barclay, 3 September 1853 quoted in Donald Leslie MacLaurin, “Education Before the Gold Rush,” 252.
34 Alex Colvile to Lord John Russell, 9 June 1855, TNA, CO 305/6, 259.
schooling, “there are reasons to think that the miners and their families became increasingly alienated from the whole idea of schooling.” Indeed, Belshaw asserts that many miners resisted the pay-for-service schooling model by refusing to reimburse the HBC or the colony for the teacher’s salary as well as neglecting to send their children regularly. Nanaimo, then, is perhaps the best example of how education was provided, initially at cost to both company and colony, as a means of colonization to try to facilitate the growth of a stable and productive community.

The third colonial common school was the Craigflower School, which was established at Maple Point a few miles north-west of Fort Victoria. While afternoon schooling was attempted in the area as early as 1853, a formal schoolhouse was not erected until 1854. Craigflower finally opened its doors to students in the spring of 1855. The school was commissioned by Kenneth McKenzie to provide education for the children of local farm employees and Barr was sent out from London as a schoolmaster. McKenzie and others were disappointed when Douglas transferred Bailey to Nanaimo and kept Barr at Victoria, depriving them of their coveted schoolmaster. As a result, a new teacher was dispatched from London. Charles Clarke came over from England with his wife on the Princess Royal in 1854 and arrived before the schoolhouse was finished. The two-story building contained a single schoolroom on the first floor and included six additional rooms for the teacher and his family as well as a small number of student

35 For more on coal mining and class formation, see John Belshaw, Colonization and Community: The Vancouver Island Coalfield and the Making of a British Columbian Working Class (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2002).
36 Belshaw also argues that state schooling did not serve the interests of the mining community. He suggests, “boys on Vancouver Island had a role to play in the labour market that was more remunerative than education….Opportunities for employment in the mines and in related industries (such as pit-prop making, freighting, work along the docks, and so on) remained a potent lure away from the classroom” (196). As a result, Belshaw suggests that both boys’ and girls’ enrolment in common and then public schools around the Vancouver Island coalfields was sparse. Belshaw, Colonization and Community, 193–197.
boarders. Almost a half-century later, community member Thomas Russell reflected on the coming of the Clarkes and the opening of the school: “Shortly after their arrival the school was opened with due form and ceremony, the enrolment consisting of eight boys and six girls from our own little party. The school gradually grew in strength and continued to flourish under Mr. Clarke….”37 Thus, by 1855, the HBC had opened and partially funded three common schools for the labouring classes in Vancouver Island.

It is difficult to assess the effectiveness of the colony’s first common schools. Accurate attendance records do not exist but a letter written by Douglas to Lord John Russell in August 1855 conveys limited census data suggesting that the colony’s total population for that year was 733. The communities of Victoria, Nanaimo, and Maple Point had the greatest numbers, with a total 187 people between the ages of 1 and 20, 97 boys and 90 girls. In his report, Douglas briefly mentioned that the three schools in operation had “collectively 81 pupils regularly in attendance.”38 While it is unclear at what age parents were sending their children to school in the 1850s, if we compare the 81 children Douglas mentioned to the 187 people reported between the ages of 1 and 20, the attendance rate would be approximately 43 percent. It is more likely, however, that those attending the early common schools were under the age of 15, upping the attendance rate to approximately 60 percent. These calculations are rudimentary at best and based on the limited information available. Nevertheless, it is possible to suggest that the early common schools, especially in their first few years of operation, experienced erratic attendance rates of somewhere between 20 and 60 percent and varying by season. As

38 James Douglas to Lord John Russell, 21 August 1855, TNA, CO 305/6, 126–127.
With the dismissal of Staines in 1854, the HBC desired another clergyman to continue the private boarding school for children of the HBC elite and to oversee the growing common school system for labouring children. On 12 August 1854, Colvile wrote to the Hudson’s Bay House stating, “The Hudson’s Bay Company are desirous of sending out a Clergyman to Vancouvers Island to be stationed in the vicinity of Victoria their principle establishment in the Island. He will have charge of a District or Parish and in addition will hold [the post] of Chaplin [sic] of the Hudson’s Bay Company and will attend to the spiritual wants of the fine settlers, and of the officers clerks and servants of the Hudsons Bay Company stationed at Fort Victoria…” Like Staines, the new clergyman would be given a stipend of £300 per annum. Funds were raised from the sale of lands, of which the HBC was a trustee. In addition the new “chaplain to the Company” drew an allowance of £100 from the Fur Trade Branch of the HBC, for his duties of “attending to the wants of [HBC] servants…” Moreover, Colvile explained: “The Company think it very desirable that the Clergyman should as is done at Red River by the Bishop of Rupert’s Land take charge of a boarding school of a superior class for the children of their officers and would wish that he should take out with him a gentleman and his wife capable of keeping a school of this nature...” As part of this arrangement, the Fur Trade Branch would provide a school as well as a residence for the teachers and Colvile claimed that “they might expect from thirty or forty pupils and the usual payment for each pupil has been £20 per annum for board lodging and education.”

39 Alex Colvile to Hudson’s Bay House, 12 August 1854, BCA, GR-1372, B01322, Box 45, F395.
his family. The engagement would last for five years at which point free passage back to London would be provided, or a new arrangement would be organized. On 13 September 1854, Anglican Reverend Edward Cridge accepted the terms and conditions of the contract and made the voyage to Victoria with his wife Mary. The Cridges were so eager to begin their work that they taught and proselytized to their fellow passengers aboard the journey from England.

The Cridges arrived in Victoria on 1 April 1855 during a time of transition for the young colony. After six years of HBC rule, and a number of petitions sent to London protesting the company’s dominance, Vancouver Island was granted a legislative assembly, the first elected assembly in British North America west of what is today Ontario. While most of the people eligible to vote were still inextricably linked to the HBC, the balance of power in the colony was shifting. New positions were created that were accountable to an elected council. One of the early initiatives of the Council of Vancouver Island was to appoint Cridge as the colony’s first school inspector. The minutes of the Council of Vancouver Island from 27 February 1856 record Cridge’s appointment:

The Governor then called the attention of the Council to the subject of the Publick Schools, and recommended that the Revd. Edward Cridge, District Minister of Victoria, should be appointed a Member of the Committee for inquiring and reporting upon the state of the Publick Schools, It was Resolved, That the Revd. Edward Cridge be, according to the Governor’s recommendation, appointed a Member of the said Committee, and be requested to hold quarterly examinations and to report on the progress and conduct of the pupils, on the system of management, and on all other matters connected with the District Schools which may appear deserving of attention.40

40 Minutes of the Council of Vancouver Island, 27 February 1856, quoted in MacLaurin, “Education before the Gold Rush,” 256.
In addition to teaching at his private institution, Cridge held the position of school inspector for almost ten years.\textsuperscript{41} That Cridge took his position seriously is evidenced by his thorough reports on the state of common schools from the mid-1850s to the early 1860s. Cridge’s reports shed light on the educational developments in the colony of Vancouver Island during the colonial period and his comments document the successes and difficulties of the early schools. Overall, Cridge’s reports show that inadequate attendance, improper facilities, and poor teaching materials made teachers’ work much more challenging.

Attendance was perhaps the single greatest determination of schooling success, and as a result, Cridge paid an inordinate amount of attention to the subject in his reports. In his first report of 1856, he commented extensively on the attendance of children from the labouring class. In the Victoria school taught by Barr, Cridge observed, “The number of children on the books is 17 all of whom are boys. Their ages vary from 6 to 15 years, there being 7 boys under ten years of age and 10 of ten years and upwards; 9 are boarders and the remainder day scholars. Of these latter, 3 are of the labouring class. That only 3 boys and no girls of this class attend the Colonial School at Victoria is a [sic] remarkable, and, I think, a painful fact.” Cridge pointed out that “some girls formally at this school have been placed at a girls’ school, but none of the labouring class…” Cridge was willing to concede that the poor attendance of children from the labouring classes was not

\textsuperscript{41} For more on the importance of educational inspectors and state formation, see Bruce Curtis, \textit{True Government by Choice Men? Inspection, Education, and State Formation in Canada West} (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992). Curtis contends that “educational inspection played a central role in the formation of new state structures capable of connecting central authorities and local agencies, and educational practice, both as ideology and as administration, was fundamental to the existence of representative government. Educational inspectors…were placed to promote and, at times, to enforce their cultural conceptions, their moral standards, their sense of justice, and their aesthetic sense as models for the rest of society. Tendencies towards educational standardization embodied their standards” (7).
necessarily their fault. He explained, “As to what may be the real cause of this deficiency I do not feel myself able to speak with confidence. There is evidently a feeling unfavourable to the schooling existing among some of the people chiefly on the alleged grounds of the irregularity of the Masters’ attendance.” Thus, it was not just children’s truancy that was a problem in the early schools.

A similar situation existed at Craigflower. Cridge proclaimed that “attendance though not so good as it might be is fair.” He continued, “The number of children on the books is 21 of ages varying from 4 to 16 years, there being 12 under ten years of age and 9 of ten years and upward.” Again, focusing on the class backgrounds of the pupils, Cridge stated that “there are 11 girls and 10 boys; 3 are boarders. Of the day scholars 11 are of the labouring class (5 girls and 6 boys).” Cridge concluded his first report by making an explicit mention to the “great want in this colony” of a “girls’ school for the labouring class.”

Admittedly, a private school for girls had been established around 1852 at the Langford farm at Colwood west of Victoria, and even Governor Douglas eventually sent two of his daughters, Alice and Agnes, to the school. However, nothing similar had yet been opened for girls of the labouring class. Thus, Cridge emphasized the need for a school for girls of the labouring class: “It seems greatly to be lamented that those who are likely thereafter to perform so important a part in the community in the capacity of wives and mothers, should be suffered to grow-up without education.”

42 Edward Cridge to Colonial Secretary, 20 November 1856, BCA, GR-1372, B01322, Box 45, F395 1.
43 Johnson, *A History of Public Education in British Columbia*, 18. Van Kirk argues that many fur traders were especially anxious “to estrange their daughters from Indian influence. It was believed that the free manner in which Indian mothers discussed sexual matters made it impossible for them to inculcate in their daughters proper feminine virtues, especially chastity.” Métis girls could climb the ranks of social respectability in ways that their brothers could not. As a result, effort was often made to educate girls privately whereas boys, even from respectable families, attended common schools with children from the working class. Van Kirk, “Many Tender Ties,” 103–5.
44 Edward Cridge to Colonial Secretary, 20 November 1856, BCA, GR-1372, B01322, Box 45, F395 1.
is known about the gender composition of the early schools in Vancouver Island, but it seems likely that, where possible, boys and girls of the labouring class were encouraged to attend schools together to reduce educational costs.

Cridge’s subsequent reports continued to suggest that more could be done to encourage a higher rate of school attendance in the colony. Attendance was highly erratic and largely unpredictable. For example, Cridge noted that upon examination on 1 April 1857, Mr. Kennedy, who replaced Barr at the Victoria school, had nine scholars. However, Cridge commented that “on the 1st day of June 1857 he had twenty scholars of whom two were boarders who pay twenty pounds sterling per annum for their board.”\footnote{Cridge’s report included in James Douglas to Henry Labouchere, 23 March 1858, TNA, CO 305/9, 52.} It seems that weather greatly determined school attendance. In his report of 1860, Cridge explained that the Victoria Colonial School, now being taught by Mr. Burr, saw 26 students leave over the winter “on account of the state of the weather, intending as the teacher understood, to return in the spring.” While Cridge gave the school a mostly positive review, he stated that “the chief defect which at present strikes me is the irregularity of the attendance of the pupils, the remedy of which must depend greatly on the parents and guardians.”\footnote{Cridge’s report included in James Douglas to Duke of Newcastle, 27 January 1860, TNA, CO 305/14, 47.}

It was not just the weather that kept students from attending common schools. Improper facilities plagued the system and as a result teaching conditions in many of the common schools were less than ideal. In the winter of 1857, the Victoria school lacked a proper teaching space. Cridge pointed out that “the scholars were at present taught in the Kitchen…the Schoolroom being too cold for winter occupation.” However, he also explained that the “Kitchen was too small as a Schoolroom for his number of scholars”
and as a result many parents complained. Indeed, Cridge emphasized that because of such conditions “many persons are entirely deterred from sending their children to school.”

There were also numerous complaints made about the state of the Craigflower school in 1857. As schoolmaster, Clarke managed to accommodate “twenty eight scholars of who two were boarders”; however, Cridge reported that the school house was in “very bad condition” and “boarders could not live there during the winter.”

Overcrowding was also an issue for some schools. Reporting on the Victoria school in 1860, Cridge pointed out that “the teacher has not refused admission to any children for want of accommodation” but when the attendance was most numerous, “he found it convenient to send one class at a time out for recreation while he was teaching the remainder of the school.” Cridge put a positive spin on the situation in his report, suggesting that “it is a cause of much satisfaction that a room which under former circumstances, furnished sufficient accommodation is now under the increase of population, scarcely large enough.”

In short, there were a number of variables affecting attendance in the early Vancouver Island schools.

Aside from the limited information on class and gender that Cridge provided in his reports, little is known about the identities, especially the race and ethnicity, of the children attending the schools. One student’s recollection confirms that the student body of the Victoria school was racially mixed. Reflecting on his time in the school, former student Edgar Fawcett claimed, “our school might be aptly termed a mixed one….There were white boys and black boys, Hebrews and Gentiles, rich and poor, and we all sat close together to economize room.” Fawcett even recounts an incident of violence

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coloured by race: “One day a dispute arose between a white boy and a black boy, and ended in a fistic encounter. I was mainly instrumental in bringing it about, and backed my man until the sponge was thrown in by the white boy’s friend.”

Again, based on the racially heterogeneous population of the early colony, and rare accounts such as Fawcett’s, it seems likely that white, black, and Indigenous pupils frequently attended early schools in Vancouver Island together.

One of the few sources to comment on “race” and schooling in the colony of Vancouver Island prior to 1865 is an incomplete attendance record, likely kept by Cridge, for the “Victoria Colonial School” from 1861 to 1865. This “account book” consists of five loose pieces of paper identifying the names of parents and children accompanied by idiosyncratic scribbling beside select names. On the first sheet of paper, which documents attendance for the year 1862, there are 35 surnames, seemingly of parents. Beside these names are brief indications of race and occupation. Of the 35 names, four are identified as “colored.” There is M. Montaro who is listed as a “colored cook of HBC”; “Frances Theodosia colored good sealer”; Mathews is simply “colored”; and another Mathews is listed as a “colored waterman.” Other parents are identified by their trade, Allett is listed as a “contractor,” Eastwood as a “butcher,” and Westwood as a “musician,” however nothing is mentioned about their race. The remaining lists for 1862, 1863, and 1864 do not explicitly mention race or parents’ vocations. The last two sheets are undated, but likely record attendance for the year 1864 or 1865. These sheets refer to 12 “colored” children, including “Peter Lester” and “Isabella Lester.” While the category of

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48 Edgar Fawcett, *Some Reminiscences of Old Victoria* (Toronto: William Briggs, 1912), 28–32. It is possible to see this confrontation as being racially motivated. However, it is also important to note that Fawcett “backed” the black boy in the fight. For more on blacks in British Columbia, see Philip S. Foner, “The Colored Inhabitants of Vancouver Island,” *BC Studies* 8 (Winter 1970-71): 29–33.

49 “Register and Account Book,” BCA, GR-2055, 2 of 2.
“colored” could also have included Kanaka workers, the Lesters are likely the children of Peter Lester who was a leader of the Negro Convention movement in California and, as historian Philip S. Foner argues, part of a general exodus of blacks from that state to Victoria. Foner suggests that many blacks living in California were frustrated at their lack of political rights, including the inability to send their children to school. As a result, parents like Lester came to Vancouver Island seeking work and greater freedom for themselves and their families. However, the fleeing families often experienced similar kinds of prejudice and isolation in Vancouver Island as they did in California, and blacks, including Lester, had to fight for the right to send their children to school.50

While “colored” is the only clear racialized designation made on the attendance records, it would be a mistake to assume that all the other children listed were simply “white.”51 In fact, right below the “colored” Lester children on the 1864/5 roll, is listed “James Douglas Govrs Son.” As mentioned previously, Douglas’ children, including his son James, were of Indigenous ancestry. And as historian van Kirk explains, “In analyzing fur-trade society it is important to differentiate racism along sex lines because prejudice affected males in different ways and usually earlier than it did their female counterparts.”52 She further points out that Indigenous sons, often viewed as “half-breeds,” were consigned to a lower order and often denied access to elite society. Perhaps this explains why Douglas’ son attended the common school while he chose to send his daughters to private school. In fact, Douglas even sent his youngest daughter Martha to a

51 For more on “race” and racism in British Columbia see Stanley, Contesting White Supremacy.
52 Van Kirk, Many Tender Ties, 170.
private school in London, UK but counselled her to keep her Indigenous identity a secret from her classmates.53

Similarly, other children on the 1865 list cannot simply be assumed to be “white.” For example, “Isaac Tod” is listed as “HBC Farmers Son” and “William Tod” has only “HBC” scribbled beside his name. Isaac and William, though, are the sons of HBC chief trader John Tod and his métis wife Sophia “Martha” Lolo. Like Douglas’s son James, the Tod boys were also Indigenous. “Peter Ogden Factors son” is the son of Peter Ogden Junior, a métis chief trader located at Fort St. James on the adjacent mainland. Similarly, “Edward Dodd” is the son of Captain Charles Dodd and his métis wife Grace McTavish. “David Work” is the son of John Work and his métis wife Josette Legace. In fact, Work moved his family from Fort Simpson on the Northwest Coast of the mainland to Fort Victoria specifically so that his children could attend school.54 “A.J. Tolmie” and “William Tolmie” are the Indigenous sons of William Fraser Tolmie and his métis wife Jane Work, also John Work and Josette Legace’s daughter.55 It is difficult to establish positively the linage of all of the school children; however, it seems that there is enough evidence to at least suggest that those without “colored” designations on the school rolls

53 See van Kirk, Many Tender Ties, 237.
were not necessarily, in the words of critical theorist Homi K. Bhabha, white, or “not quite/not white.”

In terms of the cost of common schooling in Vancouver Island, educational fees were highly irregular. While many schools received some form of pecuniary support from the HBC and then the colonial government, all common schools charged fees. In Cridge’s report for 1857, he explained that at Victoria Barr charged “$12, or twelve dollars per annum School fees for each of his Children taught at the school.” Subsequently, it appears that Barr maintained, “Boarders at the rate of twenty pounds sterling each annum” and agreed to “teach Day Scholars at the rate of five Dollars each per annum.” At Craigflower, Clarke “charged the students at the rate of five dollars per annum” for boarding students and “at the rate of twelve dollars per annum” for tuition plus other charges for books. The early rates at Craigflower also depended on parents’ relationship to the HBC. Clarke charged “five dollars each per annum for the children of persons in the service of the H.B.Co and six pence per week each to all others: for tuition.” Charging parents some kind of fee for service was standard practice in Vancouver Island.

In terms of teaching, Cridge’s reports sketched a picture of schoolmasters doing the best they could with limited materials. In the first report of 1856, Cridge commented

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57 Cridge’s report included in James Douglas to Henry Labouchere, 23 March 1858, TNA, CO 305/9, 45–46.
on his examination of the Victoria school, “Some of the children answered with intelligence, and showed a fair understanding of their subject….The chief deficiency detected was a want of accuracy and grounding in the elementary parts. The subjects taught are reading, writing, arithmetic, history, a little geography, and grammar.” Cridge also claimed “this school is not well supplied with books and other requisites – a serious defect. I would suggest that an adequate supply should be ordered from England or San Francisco at the earliest opportunity. The books published by the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland are very suitable to a school of this description and are very cheap.”

In 1857, Cridge explained, again in relation to the Victoria school, “the subjects taught in his school were arithmetic, English grammar, geography, spelling, writing, English history….and the Church of England catechism…” In his 1858 report, he stated that at Craigflower Clarke “was bound by agreement to teach the following branches: Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, English grammar, Geography.” In 1860, Cridge commented on Burr’s progress at the Victoria school, “Great improvement has been made by the pupils. In addition to efficient instruction in Grammar, Geography, Arithmetic, and other elementary branches, I found a class being well grounded in Euclid and algebra.”

From all available accounts, it seems likely that teaching was a prized but seemingly undervalued, and underpaid, occupation in the colony. In 1860, Cridge spoke very highly of Burr, “The teacher pays considerable attention to the moral and religious culture of the children. There is great need of this. I am happy to learn that improper language which at one time was painfully prevalent is now becoming rare. I would also

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58 Edward Cridge to Colonial Secretary, 20 November 1856, BCA, GR-1372, B01322, Box 45, F395 1.
observe that the Teacher is ready to attend to any suggestion tending to the improvement of the school. The welfare of the pupils seems ever uppermost in his mind.”

However, after Cridge commended Burr for his teaching efforts, he admitted that the teacher had difficulty supporting his family on a schoolmaster’s salary. Cridge explained to the Vancouver Island Colonial Secretary in May 1862, “As Mr. Burr has discharged the duties of his office with affinity and satisfaction and as I believe he feels considerable difficulty in supporting his family on his present income I trust his excellency will be pleased favourably to notice his request.”

In 1863, the new teacher at the Nanaimo school, Cornelius Bryant, took matters into his own hands. He demanded a pay raise. Bryant reasoned, “Owing to the increasing importance and responsibilities of my duties as School Teacher at this place I am induced to humbly petition your Excellency to be pleased to grant me an increase in salary. As I understand the Teachers of the other Colonial Schools are receiving this year an advance on their former salaries of £50 per annum, I hope that my humble request for a similar favour may meet with your Excellency’s kind consideration. I have always endeavoured to perform my duties faithfully and consistently, and in the future it shall be my aim to persevere in the same course of action.”

As the schooling system expanded, so too did teachers’ expectations for remuneration for their labour.

By the 1860s, it became clear to Cridge and others that educational reform was sorely needed. In 1864, Arthur Kennedy replaced Douglas as Governor and raised concerns about the state of education in the colony. Moreover, public agitation, largely by

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61 Edward Cridge to Colonial Secretary, 13 May 1862, BCA, GR-1372, B01322, Box 45, F395 27.
62 Cornelius Bryant to James Douglas, 8 June 1863, BCA, GR-1372, B01322 Box 45, F396 1.
British Colonist editor and legislative assembly member Amor De Cosmos, pressured the government to take more responsibility for the common schools. In March 1864, a public meeting was called and attended by approximately 500 Victoria residents in which many parents demanded the establishment of a free non-denominational common school in the city. This public pressure pushed elected representatives to pass legislation implementing a completely free (i.e. state supported) system of general education based on non-sectarian principles under the direction of a school board of education and controlled by the governor. Growing out of this, the legislature passed the Common Schools Act, 1865 to establish a basic framework for the systematic “Establishment, Maintenance, and Management of Common Schools.”

Effectively, the Common Schools Act, 1865 created a highly centralized administrative structure for governing common schooling in Vancouver Island. The governor was still technically in charge of education; however, he could now appoint nine officials to constitute a General Board of Education that would, for the most part, control the running of the school system. It remained the governor’s prerogative to appoint teachers, but the General Board could establish their duties and had the right to visit the schools for examination. With the approval of the governor, the Board was to be in charge of curriculum; its duties were to “prescribe Course of Education and Discipline, and to select and Prescribe for Use in each District School, such books as they may think best, and to authorize the Purchase and Distribution thereof.” The governor also appointed a Superintendent of Education at the salary of $1500 per year. Kennedy chose Alfred Waddington, a prominent politician and advocate of free education, and he replaced Cridge as the colony’s school inspector. The most controversial feature of The

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63 An Act Respecting Common Schools, 15 May 1865, TNA, CO 306/1, 315.
Common School Act, 1865 was that it stipulated that schools “shall be conducted strictly upon Non Sectarian Principles. Books inculcating the highest Morality shall be selected for the Use of such Schools, and all Books of a Religious Character, teaching Denominational Dogmas shall be strictly excluded therefrom.”64 After fifteen years of largely ad hoc, fee-based, and mostly denominational education in the colony, Vancouver Island established a free non-denominational schooling system controlled by a highly centralized administrative structure.

The Common School Act, 1865 was viewed by the state as a double-edged sword. Free schools attracted new settlers needed for colonization and the settler economy; however, Vancouver Island was also deeply in debt and the state’s promise to pay for schooling only exacerbated the colony’s existing financial problems. Nevertheless, by the mid-1860s new schools were established at Esquimalt, Cedar Hill, Lake District, South Saanich, and Cowichan, in addition to existing schools at Victoria, Nanaimo, and Craigflower. In addition, given the overcrowding at the original Victoria school, another school, taught by John Jessop, Thomas Nicolson, and Elisabeth Fisher, was opened in Victoria on 28 June 1865. In one of his last reports, before being replaced by Waddington, Cridge explained that despite the many problems of the colonial schools, “it is plain that they are conferring a great benefit on a large proportion of the community.”65 However, not all children were attending common schools in the colony. A great number of children continued to attend private religious institutions and Rear-Admiral Joseph Denman also pointed out that in Victoria there were still approximately fifty to a hundred children “running through the streets…acquiring street education that will prepare many

64 An Act Respecting Common Schools, 15 May 1865, TNA, CO 306/1, 315.
65 Edward Cridge to Colonial Secretary, 27 August 1861, BCA, GR-1372, B01322, Box 45, F395, 24.
of them in after years for every description of crime and depravity.” But by 1866 the common schools in Vancouver Island had a total of 404 students (237 boys and 167 girls) and were completely supported by the government at the cost of £2,272.11.6. Alarmed at the growing expenditure for education, Kennedy stated that administering the free common schools was “rapidly degenerating into a monster job arranged by an irresponsible board.” Free schooling had been secured but at a steep cost.

In 1866, Vancouver Island and the mainland colony of British Columbia merged into the United Colony of British Columbia. It was a marriage of convenience. In the aftermath of the gold rush, Vancouver Island was suffering the effects of a depression and the resource-rich but deeply indebted colony of British Columbia needed more administrative support. It was not, however, an easy amalgamation. The colonies had already cultivated their own procedures and there were many disagreements about colonial policy. One important difference revolved around education. British Columbia officials criticized Vancouver Island’s free education scheme as extravagant and irresponsible, and continued to advocate for fee-based schooling. As the mainland colony expanded, however, calls by politicians, parents, and community members pressured the state to play a more active role in supporting education.

Common Schooling in the Colony of British Columbia

Educational developments on the mainland lagged behind those in Vancouver Island. Prior to British Columbia becoming an official Crown colony in 1858, the north-

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66 Rear-Admiral Joseph Denman to the Secretary of the Admiralty, Esquimalt, 3 June 1865, quoted in Barman, “Emergence of Educational Structures,” 20.
67 Arthur Kennedy to Edward Cardwell, 24 January 1866, TNA, CO 305/28, 72.
central area was a fur-trading district known as New Caledonia. The HBC had a vast network of forts spread throughout the territory with Fort St. James in the north as its administrative hub. The company learned from Indigenous peoples about various gold deposits along the Thompson and Fraser rivers. The HBC, though, wanted to avoid a gold rush, largely because it would cut into profits and be difficult to control. Nonetheless, by the mid-1850s, rumours of gold were spreading and it was clear to Douglas that it would be hard to prevent speculators in California and Oregon from traveling north to mine for gold. Indeed, historian Jean Barman argues, “in reality the 1858 rush represented not the initial discovery of gold but a loss of control.”

By 1858, the HBC’s ten-year lease over Vancouver Island was only good for one more year and the company’s authority on the mainland was restricted to the fur trade. It was clear to the British government that it needed to take direct responsibility for the situation on the mainland. In a bold move, the British government decided to end the HBC’s lease early and assert sovereignty over the area without consulting its Indigenous inhabitants. It was a colonial power play. The new colony of British Columbia officially came into being on 2 August 1858, and the Colonial Office appointed Douglas as Governor of Vancouver Island and British Columbia, with the added provision that he resign from the HBC to avoid further conflict of interest. While Britain had extended its control over the mainland to benefit from the gold rush, the Colonial Office made it clear that it wanted the colony to be financially self-sufficient and continued to take a hands-

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68 For more see Barman, *French Canadians, Furs, and Indigenous Women in the Making of the Pacific Northwest*.
off approach to assisting social development. Once again, colonization was left in Douglas’ hands.

As the gold rush intensified, the need to establish colonial control and social organization on the mainland quickly became clear when the Fraser Canyon War broke out between invading miners and the Nlha7kápmx (Thompson) peoples in the summer of 1858. Nlha7kápmx peoples increasingly complained of American and European miners from California and Oregon Territory impinging on their territories and taking gold, salmon, and other resources indiscriminately. Trespassers also harassed Nlha7kápmx women. As such, a number of minor conflicts ensued between Nlha7kápmx peoples and miners. However, tensions boiled over in August 1858. The Nlha7kápmx reportedly sent downstream the decapitated bodies of two French miners who raped an Indigenous woman. In response, miners organized volunteer militias to mount a show of force large enough to pressure the Nlha7kápmx into a peace settlement to secure access to land and gold. While details of the war that followed are sparse, deadly conflict ensued. As miner militias travelled up the Fraser Canyon from Hope and Yale, they met the Nlha7kápmx in

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70 Academic accounts of early British Columbia history have largely neglected the Fraser Canyon War as a formative event. For the exception see Daniel P. Marshall, “Claiming the Land: Indians, Goldseekers, and the Rush to British Columbia,” (PhD Diss., University of British Columbia, 2000). Marshal argues that the war, as will be discussed in Chapter 3, should be understood in the context of wars in Washington and Oregon during the same period: “Much of the cultural mentality that informed the genocidal attitudes of the California mining frontier was baggage carried north with the requisite pick, pan and shovel” (199). For more on colonial conflict in the Pacific Northwest, see Ray Hoard Glassley, *Pacific Northwest Indian Wars* (Portland: Binfords and Mort, 1953); Richard White, “It’s Your Misfortune and None of My Own”: A New History of the American West (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991).

71 Mining, as Marx argued in Capital, needs to be understood as a force of primitive accumulation. Marshall argues that mining was the “single greatest disruptor of Native lands in the American West” (200).

72 Marshall argues that “certain reminiscences have tended to sensationalize the number of white goldseekers who were found decapitated, but, at the same time, there is considerable evidence among contemporary letters, diaries and newspaper accounts that numbers of such instances occurred” (218).
battle and burned a number of villages upon their return to camp.\footnote{Marshall cites Ned Stout on the events, “We had to fight our way through and we burned every rancherie and every salmon box that we could get a hold of….They shot at us whenever they got a chance and we did the same. They did their best to cut us off and we had a very hard trip as we had to keep clear of the river as much as possible. I was shot in the arm and breast and a number of our men were killed and wounded. On the way down we came across an Indian who stood on a rock and waved defiance at us. He was shot by one of our men….I do not know just how many white men were killed during these fights, but there were thirty six at least….” Marshall, “Clearing the Land,” 251.} In response, Indigenous groups across the upper Thompson region gathered to determine their response. Meanwhile, one of the militias, the Pike Guards, led by Captain H.M Snyder apparently set out to negotiate a peace treaty with the Nlha7kápmx.\footnote{Snyder wrote to James Douglas, “a company was formed to proceed at once up the river…and by a unanimous vote I was elected their Captain…When I stated the object I had in view, and the manner in which I intended to proceed, which was to take an interpreter and make peace [sic] with the Indians by possible [sic] means if we could, and by force if we must, on those terms I would consent to be their commander and on no others. On taking the vote an unanimous consent was given.” H.M. Snyder to James Douglas, 28 August 1858, BCA, GR-1372, Box 126, 1617.} Backed by a force of over one hundred men convinced of the need to exterminate the Nlha7kápmx, Snyder carried a white flag and brokered a number of peace settlements with different chiefs, including noted chief Cexpe’nthlEm (David Spintlum) at present day Lytton.\footnote{Marshall argues that it is more likely that the Nlha7kápmx, in weighing their options, had already decided on peace before Snyder’s arrival.} Stories passed down to Nlha7kápmx Elder Mary Williams tell a different story of the “peace” talks: “They arrived with one of their headmen, and told the Lytton people to gather…Every one of the White men had loaded rifles, ready to shoot the people…The Whites said that all the old people were going to be killed off – only the young women were to be kept.” Williams says that Cexpe’nthlEm intervened, shouting: “Stop right there! End that talk right there! I am going to give you some land…The white people agreed. They put down all their guns and shook hands with the Indian people and went back to where they came from, back to Yale.”\footnote{“The Coming of the White Man,” as told by Mary Williams (Translated by Mamie Henry) in Our Tellings: Interior Salish Stories of the Nlha7kápmx People, eds. Darwin Hanna and Mamie Henry (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1996), 130–131.} Nevertheless, by September 1858
provisional peace prevailed in the Fraser Canyon. After receiving reports about the war raging in the Fraser Canyon, Douglas sent out a small force of Royal Marines and Royal Engineers from Vancouver Island. Douglas reprimanded the miners and met with the Nlha7kápmx, including Cexpe’nthlEm, to assure them he intended to keep the peace.

British Columbia’s history of social organization unfolded against the background of these events. Schooling in the mainland colony emerged in an even more ad hoc and haphazard fashion than in the island colony. Education could help claim and legitimize Britain’s hold over the country and, therefore, creating schools was identified as an early priority. Douglas explained to Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton on 19 February 1859, “It is our intention to make large reserves for roads, the erection of places of worship, schools, and public purposes, and also for Towns and Villages, in such a manner, however, as not seriously to interfere with or retard the progressive improvement, and settlement of the Country.”77 In British Columbia, schooling was to play an important role in colonization, though not right away.

In the fall of 1859, Douglas returned to the new colony to visit the emerging towns of New Westminster, Langley, Douglas, Fort Hope, and Yale and to keep tabs on the mining districts. He explained in a letter to the Duke of Newcastle, “in my progress through the country I have had opportunities of conversing familiarly with the people…and of studying practically the best means of promoting the settlement and permanent interests of the Colony.”78 “The entire white population of British Columbia does not probably exceed 5000 men,” Douglas explained, “there being with the exception

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77 James Douglas to Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, 19 February 1859, TNA, CO 60/4, 171–172.
78 James Douglas to Duke of Newcastle, 18 October 1859, TNA, CO 60/5, 174.
of a few families, neither wives nor children to refine and soften their presence.”

Douglas encountered the rough homosocial spaces outlined by historian Adele Perry. As a result, Douglas claimed that “no schools have been as yet established in the colony; but my attention will be given to the subject of education, and provision made for elementary schools, whenever the wants of the country render them necessary.”

It is not surprising, then, that the first school in British Columbia developed around the cluster of Royal Engineers, or “sappers,” and their families that Douglas stationed at Sapperton near New Westminster in response to the Fraser Canyon War. The Royal Engineers were supposed to keep order, provide military protection to settlers, and assist with surveying land and the construction of roads and bridges so essential to colonization efforts. Like the miners at Nanaimo in the early 1850s on Vancouver Island, the Royal Engineers quickly demanded educational services. In 1861, Douglas wrote to Newcastle forwarding a request for support for a school made by Colonel Moody on behalf of the engineers. Moody asked for a sum of £30 per year as well as free rations, approximately £85 in total, to be provided “in aid for the Children of the men of the Royal Engineers serving in British Columbia.” Moreover, Moody stated, “I have the honor to request that you will draw the attention of His Excellency the Governor to the total absence at present of education for the children of the men of the Royal Engineers

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79 James Douglas to Duke of Newcastle, 18 October 1859, TNA, CO 60/5, 182.
80 Perry argues that “in settler British Columbia, in the years between 1849 and 1871, customary gender relations were disrupted by the overwhelming demographic dominance of men. One result of this disruption was that white men developed a rough homosocial culture.” Perry, On the Edge of Empire, 20.
81 James Douglas to Duke of Newcastle, 18 October 1859, TNA, CO 60/5, 183.
82 James Douglas to Duke of Newcastle, 14 November 1861, TNA, CO 60/11, 138.
serving in this colony. The total number of children is seventy (70), of whom thirty-one (31) are of an age to attend school.”

Based on Moody’s letter, it appears that a school was in operation at Sapperton before 1861, likely as early as 1859. Miss Emily Herring, stepdaughter of Philip Crart of the Royal Engineers, was the first teacher, but she was dismissed for apparent “misconduct” in March of 1861. Moody explained, “The young woman who recently held the position of schoolmistress, has, from misconduct of a nature proving her entire unfitness for the charge of children, rendered it necessary to dispense with her services.” While details of the conduct of the schoolteacher are not made explicit, except for inferences that she was the relative of a sergeant and that the detachment continued to hold a sense of, in Moody’s eyes, “misplaced sympathy” for her, it is clear that the school was closed and that a new teacher was being requested. Moody clarified the situation further: “Hitherto the men of the Detachment, subscribing at a rate proportionate to the number of children sent by each, furnished an income of thirty-six or thirty-seven pounds, that of the teacher being guaranteed at forty-five pounds (£45) per annum.”

Moody stated, “I am made aware of the certainty that any other teacher than the above [the sergeant’s daughter] will not receive the same amount of voluntary support from the sympathy towards the first to which I have alluded; though I have no doubt that by firmness with kindly forbearance on my part and the judicious selection of a successor, a wiser course will be adopted.” He suggested that under the circumstances the War

83 Richard Moody quoted in despatch, James Douglas to Duke of Newcastle, 14 November 1861, TNA, CO 60/11, 140.
85 Richard Moody quoted in despatch, James Douglas to Duke of Newcastle, 14 November 1861, TNA, CO 60/11, 140.
Department grant “aid towards the schooling of soldiers’ children where there is no War Department teacher, but I am aware such grants are made, and what I now solicit the sanction of His Excellency….the sum of thirty pounds per annum with free rations, communicating the circumstance to the Colonial Department for consideration and arrangement with the War Department in England.” Moody concluded his letter: “With this small amount of assistance and, I trust, the gradual return of all the soldiers’ children with their parents’ pecuniary contributions, we may anticipate an income worth the acceptance of a respectable young teacher.”

Given the details of the situation, Moody believed that imperial monies were necessary to attract a suitable teacher.

Moody’s funding request was forwarded to the War Office for consideration. Permanent Under-Secretary of State for War, Edward Lugard, wrote to Moody on 24 February 1862 and informed him of the War Office’s decision. Lugard stated, “I am directed by Sir George C. Lewis to state that having referred the matter hence for the mediation of the Council of Military Education, he has, upon their recommendation approved of a sum, not exceeding £18 per annual, being permitted from army funds to discharge the duties in question, and that the number of children in attendance should continue to warrant the establishment of a school.”

With the new funds, the school was reopened in 1863 and Mrs. Anne Moresby, a lawyer who had practiced in Victoria, was hired as school teacher. Moresby was a financially distressed widow and she accepted the position at Sapperton mostly out of economic necessity. Moresby later recalled, “teaching school was one of the few occupations available to respectable educated women who had

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87 Edward Lugard to Richard Moody, 24 February 1862, TNA, CO 60/14, 324.
to earn their own living.”

Thus, the first common school in British Columbia, at Sapperton, was reopened with financial assistance from the British government.

While imperial funds were secured for the Sapperton school, the general costs of maintaining the detachment of engineers and their families continued to be a considerable strain on the new colony’s economy. On 22 April 1863, Douglas wrote to Newcastle explaining that “the number of children in the Detachment having been more than trebled since it left England; and the number is increasing everyday. I believe the number of women and children rationed at present moment exceeds 150 and as this is beyond the strength of the whole detachment I believe it is out of all proportion to what is authorized by the regulations of the army.” The sappers of Sapperton were clearly making themselves at home. One of Douglas’ solutions to the bloated detachment was to decrease its size through discharge. Douglas stated, “Under these circumstances I do not hesitate to beg that your Grace will authorize me to reduce the establishment by granting a discharge to those who may have large families and to others who may wish to settle in the colony; I believe many so circumstanced would readily avail themselves of the offer.” In Douglas’ mind such an arrangement would create a situation in which “the cost of the detachment could be considerably reduced.”

As the detachment was gradually disbanded in 1863, the Sapperton school transitioned into a general common school like those that had developed in Vancouver Island. Moresby was kept on as the schoolteacher. A.T. Bushby wrote to the Colonial Secretary on 3 November 1864 laying out the details of the new situation. Bushby said, “The school was originally formed for the education of the children of the Royal

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89 James Douglas to Duke of Newcastle, 22 April 1863, TNA, CO 60/15, 249–250.
Engineers stationed at New Westminster, and as such, I am told, was supported out of Imperial Funds; at the time of the disbandment of this detachment Ms Moresby received an inclination that her services would no longer be required and that the school would be discontinued.” Bushy explained that “a petition unanimously signed by the inhabitants of the camps and its vicinity, was presented to the Executive […] regarding the necessity for the continuance of the school and praying for pecuniary help to that purpose. The result was that Ms Moresby was re-appointed for twelve months at a salary of £72 per an. with allowance.” In addition, Moresby could collect school fees and use them as she saw fit.

The status quo at the Sapperton school was mostly maintained. Bushby stated “The school for some time past has been attended by an average of twenty-five children (boys & girls) from the ages of four to ten. The school hours are from 9:30am to 12am and from 1 to 3pm with half holy day on Wednesday and Saturdays….The course of instruction consists of reading, writing, spelling, history, grammar, geography, and arithmetic, in most of which branches I found the children very fairly proficient considering their ages and scanty appliances Ms Moresby has at her command for imparting such knowledge.” Moreover, “The school is attended by children whose parents are of all dominations. No regular religious instruction is given…..The school room answers every purpose and is well supplied with (black board).”  In terms of funding, Bushby explained that the colonial government paid £72 for Moresby’s salary and she also collected a $1 fee per head per month from the students. Thus, while a public education system did not develop as quickly on the mainland as in Vancouver Island, by the mid-1860s both colonies had established a form of common schooling supported by pecuniary state assistance and fees paid for by parents.

90 A.T. Bushby to Colonial Secretary, 3 November 1864, BCA, GR-1372, B01312, Box 25, F242, 14.
At about the same time that Douglas dealt with the educational demands of the Royal Engineer detachment at Sapperton, another common school was established in nearby New Westminster. Merchant Henry Holbrook wrote to Chief Justice Mathew Baillie Begbie stating, “the grand jury insists that it is the duty of all good Government to provide education….and as we have many children in this city wanting education, we consider that the Government might make a grant of money for a public school and that a teacher to the same be appointed for the benefit of such children.”

Writing to Newcastle in the fall of October 1861, Douglas mentioned that “there are at present two schools at New Westminster.” Douglas was on the defensive as a petition by “quiet well meaning tradesmen” had been forwarded to Her Majesty’s government voicing a number of grievances including “the want of public schools.” Douglas responded by stating, “The government has not been unmindful of the subject of education, and will make provision for the establishment of public schools as soon as required.” Aside from the schools in Sapperton and New Westminster, Douglas asserted that there were “certainly not over half a dozen children fit for school at any of the other towns in British Columbia.”

Nevertheless, parents in other areas of the colony soon expressed a desire for education. In 1863, clergyman Robert Christopher Lundin Brown wrote to the colonial government regarding the creation of a school in Lillooet on the Fraser River north of Lytton. He explained that the Governor had visited the town in the summer of 1861 and after Church on Sunday they had a conversation “on the subject of schools, but at that time […] there were] only four or three children [living] at Lillooet.” Brown stated that in the two years since his meeting with Douglas the town’s situation had changed. He

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91 Petition by Henry Holbrook et al. to Matthew Baillie Begbie, 12 November 1860, BCA, GR-1372, B01334, Box 71, F778, 40.
92 James Douglas to Duke of Newcastle, 8 October 1861, TNA, CO 60/11, 37–45.
claimed, “There are 11 children in this town where parents are anxious to have a school to send them to.” Brown also stated, “this number includes a half breed boy whom his adopting parents would fain have properly educated.” He conceded that “this number is doubtless small” but he reasoned, “there are several parents occupying houses along the waggon road who would gladly send their children to a school at Lillooet. This could raise the number of children requesting education to about twenty.” In discussing the logistics of providing education for these children, Brown made it clear that government assistance would be required to erect a schoolhouse and to pay a proper teacher.  

Indeed, as the mainland settler population grew, so too did demand for schools. Requests for educational aid even came from mining hubs such as Barkerville. Henry M. Ball, who later became a Justice of the Peace, wrote a letter to the local Colonial Secretary explaining, “I have the honor to report that an application has been made to me by a ‘Mrs. Galloway’ on behalf of the parents of the children of the town for the establishment of a school at Barkerville or Cameron Town, to be partially supported by the Government.” He explained, “the parents are willing to pay two dollars per week and hope the Government will pay a salary to the schoolmistress ‘Mrs Galloway.’” He added, “P.s. There are 10 children who will attend the school.” It is unclear whether the government agreed to partially fund this school, but in further correspondence Ball clarified that “on inquiry I find Mrs Galloway is the wife of a miner, and that she kept school in New Brunswick and California.” Moreover, Ball explained in a letter on 25 July 1867 that “a subscription amongst the inhabitants is being raised for the purpose of

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93 R.C.L. Brown to Colonial Secretary, 21 August 1863, BCA, GR-1372, B01311, Box 24, F 214, 3.
starting a school, and as soon as it is organized I will report further respecting it, for the information of the Governor.”

Little is known about the conditions of British Columbia’s early common schools. There are, however, records that allow brief glimpses into everyday educational life on the mainland. On 17 January 1868, a few years after British Columbia and Vancouver Island were amalgamated, Bushby wrote to the Colonial Secretary and enclosed a report of the Langley Public School for the year ending 31 December 1867. The unnamed author of the report, presumably the teacher, stated that 26 children attended the school from 29 April to 18 December 1867 and that their ages varied from 7 to 15. The author of the report explained, “Except my own children, none could read. With the above exception none speaks anything but Chinook. Of those who have attended regularly, quite a number can read and spell tolerably, and a few can write fairly….”

Chinook Jargon, or chinuk wawa, was a hybrid language that emerged in the Pacific Northwest for trade purposes and was based loosely on the Indigenous language of the Chinook peoples. Given the author’s report, it is likely that the majority of the class spoke Chinook. And while language cannot be assumed to be a signifier of identity, it seems reasonable to suggest that given the fact that Langley had its origins as an HBC fort that, like the Vancouver Island schools, some of the students were quite possibly Indigenous.

Regarding the finances of the school at Langley, the author stated that $250 had been received as a government grant and the rest of the $434.00 was paid by a local committee.

94 Henry M. Ball to Colonial Secretary, 18 June 1867, BCA, GR-1372, B01305 Box 10, F99, 9.
95 A.T. Bushby to Colonial Secretary, 17 January 1868, BCA, GR-1372, B01312, Box 25, F243, 1.
96 On Chinook Jargon and its use in British Columbia, see John Lutz, Makik. See also, Henry B. Zenk and Tony A. Johnson, “Uncovering the Chinooukan Roots of Chinuk Wawa: A New Look at the Linguistic and Historical Record,” University of British Columbia Working Papers in Linguistics (Papers for the International Conference on Salish and Neighbouring Languages 39) 14 (2004): 419–451. Lutz argues Chinook was not primarily an Indigenous language; the Hudson’s Bay Company did business with Indigenous peoples in Chinook and several prominent settlers were well versed in Chinook Jargon.
through parental subscriptions and monies raised by charging $1 per scholar for each term. The reporter also claimed that the government still owed $88 dollars for the last two months of work at the school.

While it is difficult to analyze the composition of the student body of the early schools in British Columbia, references to a “half breed” boy in Lillooet and the majority of the Langley school speaking Chinook suggests that these schools, like those of Vancouver Island, were quite likely racially heterogeneous. One source that can help to throw further light on the composition of these schools is the colony’s Blue Books. For British colonies, Blue Books, referred to thus because of their blue covers, were key aspects of colonial administration. Colonial officials used these books to record a variety of statistical information, from financial accounting to population returns. The population sections for the British Columbia Blue Books in the 1860s explicitly list race as a category of statistical return. For example, the 1866 Blue Book records Lillooet’s population as 874; 274 are listed as “whites” while 600 are listed under the “colored” column, which was crossed out and replaced with the word “Natives” written underneath. In addition, there were 352 Chinese and 17 “colored” peoples listed. Overall, then, non-whites greatly outnumbered those listed as white. This trend holds true for every British Columbia community listed, except for the Cariboo in which white men, likely miners, were the predominant group recorded. Again, as in the colony of Vancouver Island, it is perhaps impossible to say how many of British Columbia’s early schools were attended by Indigenous children; however, there is convincing evidence that the schools were racially heterogeneous.

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97 A.T. Bushby to Colonial Secretary, 17 January 1868, BCA, GR-1372, B01312, Box 25, F243, 1.
What little we know about the teachers of British Columbia’s early schools comes from sporadic reports made by teachers themselves. Sometimes these reports discussed teaching conditions and pay grievances, and rare reports even commented on the racial composition of classes. For example, the school at Douglas, near Harrison Lake, was not registered in British Columbia’s Blue Books but because of a teacher’s protest over her wages, there is an extensive record of the schoolteacher Mrs. Brown and her classroom.

In the spring of 1866 Charles Brew wrote to the Colonial Secretary on the subject of the school at Douglas explaining, “I have the honor to state that last month there were thirteen children at Mrs. Brown’s school, but two of them have since been withdrawn as their parents have gone to reside at Yale, and in a few days I think six more children will be taken away as their father…is also leaving Douglas. There then will be therefore only five children at the school.” Brew continued, “Should it be determined to withdraw the allowance for a schoolmaster at Douglas for the future, I think that Mrs. Brown is entitled to a salary for the time she has kept the school. She has received no remuneration from the children’s parents.”

Brown added her own voice to the record in a letter addressed to Brew on 19 May 1866. She explained, “I venture to address you upon the subject of my salary; as I have performed the duty of School Mistress for two months and a half I would certainly be glad to know what steps the Committee or the Government are going to take in the matter. Enclosed I beg to forward for your information or that of the Government a record of the number of children attending daily the Douglas school from 10th March to this date.”

Birch responded a month later on 7 June 1866, “Mrs Brown the

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98 Charles Brew to Colonial Secretary, 8 May 1866, BCA, GR-1372, B01310, Box 22, F195, 8.
99 Sarah Brown to Charles Brew, 19 May 1866, BCA, GR-1372, B01310, B01310, Box 22, F195, 14.
schoolmistress at Douglas will keep on the school for $25 per month from Govt.”\footnote{Arthur Birch to Charles Brew, 7 June 1866, BCA, GR-1372, B01310, Box 22, F195, 8.} The colonial secretary then informed Brew that “His honor has no objection to Mrs. Brown retaining the [position…] so long as a sufficient number of children attend the school to justify the payment of a salary…of $25 per month.”\footnote{Colonial Secretary to Charles Brew, 15 June 1866, BCA, GR-1372, B01310, Box 22, F195, 8.} In order to ensure that the school continued to meet the requirement, Brown was instructed to forward a monthly statement showing the number of children attending school. In July 1866, Brown forwarded a return for the children she taught at the Douglas school. In demonstrating her teaching, she also drew attention to the racial composition of her classroom. In her accounting, she collected pupils’ names, living location, and race. There were 8 students listed on her roll.

1. Joseph Smith – 29 Mile House – white
2. Josephine M. Donald – Douglas – white
3. Minnie Parker – Douglas – white
4. Kate Parker – Douglas – white
5. Alfred M. Donald – Douglas – white
6. Alfred Smith – Douglas – white
7. Frederick M. Donald – Douglas – an infant – white
8. Benjamin Franklin (Half Jew, half Siwash) – Douglas.\footnote{Report included in Colonial Secretary to Charles Brew, 15 June 1866, BCA, GR-1372, B01310, Box 22, F195, 8.}

While little else is known about Benjamin Franklin and his classmates, this example is further evidence that British Columbia’s classrooms were, in practice, open to students of Indigenous descent.

Nevertheless, continued confusion over Brown’s pay allows a further look into the early school at Douglas. In a letter of 21 July 1866, Brown wrote to Brew and explained, “As there appears to be some misunderstanding in regard to my salary as Teacher of the Douglas School; I beg to inform you that the salary allowed from the 10\textsuperscript{th} March to the 19\textsuperscript{th} May, the date the school report was forwarded to you, was to be fifty
dollars per month to which I beg to refer you to the Hon. Colonial Secretary’s letter of 5th June allowing the same to that date.” Brown continued, “The parents of the children attending school, being under the impression from the aforesaid letter that the school was to be discontinued, applied for a grant of twenty-five dollars per month, the balance to be made up by the parents of the children, but such arrangement was to come into effect from the date of the Colonial Secretary’s letter; I therefore hope that […you will] be pleased to have the balance of salary due me allowed.” Birch confirmed to Brew that “a salary at the rate of $50 per month was to be paid [to Brown] up to the 19th May.”

Perhaps because of the wage dispute, Brown resigned as schoolteacher at the end of July and moved north to Clinton with her husband.

By 1867, there were four common schools officially in operation in the colony of British Columbia: Sapperton, New Westminster, Langley, and Yale. There was great diversity in terms of teaching, attendance, and financing in British Columbia’s first common schools. In 1866-1867, for example, the Yale school had a monthly average attendance of approximately 29 per cent in 1866-1867, but was, according to the Colonial Secretary, the “best school in the colony.”

According to the 1868 Blue Book, the New Westminster school operated by H. Burr had a total of 60 students, 40 boys and 20 girls. The Sapperton school was taught by Moresby and was attended by 25 students, 10 boys and 15 girls. At Yale, A. Burr now taught a total of 26 students, 12 boys and 14 girls and A. Kennedy taught at the Langley school, which had 30 students enrolled, 15 boys and 15 girls. While schooling needs were expanding, Arthur Birch stated that in the colony, “no

103 Sarah Brown to Charles Brew, 21 July 1866, BCA, GR-1372, B01310, Box 22, F195, 17.
104 Joseph Burr to Colonial Secretary, 1866, BCA, GR-1372, B01312, Box 25, F237.
general system of public education exists at present.” While the government remained steadfast in avoiding the free system of Vancouver Island, pressure soon began to mount for educational reform.

Educational Compromise in the United Colony of British Columbia

In 1866, in the aftermath of the gold rush, Britain decided to amalgamate the colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia into the new United Colony of British Columbia. Given the very different approaches to education taken by the two colonies, the need for a united vision for colonial schooling became readily apparent. A fight for educational reform emerged and its champions were the editors of the leading newspapers of the day, Amor De Cosmos for the British Colonist in Victoria and John Robson of the British Columbian in New Westminster. Both men advocated non-sectarian schooling, were political reformers, and were important proponents of British Columbia’s eventual confederation with the other colonies of British North America in 1871. De Cosmos and Robson are considered to be among the founders of British Columbia’s public education system.106 While they disagreed on certain issues, including school fees, De Cosmos and Robson’s efforts were influential in sparking a popular debate about the future of education in British Columbia.

Amor De Cosmos, born William Alexander Smith, fancied himself a “lover of the universe.” He changed his name to reflect what he loved most about life: “order, beauty,

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105 Arthur Birch to Earl of Carnarvon, 31 October 1866, TNA, CO60/25, 237.
the world, the universe.”107 De Cosmos was born in Nova Scotia and reaped the benefits of an organized system of colonial education before moving on to Dalhousie University where he was exposed to the ideas of political reformer Joseph Howe. De Cosmos left higher learning in Halifax for the California gold fields before coming north to Victoria in 1858. In Victoria, he established himself as a critic of Governor Douglas and HBC control over the colony. He founded the British Colonist newspaper and used it to sound off on many issues. His weapon of choice was a sharply worded editorial. In addition to targeting the HBC, he was highly critical of the Church of England and its dominance in Vancouver Island. In a matter of only a few short years, De Cosmos became an important political reformer in Vancouver Island and he passionately advocated the provision of non-sectarian education for all. He was elected to the Vancouver Island legislature in 1863 and played a central role in establishing the Common School Act, 1865.

In 1865, de Cosmos stated his views on the importance of education for social formation:

For the first time since the colony of Vancouver Island came into existence the blessing of education has been presented to the poorest as well as to the richest child….Poverty has at length ceased to be an excuse for idle and ignorant childhood.….In a young community like ours the education of youth is a subject of even more tender solicitude than it is in older countries. We are forming the minds of those who are not only to become responsible for the material progress of the country, but who are to build it up, if not indeed lay the foundation of the social as well as political fabric of British rule on this side of the continent. There is a power in the public system of education of creating a national sentiment and inculcating an earnest patriotism almost unknown in the private schools of instruction.

According to De Cosmos, schools were a crucial tool, not just of colonization, but also of cultivating an interest in industry and social progress. He continued:

The people who are to carry on the work of building up a prosperous and probably influential country must not be encumbered with the cogs of sectional feeling of any kind. They must be taught, also, the great practical principles of life, and especially of new country life. It too often happens that education, like many other things, is not appropriate, and that while a child’s head is filled with a heap of rubbish never to be used throughout its career, the most necessary rudiments for the country in which it resides and which is to be its future stage, are altogether neglected. Again, we have old country ideas about the various grades of life—the servility of one class to another—sickening enough at all times in the countries from which they draw their sustenance, but transplanted in the repugnant soil of a new land, actually unbearable—we have these ideas down deeply in the juvenile mind. We want a very different tone to be imparted to our youth.\footnote{108}

An eccentric character, De Cosmos continued to advocate improved education and played an important role in the development of British Columbia.

On the mainland, De Cosmos’ educational counterpart was John Robson. Robson was the “fiery hawk-nosed” editor of New Westminster’s newspaper the British Columbian.\footnote{109} Like De Cosmos, Robson came from British North America, and was originally attracted to the west by the lure of striking it rich in the gold fields. When his luck ran out, he decided to settle in the mainland colony of British Columbia and became an advocate for representative government. Growing up in Upper Canada, Robson was exposed to the educational ideas of political reformers such as Egerton Ryerson, who played an instrumental role in implementing public schooling in Upper Canada. Thus, while living in British Columbia, education became one of Robson’s points of passion. He argued that with increased immigration to the colony a properly organized public school system was necessary to harness the power of relative population growth. In fact, he believed, much as James Edward FitzGerald had twenty years before him, that an organized educational system could help attract more desirable settlers to the Pacific

\footnote{108 The British Colonist, “Editorial,” 2 August 1865, 2.}
\footnote{109 Johnson, A History of Public Education in British Columbia, 32.}
Northwest. Robson also wanted a non-denominational form of common education, unencumbered by “sectarian domination and exclusiveness” and “placed within the reach of all.”110 Yet, while he advocated for inclusive schooling and argued that school fees were “entirely too high for the working classes,”111 he was not in favour of free schooling. He maintained, “To throw free education open to everyone was a serious principle, it caused people to forget the advantages that were bestowed on them and rendered the parents careless as to the attendance of the children at school. There could be no doubt that making the parents pay one-half of the cost of educating their children was the true principle.”112 Nevertheless, Robson argued that no one could complain about some expenditure of public money on schools if they were non-denominational.

While educational advocates such as De Cosmos and Robson made public pronouncements in favour of non-denominational schools, the government of British Columbia preferred the status quo of denominational schools based on a pay-for-service model supported only modestly by the state. Frederick Seymour, the Governor of the new united colony, fiercely opposed the idea of free schools. In the first session of the legislature of the United Colony of British Columbia, Seymour addressed the public’s demands for educational reform.113 He protested, “the Colony is not yet old enough for any regular system of Education to be established.” On the subject of free, state supported schools, he argued: “any man who respects himself would not desire to have his children instructed without some pecuniary sacrifice on his own part. The state may aid the parent,

112 Robson quoted in Barman, “Emergence of Educational Structures,” 25.
113 For more on Governor Seymour see Margaret A. Ormsby, “Frederick Seymour, the Forgotten Governor,” *BC Studies* 22 (Summer 1974): 3–25. Seymour brought a wealth of colonial administrative experience from his posts as Lieutenant-Governor of the Bay Islands and Lieutenant-Governor of Honduras.
but ought not to relieve him of his own natural responsibility else it may happen that the
promising mechanic may be marred, and the country overburdened with half-educated
professional politicians or needy hangers-on of the Government.” He further claimed that
“all that the State can do is enable the children to overcome the almost mechanical
difficulties which seem to barr their passage over the threshold of knowledge, and having
effected this to leave to parental affection and knowledge of individual character the
choice of the arms with which the child shall, at future period, fight the battle of life. It is
vain for the State to attempt to drive on in an even line the idle and the industrious—the
boy of ready aptitudes and him whose brain becomes pained and confused in
endeavouring to master the simplest problem.” Jean Barman summarizes Seymour’s
logic nicely, “Unnecessary education, likely if it be free, would only result in individuals
unhappy with their destined place in the social order.” Thus, Seymour conceived it “to
be the duty of the governing power to assist in giving to all elementary instruction, and
then to offer inducements to those who are able to come to the front in the intellectual
struggle with their fellowmen.” In essence, the colonial state gradually accepted
demands for non-denominational instruction to encourage parents to send their children
to the common schools, but stood fast in the belief that the state should not bear the entire
financial burden of an expanding school system.

By the late 1860s, however, an increasing population and the growing calls for
educational reform by De Cosmos and Robson pressured the colonial government to
reconsider its position. The government finally admitted that it was time to “establish a

114 Seymour quoted in MacLaurin, “The History of Education in the Crown Colonies of Vancouver Island
and British Columbia and in the Province of British Columbia,” 71.
115 Barman, “Emergence of Educational Structures,” 23.
116 Seymour quoted in MacLaurin, “The History of Education in the Crown Colonies of Vancouver Island
and British Columbia and in the Province of British Columbia,” 71.
uniform system of Public Education throughout the colony.”

On 24 February 1869, the Legislative Council of British Columbia passed “An Ordinance to establish Public Schools throughout the Colony of British Columbia,” known as The Common School Ordinance, 1869, and it was granted royal assent on 13 March 1869. The Common School Ordinance, 1869 repealed The Common School Act, 1865, which was still in effect in Vancouver Island, and the new legislation became a stopgap measure that acknowledged partial state responsibility for providing public schooling. The state also surrendered to the pressure for a non-denominational education system. However, in return The Common School Ordinance, 1869 gave the state unprecedented power over the administration of public education.

The Common School Ordinance, 1869 reorganized education in British Columbia. The governor no longer had direct control. Instead, a governor in council was instituted who had the authority to create new schools and new school districts. The Governor in Council also appointed teachers to the common schools, heard complaints, ensured that proper textbooks were used in the schools, drafted regulations, monitored all lands and buildings, and encouraged the election of local boards to deal with local needs. The Common School Ordinance, 1869 also formalized the process of requesting a new school. In order to create a school district and establish a school in a specific area, a petition had to be addressed and signed by at least two thirds of the resident householders, and “that said petition shall set forth the number of children between ages of 5 and 18 years who will be able to attend the proposed School; and also the number of children below the age of 5 years; and also the number and names of the residents in the District above the age of

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117 “An Ordinance to establish Public Schools throughout the Colony of British Columbia, TNA, CO 61/2, 1.
21 years, and the amount to be contributed by them towards the support of a School Teacher and School-house.” The Governor in Council was granted the right to refuse the creation of any school where the number of children did not exceed twelve “or where the amount likely to be collected shall not exceed Three Hundred Dollars per annum for the School Teacher.” Upon receipt of a petition, “the Governor in Council may order the election of a Local Board therein, to consist of not less than three persons, who shall be elected annually, during the first week in October each year.”

The government assigned local boards multiple responsibilities. The duties of the boards included the calling of meetings, dealing with maintenance and repair issues, and, most importantly, deciding how to raise the necessary funds for the school. With seven days’ notice the local board could call a special meeting “to determine whether to apply for a Grant in aid of Educational purposes as hereinafter provided, and to decide in what manner the balance (if any) of moneys required for purposes aforesaid, and for which the said Grants may not provide sufficient for the current year shall be raised, whether by voluntary subscription, Tuition Fees, or General Rate as hereinafter mentioned, and to fix the amount of Tuition Fee; provided, always, that such Tuition Fee shall not exceed Two Dollars per Month for each scholar.” It was left to the discretion of the local board to “exempt from the payment of Tuition Fees, wholly or in part, any indigent person.”118

The state supported common schooling at the rate of five hundred dollars per year for each qualified school. State funds were targeted to pay for the teacher’s salary. The remainder of the costs would still have to be borne by parents in a manner which the local board could decide. The Common Schools Act, 1869 laid out that “if, at the before

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118 “An Ordinance to establish Public Schools throughout the Colony of British Columbia, TNA, CO 61/2, 2–3.
mentioned Annual Meeting of the freeholders and resident householders it shall be determined by a vote of two-thirds of the number present to levy a Tax in lieu of charging Tuition Fees, the Local Board shall have power, and the same is hereby granted, to pass a By-law for levying and collecting a Tax not exceeding Two Dollars per head per annum upon all resident householders and male residents above the age of 20 years, in the District.” Here the state’s coercive head emerged: “Every By-Law, when approved by the Governor, shall have the force of law, and any person liable to pay any Tax made payable thereunder, and refusing to pay the same within seven days after the same shall have become due, may be summoned, at the instance of the Local Board, to appear before the nearest Justice of the Peace, who shall have power to act summarily in the matter, and adjudge the amount of said Tax, and such costs (to be levied, if necessary, by distress of goods and chattels of the person refusing to pay) as he may think reasonable.” The state was still intent on having “the people” pay for public schooling.

That the state viewed the The Common School Ordinance, 1869 as a compromise is reflected in the report released by the Attorney General, Henry Pering Pellew Crease, in 1870. Crease stated that the Ordinance “is a compromise between conflicting opinions” on the important subject of education and he argued that the end result was “as elementary a measure as would well be passed.”\textsuperscript{119} He continued, “the interest taken by individual members in education and the conflicting views entertained as to the degree in which religion should be mixed up, or excluded, in the training of youth in the colony have themselves proved a barrier to a more generally satisfying measure. The principle of the Bill is to place the general control of the scholars which shall arise under this

\textsuperscript{119} Quoting Attorney General Report in Frederick Seymour to Earl of Granville, 16 April 1869, TNA, CO 60/35, 564.
Ordinance, under the Governor in Council, whose powers are fully set out in the 2nd section of the Ordinance.” Moreover, Crease believed that the Ordinance is “an improvement on the free school system of Vancouver Island, which it supersedes, for it recognizes the principle that those who are able to pay should contribute towards the education of their children.” Thus, the state conceded on the issue of religion but supported Governor Seymour’s earlier position on school finances. British Columbians were required to share in the responsibility of paying for state-controlled schooling.

In 1870, due to logistical problems related to local boards actually collecting the necessary money for schooling, an amendment was made to The Common School Ordinance, 1869. The result was The Common School Amendment Ordinance, 1870 which was the last piece of legislation related to education passed by the colony of British Columbia before it joined Canadian confederation the next year. The Common Schools Amendment Ordinance, 1870 instituted a number of changes. The most significant addition was the creation of the position of Inspector-General of Schools for the Colony of British Columbia. Edward Graham Alston, who had previously been a member of the General Board of Education in Vancouver Island, was appointed to the position. Alston got to work quickly. Like Edward Cridge and Alfred Waddington before him, Alston was to be responsible for inspecting and reporting on the “management, character, efficiency and general condition” of the common schools. In addition, he was responsible for approving the qualifications of teachers and for ensuring that they conducted their classes in accordance with the Rules and Regulations for the Management and Government of Common Schools, which set down hours of instruction.

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120 Quoting Attorney General Report in Frederick Seymour to Earl of Granville, 16 April 1869, National Archives, CO 60/35, 565–566.
vacation periods, teaching duties, and prescribed textbooks. Alston’s policies soon
created a system for monitoring students, teachers, and their progress, and this system
helped lay the foundation for public education in British Columbia.

While the colonial government’s school ordinances in 1869 and 1870 signalled a
shift in schooling policy, it was clear that state officials continued to view them as a
compromise. Sir Charles Good explained the educational developments in the colony
thus: “The Common Schools Ordinance was a tentative measure, intended to lay the
foundation of a general school system throughout the colony. It was roughly and
hurriedly thrown together, but served its purpose by initiating the proposed system, and
will, no doubt, be altered and amended as occasion demands. It places the control of
schools in the hands of the Governor in Council, and provides for the elections of local
boards, in school districts and for a public grant of $500 per annum in aid of the support
of the schools provided the District has made like provisions by School fees or tax.”

In the spring of 1870, Anthony Musgrave, who replaced Seymour as governor, wrote to the
Earl of Granville to explain what was being done about education in the colony of British
Columbia. He described British Columbia as a “peculiar community….containing a few
thousands of population in small knots separated by great distances.” He explained, as a
result, “any educational measure can be in the existing circumstances of the colony only a
very rudimentary character.” He concluded his letter by stating, “there are no common
schools in any District existing without the aid of the government” and that the The
Common School Amendment Ordinance, 1870 was passed “not as a perfect measure, but
as another step towards the establishment of a more satisfactory system”

121 Anthony Musgrave to Earl of Kimberly, 3 August 1870, TNA, CO 60/39, 248–249.
122 Anthony Musgrave to Earl of Granville, 16 May 1870, TNA, CO 60/38, 483–486.
In a subsequent report, Crease offered another sobering view of the amended Ordinance and the state of schooling in British Columbia generally. He suggested that the government passed the pieces of legislation to remedy certain problems and defects, “though in a very crude and imperfect way.” Crease claimed:

The ineptitudes of the country settlers from their daily habits to comply with the preliminary requisites of the Act before the grant in aid of public money can be made and to carry out the meetings’ resolutions, returns, and tax bye law and the correspondence thus necessitated, where intermediate distances are great. The difficulty an Executive Council encounters in procuring reliable information in enforcing the payment of the District School Tax and local contributions to the teachers’ pay, as well as of ascertaining the condition of the schools, the capabilities and conduct of the teachers, of investigating complaints, of examining textbooks, and of providing regular examinations added to the doubts that have arisen as to the powers of local boards to enforce tuition fees concurrently with school taxes under bye law all pointed to the necessity for…machinery to aid the Executive Council, as well as the local boards in reducing a….looser system of Education of the lowest types with something like practical working order.

He concluded his report, “Bye and bye the absolute necessity of a more perfect system, the yearning of the settler after an education for his children, if possible superior to his own, [is needed for] a population to take root in the soil…to keep their children from becoming savages.”

By the end of the colonial era in British Columbia, it was clear, then, that the state wanted to assume a more active role in providing education as part of a larger strategy of establishing a permanent population in the Pacific Northwest.

**Conclusion**

In just over twenty years, schooling in what is now known as British Columbia transitioned from HBC-controlled education to a form of common, or public, schools that

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123 Attorney General Henry Pering Pellow Crease 20 April 1870, in Anthony Musgrave to Earl of Granville, 16 May 1870, TNA, CO 60/38, 490–494.
were financially supported by the state and that accommodated approximately 570 students. According to the 1870 Blue Book for British Columbia, the education costs to the state for that year were $8386.12. In addition, there were 16 schools in operation with two more on the verge of opening in Chilliwack and Lillooet. Common schools were established on Salt Spring Island, in Victoria, Craigflower, Esquimalt, Saanich, Nanaimo, Comox, Cowichan North, Cowichan South, and Cedar Hill on Vancouver Island, and at Burrard Inlet, New Westminster, Langley, Lake, Lytton, and Yale on the mainland. All of these schools received a minimum of $480 from the government and they all took in extra fees either in the form of voluntary subscriptions or a local tax to cover any remaining costs. While parents and school advocates lobbied hard for greater state aid for education, the state provided pecuniary support on its own terms. The result was a strategic compromise that gave the state almost complete control over public schooling in return for partial financial support of non-denominational schools. By 1870, then, the foundation was laid for a non-denominational but state-controlled education system in British Columbia. However, managing and providing schooling services—extending educational machinery to facilitate social formation—for British Columbia’s relatively small settler population was not the colonial state’s largest concern. Settlers continued to make up only a small fraction of the total population of British Columbia. How to monitor and manage the large Indigenous population was a principal anxiety of the early state. And, as will be seen in the next chapter, schools for Indigenous children run by missionaries also played a key role in the efforts to ensure the successful colonization of the Pacific Northwest alongside colonial common schools.
On 31 October 1851 in Victoria, Governor James Douglas wrote to update the British Colonial Secretary on the state of the colony of Vancouver Island. Douglas reassured the secretary that all was well on the west coast. He stated, “I am happy to inform your Lordship that nothing has occurred to disturb the tranquillity of the Settlements of this Island.” Douglas turned his attention to the Indigenous inhabitants living in the colony, which greatly outnumbered the small number of settlers in the area. There were at least 30,000 Indigenous people living in what is now known as British Columbia compared to only a few hundred settlers, at most. He wrote, “the Natives generally profess the most friendly disposition, and prove their sincerity by the character of their daily intercourse with the Settlers.” Douglas was optimistic that “under proper Management,” Indigenous peoples could be of great “service” to the colony as general labourers and even as a potential auxiliary force in the case of war with a foreign power.

Douglas’ correspondence suggested that, perhaps, James Edward FitzGerald had been

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1 James Douglas to Earl Grey, 31 October 1851, TNA, CO 305/3, 65.
2 For more on the politics of population in British Columbia see John Douglas Belshaw, Becoming British Columbia: A Population History (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 2009).
3 James Douglas to Earl Grey, 31 October 1851, TNA, CO 305/3, 65. While the colonial archive treats Indigenous peoples as a monolithic group, it is important to understand that the Indigenous peoples living in what is now British Columbia were differentiated in a variety of ways and responded differently to the arrival of Europeans. For more on the variety of responses, see John Sutton Lutz, Makúk: A New History of Aboriginal-White Relations (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2008).
4 James Douglas to Earl Grey, 31 October 1851, TNA, CO 305/3, 66.
right to describe the Pacific Northwest as being “free” from hostile Indigenous inhabitants.
Underneath Douglas’ sanguine assessment, however, lay a deep anxiety about the potential threat that conflict with Indigenous peoples posed to the general safety and stability of the new colony. Colonial relations could sour quickly. In fact, Douglas explained to the Colonial Secretary a few short years later that “probably the worst calamity that can befall this colony in its infant state is the hostility of the Native Tribes.”

Indeed, there was a long history of conflict between Indigenous peoples and traders in the Pacific Northwest, and new settlers feared that Indigenous resistance to colonization could be disastrous. In 1849, a 36-gun British man-of-war, the Inconstant, was sent to assist the HBC in securing Fort Victoria against hostile Indigenous peoples gathering around the fort. The Inconstant’s captain, John Shepherd, reported to his superior, Rear-Admiral Phipps Hornby, who in turn reported to the secretary of the Admiralty: “As regards the Colonization of the island, if such is the Company’s object, it is anticipated that much resistance would be offered by the Indians, the Tribes to the northward being described as numerous, well armed, brave and warlike.” Hornby further commented that “no colony should be established [in Vancouver Island], without being in its infancy rendered safe against the Indians, by presence of a strong detachment of troops.”

To assist colonization, the Colonial Office approved the use of gunboats to

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5 James Douglas to Duke of Newcastle, 28 July 1853, TNA, CO 305/4, 73.
7 Rear-Admiral Phipps Hornby quoted in Barry Gough, Gunboat Frontier: British Maritime Authority and Northwest Coast Indians, 1846-1890 (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1984), 27. Gough’s important work shows that after the Crimean War, new gunboats were fitted for service in British Columbia to counter threats of Indigenous violence. He argues that these boats were a “cheap and effective show of power” in the Pacific Northwest. Moreover, he contends, “Their psychological impact on Indians was sometimes, but not always, immense. They became the long arm of both imperial and colonial governments in extending the laissez-faire principals of the Victorian age. Through their auspices, trade was protected, seas were surveyed, settlement and the rule of law were extended, missions were undertaken, and, above all, the colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia….were made secure” (13).
patrol the bays and inlets of the North Pacific as a show of force, but refused to pay to
dispatch troops to protect the colony. Frontier diplomacy, backed by gunboats if needed,
would have to prevail in the Pacific Northwest. Given the great population imbalance
between settlers and Indigenous peoples, that continued throughout the colonial period,
Douglas deemed it essential to “cultivate [the] good will” of Indigenous peoples. On this
subject, Douglas wished to seek the Colonial Office’s sage council. He stated: “I shall
probably take the liberty of calling your Lordship’s attention hereafter to the best means
of improving the conditions of the Aborigines of this Island, who are in many respects a
highly interesting people, and I consider worthy of attention.”

One of the “means” that Douglas had in mind for cultivating Indigenous peoples’
good will was the creation of schools. Gunboats and classrooms could, in complementary
ways, protect the colony. Yet, Douglas pointed out, “I am led to regret that the
Missionary Societies of Britain, who are sending Teachers to so many other parts of the
world have not yet turned their attention to the natives of Vancouver’s Island.” While, as
the previous chapter noted, many children with Indigenous ancestry attended the HBC
school run by Reverend Robert John Staines, there were no permanent schools in
Vancouver Island specifically created for the great number of Indigenous children
throughout the colony. To rectify the situation, Douglas suggested that if religious
societies could send missionary agents, “schools might be established for the moral

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8 James Douglas to Duke of Newcastle, 28 July 1853, TNA, CO 305/4, 73. Moreover, early settlers did not
possess accurate statistics on how many Indigenous peoples actually existed in the colony and on the
mainland. On this point, Gough argues, “European fears were intensified because they never knew how
many Indians they actually faced. They knew there were thousands, but not how many thousands” (9).
9 James Douglas to Earl Grey, 31 October 1851, TNA, CO 305/3, 66.
10 For more on Douglas’ prior colonial experience see, Adele Perry Colonial Relations: The Douglas-
Connolly Family and the Nineteenth-Century Imperial World (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
2015).
training and instruction of the Aborigines, to the manifest advantage of the Colony.”

Based on similar schooling experiments in other colonies, the Colonial Office saw promise in the proposal. On Douglas’s behalf, the Colonial Office approached missionary societies in London about the possibility of sending out agents to the new colony. It would not be long before God’s armies invaded the Pacific Northwest.

While early missionaries travelled throughout the Pacific Northwest in the 1830s and 1840s, it was not until the 1850s and 1860s that Christian—primarily Methodist, Roman Catholic, and Anglican—missionaries seriously began carving out sectarian spheres of influence among the Indigenous peoples in what is today British Columbia. In examining the work of Christian missionaries more closely, this chapter challenges the notion that missionary societies simply threw their agents into the field with little support from colonial regimes. Missionaries were not simply autonomous agents waging God’s war against the so-called savagery of Indigenous peoples. The colonial state played an active role in inviting, directing, and shaping early missionary work, especially in regards to education. Historians such as Robin Fisher claim that missionaries in British Columbia “worked within a framework of governmental coercion,” but this chapter shows how the

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12 For more on schooling in other British colonies see for example, M. Kazim Bacchus, Education as and for Legitimacy: Developments in West Indian Education between 1846 and 1895 (Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1994); J.M. Barrington, Separate but Equal? Māori Schools and the Crown 1867–1969 (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2008).
The colonial state actively used missionaries to help establish that very framework.\textsuperscript{14} Throughout the colonial period, the colonial state selectively supported missionary work as part of a larger strategy of containment; the state tried to neutralize the perceived threat posed by Indigenous peoples in order to ease colonial anxiety and encourage further settlement and economic development. The state was particularly interested in supporting missionaries’ plans to gain converts by creating and running mission schools for Indigenous children. The goals of church and state coincided. The state hoped that missionaries, in their efforts at religious conversion, could train Indigenous peoples to accept the ways of whites and to accommodate to an emerging settler economy. Between 1849 and 1871, the state and religious bodies entered into a number of different arrangements that reflected shifting colonial priorities. State assistance ranged from moral support to grants of free land to the provision of pecuniary support. Overall, in ways similar to the common school system, the state envisioned missionary schooling for Indigenous pupils as playing an integral role in bolstering British control in the Pacific Northwest and supporting the development of an emerging capitalist settler society.

\textbf{First in the Field}

Christian missionaries were active in the Pacific Northwest as early as the 1820s. In 1829, a representative of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Jonathan Green, travelled to the Northwest Coast to explore the possibilities of establishing a mission. Green travelled broadly and visited several locations along the

\textsuperscript{14} Fisher, \textit{Contact and Conflict}, 142.
coast before writing a report calling for increased missionary attention to the area.\footnote{See Jonathan S. Green, \textit{Journal of a Tour on the North West Coast of America in the Year 1829} (New York: C.F. Heartman, 1915), 103.} One of the first to answer the call was Reverend Herbert Beaver, a Church Missionary Society (CMS) agent, who arrived at Fort Vancouver on the Columbia River in September 1836. The HBC sent Beaver, accompanied by his wife Jane Beaver, to serve as the fort’s chaplain for the fort and to act as missionary to the Indigenous peoples of the surrounding area. The Beavers, however, did not find their new surroundings suitable.\footnote{Fisher, \textit{Contact and Conflict}, 119.} As Protestants, they strongly disapproved of the large numbers of Catholic employees tolerated at the fort and were outraged at the country marriages of certain officers including John McLoughlin, James Douglas, and Peter Skene Ogden. The Beavers were strict zealots in a more flexible and forgiving fur-trading environment. They did not fit in. Beaver’s wife Jane refused to associate with fur traders’ Indigenous wives. Relations between Beaver and the HBC became irreparably strained when Chief Factor McLoughlin attacked Beaver with a cane after the latter had exhibited a longstanding public denigration of McLoughlin’s wife. McLoughlin apologized for the assault, but the Beavers had had enough of the rough conditions at Fort Vancouver. They left on 1 November 1838 having accomplished very little in terms of missionary work.\footnote{See Jay Nelson, “‘A Revolution in the Manners of the Country’: Aboriginal-Settler Intermarriage in Nineteenth Century British Columbia,” in \textit{Regulating Lives: Historical Essays on the State, Society, the Individual, and the Law}, eds. John McLaren, Robert Menzies, and Dorothy E. Chunn (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2003), 23–62.}

1838 also marked the arrival of Catholic missionaries in the Pacific Northwest. From the late 1830s to the 1860s, Catholic agents dominated the early missionary field. Around the time of Beaver’s departure, the bishop of Québec sent out Fathers Francis N. Blanchet and Modeste Demers to Fort Vancouver to found a mission. With Fort
Vancouver as a base, Demers travelled extensively throughout the Pacific Northwest. In 1841, he journeyed to Fort Langley, on the Fraser River, and in the following year, he accompanied a supply brigade to the hinterland posts of New Caledonia in what is now northern British Columbia. Also in the 1840s, Jesuit priest Father Pierre de Smet visited Indigenous groups in the south-eastern regions of New Caledonia and Father John Nobili worked in the north. As the HBC prepared to move its headquarters from Fort Vancouver to a more northerly location in the early 1840s, Father Jean-Baptise Bolduc accompanied HBC Chief Factor James Douglas on a reconnaissance mission to southern Vancouver Island and worked among the Coast Salish peoples.

Reverend Robert John Staines was the first person to establish a sustained religious presence after the HBC relocated to Victoria in 1843 and Vancouver Island was officially declared a British colony in 1849. Staines, as outlined in Chapter Two, was an Anglican clergyman sent out by the HBC expressly to be the company’s chaplain and a schoolmaster for the children of officers. However, aside from teaching children with Indigenous ancestry who belonged to HBC officers such as McLaughlin and Douglas, Staines did not play an active role in preaching to the Indigenous peoples in the areas surrounding Fort Victoria. The job of teaching Indigenous children was first taken up in Vancouver Island by Staines’ Catholic counterpart Father Honoré Timothy Lempfrit.

Lempfrit travelled to the colony in June 1849 and provided religious teaching to Catholic HBC employees, the Indigenous wives of fur traders, and children from the Lekwungen (Songhees) settlement located directly opposite Fort Victoria. The HBC initially provided Lempfrit with a makeshift building to begin his work and afterward he erected a house at Victoria which he also used as a classroom and chapel to teach

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18 Fisher, Contact and Conflict, 121.
upwards of 25 pupils. Lempfrit was not financially supported by the HBC but rather relied on donations from his parishioners. According to Rear Admiral Fairfax Moresby, Lempfrit was a “very intelligent & earnest missionary” who was generally “on good terms with the community.” However, Lempfrit’s relations with the Lekwungen soon soured. Moresby stated, “the good Padre [became] the cause of anxiety to the settlement, through a misunderstanding with the Indians, when the tribe assembled round the fort in a threatening manner.”

In the eyes of influential figures, Lempfrit’s activities amongst the Indigenous inhabitants in and around Victoria quickly made him a liability to colonial safety.

In 1851, Douglas asked Lempfrit to abandon his mission at Victoria. At this request, Lempfrit travelled north-east to live among the Cowichan peoples. It is unclear to what extent, if at all, Douglas was involved in guiding Lempfrit’s ultimate destination, but it is clear that the Governor had his reservations about the missionary’s plan. According to Douglas, Lempfrit left Victoria without “a single white assistant, and without any pecuniary means to defray the expense of an establishment, as he trusted entirely to his Indian converts, for support; a plan that could hardly be expected to succeed.”

Tellingly, Lempfrit’s Cowichan mission did not last long. In 1852, Douglas wrote to Colonial Secretary Earl Grey informing him that “we were…lately alarmed by a reported outrage committed by a party of Cowegins” on Lempfrit, to which Douglas “immediately dispatched an officer and a small force, with orders to bring Mr. Lempfrit

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19 Rear Admiral Fairfax Moresby to Secretary of the Admiralty, 7 July 1851, TNA, CO 305/3, 228. In Gunboat Frontier, Gough chronicles the constant conflict between the Lekwungen and the HBC in the early days of Fort Victoria. See Gough, Gunboat Frontier, 25–28.
[sic] to this place….a service which was satisfactorily accomplished without any difficulty.”

Lempfrit’s labours in the colony were clearly causing more harm than good. Douglas wrote to the Colonial Office that, as a result of the lessons learned from Lempfrit’s situation, he intended to discourage missionaries from working among Indigenous peoples except within the direct borders of the settlement where they could be properly protected and supported. This measure was adopted particularly to place “prudent restraint on the hasty zeal of the Roman Catholic Missionaries, whose intention it was to found missions, with inadequate means.” Douglas reasoned that “it would be a mere waste of energy” to send missionaries to other parts of the island “without powerful support [because] there is not the remotest chance, that the cause of religion would be promoted by their presence.” Moreover, Douglas believed that missionary work would only expose the missionaries to continued danger and risk sparking hostilities that could threaten the future existence of the colony. Indeed, Douglas pointed out that in the event of “Indian difficulties” the colony would be “drawn into the contest,” and by discouraging missionaries from over-reaching, the colony was simply following “the only safe course, by taking every possible precaution, to prevent the occurrence of difficulties.”

In the early 1850s, Douglas was not happy with the Catholic missionaries labouring in the Pacific Northwest, and so he wrote to the Colonial Office asking for help

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20 James Douglas to Earl Grey, 28 May 1852, TNA, CO 305/3, 115. While the expedition recovered Lempfrit without sparking new hostilities, relations between colonizers and the Cowichan tribes continued to be strained in the following years. In 1853 and 1856, new settler expeditions, with naval backing, sought to extend British justice to the northern groups. For more on these colonial expeditions see, Gough, *Gunboat Frontier*, 61–67.

21 James Douglas to Earl Grey, 28 May 1852, TNA, CO 305/3, 115. Settlers hostile to the Governor and HBC control of the colony generally resented this safe approach to Indigenous peoples which they termed Douglas’ “squawtocracy.” Instead of kowtowing to Indigenous groups, some settlers wanted to fight fire with fire, as would later happen with the Fraser Canyon war in 1858 discussed in Chapter Two. See Gough, *Gunboat Frontier*, 56.
from established Protestant missionary societies in England. Following the lead of Roman Catholic missionaries who had been active in the missionary field since the sixteenth century, British Protestants founded a number of new missionary societies in the late 1790s. The Baptist Missionary Society (1792), the London Missionary Society (1795), and the Church Missionary Society (1799) worked with already-established Protestant bodies like the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG, 1701) to fund and popularize missionary activities throughout the British Empire in the early nineteenth century. Historian Brett Christophers argues that in the eighteenth century, British officials were less interested in “civilizing” missions and were primarily focused on raw economic extraction in the colonies. Missionary activity among Indigenous peoples was viewed, especially in the fur trade regions, as a risky intervention that could disrupt the delicate balance of existing trade relations. However, with the movement to abolish slavery in the 1830s, and many in Britain questioning the economic value of the colonies, the idea of the British Empire as spreading the light of a superior Christian civilization soon took hold. Moreover, as the “ruthless terrorism” of primitive accumulation wreaked havoc in Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and England, pressure increased to similarly dispossess Indigenous peoples of their land, this making way for colonial settlements that could house dispossessed and disaffected British emigrants. Missionaries were seen as settler colonialism’s shock troops. As a result, by the beginning of the nineteenth century the British government looked more favourably on missionary work and supported Protestant missionary societies in creating missions and

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22 Patterson II, Mission on the Nass, 23.
23 Christophers, Positioning the Missionary, xviii.
schools for Indigenous peoples throughout the empire from colonies such as Red River to
New Zealand.

By the mid-nineteenth century, education and empire were intimately bound. Thus, Douglas’s aforementioned request in 1851 for Protestant missionary help for Vancouver Island came as little surprise to the British Colonial Office. In response to Douglas’s dispatch, a representative from the Colonial Office contacted Major H. Straith of the CMS about the possibility of sending missionary agents to the Pacific Northwest. The Colonial Office representative stated, “I am directed by Earl Grey […] to send] an extract from a Dispatch from the Governor of Vancouver’s Island suggesting the establishment of schools for the moral training and instruction of the Native Tribes, and I am to state that Lord Earl Grey would be glad to be informed whether it is in the favour of the Society to send out Missionaries to that settlement.”

Straith replied immediately. Considering the missionary prospects of the Pacific Northwest, Straith claimed, “it appears to the Committee that the most desirable plan would be the establishment of industrial Boarding Schools upon the model of similar institutions in New Zealand.” Straith then appended a copy of a dispatch from the Governor of New Zealand, Sir George Grey, to Earl Grey on the subject of schools for Māori children in operation in that colony.

Governor Grey’s appended dispatch made it abundantly clear that the colonial state in New Zealand partially funded missionary schools and highlighted the distinct advantages that such schools could provide, not just for the colony of New Zealand but

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26 Major H. Straith to Sir John Packington, 28 February 1852, TNA, CO 305/3, 484. For more on the development of missionary schools for Māori in New Zealand, see Barrington, Separate but Equal?
for the entire British Empire. Grey stated, “these instructions are founded in the first instance by the government and the religious bodies who conduct them, and each school is then supported by the religious body which it belongs, by the produce of the land allotted to it, and for the first few years, until it becomes self supporting by the Government.” In the New Zealand example, missionary bodies in England were expected to fund their agents, but the British crown, acting through the local colonial government, also provided land grants and pecuniary aid to support the start-up of mission schools. Overall, Grey asserted that mission schools could facilitate a transformation in Indigenous ways of life that would be beneficial to the development of an established settler colony. He believed that such changes as encouraging Indigenous peoples to “adopt our language, laws, and customs” could cultivate the good will of Indigenous peoples and thus ultimately protect “the interests of our commerce and shipping.” Thus, Grey regarded the plan of partially state-funded industrial schools for Indigenous peoples as being “essential to the interests of the Empire.” Straith argued that Grey’s dispatch illustrated “the importance of such Schools in a social & national point of view” and reasoned that if the Colonial Office was willing to support similar institutions for Indigenous children in Vancouver Island, the CMS was prepared to send its agents to the Pacific Northwest. The CMS, though, would not send its first missionary to Vancouver Island until 1856.

In the meantime, Catholic missionaries continued to be the first in the field. On 4 March 1853, approximately two years after Lempfrit left Victoria and four years before the first CMS missionary arrived, Douglas wrote to inform the Colonial Office that despite his discouraging of Catholic missionaries from forming stations beyond the limits

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27 George Grey to Earl Grey, 29 January 1851, TNA, CO 305/3, 486–487.
of Victoria, new Catholic missionaries had arrived in the colony looking to expand the field. He stated, “Mr. Demers a native of the British Province of Canada who is invested with the Title of Roman Catholic Bishop of Vancouvers Island, arrived in this colony some months ago, accompanied by several other Priests of the same religious persuasion with the object of establishing Missions among the native Tribes of Vancouvers Island.” Douglas pointed out that “these gentlemen have not yet made much progress, nor in fact made any decided attempt to convert the Natives, except in the vicinity of Victoria and even here their intercourse with them is not general.” Douglas claimed that instead the priests spent the greater part of their time “devoted to the instruction of the French Canadian Settlers, and their families, a class with which they possess a great and most salutary influence, which is happily directed to the elevation of the moral character of the Members of their Church, and to the encouragement of industry, sobriety, and obedience of the laws.”

Overall, the first Catholic missionaries in the field, being restricted by the colonial government to the area around Victoria, had minimal effect.

**War and Anxiety**

The prospects for missionaries in Vancouver Island began to shift significantly when in the late fall of 1855, news reached Victoria of a bitter armed struggle between Indigenous peoples and settlers in what is today known as Washington State and the State of Oregon. Douglas’s fears of “Indian difficulties” potentially threatening the safety and

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security of Vancouver Island quickly materialized.\textsuperscript{29} While battles such as the Whitman Affair and the resulting Cayuse War had broken out in the Pacific Northwest before, this new armed conflict was viewed by Douglas as being potentially more dangerous.\textsuperscript{30} On 1 November 1855, the Acting Governor of Washington Territory, James Tilton, wrote to Douglas explaining the severity of the situation. Tilton stated that there was a “determined combination among the various Tribes to make war upon us and they have been sufficiently bold to attack us within a short distance of our settlements.” Tilton cut to the chase: “I deem it proper as we are in great need of arms and munitions, to request from you, Sir, what assistance, is in your power to afford.” He stated, “Your known courtesy to Americans generally, and the feeling our people know you entertain towards us, leads me to make this request with the less hesitation. I do it also that it may be made apparent to the savages on the Sound, that affinities of blood and interest existing between our nations, are always sufficiently to bring forth from the one to other support when threatened with danger.” Tilton added, “If it could be done without serious injury to the affairs of your Hon H.B.Co I would deem it an additional service that the arms should be sent here by one of your steamers, as you are aware our settlements are so isolated; the presence of steamers such as yours may deter attacks, which I have reason to think may


\textsuperscript{30} On colonial conflict in the Pacific Northwest see, Bay Hoard Glassley, \textit{Pacific Northwest Indian Wars} (Portland: Binfords and Mort, 1953). Briefly, the Whitman Affair refers to the murders of missionary Marcus Whitman, his wife Narcissa, and twelve others by a party of Cayuse on 29 November 1847 near the town of Wella Walla in present day Washington State. The Cayuse peoples were dismayed by the invasion of increasing numbers of whites and held Whitman and his supporters responsible for the spread of measles and the resulting depopulation. They even suspected he was positioning converts at his mission. After learning of Whitman’s murder, a white militia organized to retaliate against an uninvolved group of Cayuse. The resulting hostilities sparked the Cayuse War, which raged between Indigenous peoples and settlers in the region between 1847 and 1855.
be made upon one or more of them in a few days.”

Tilton was asking Vancouver Island for help in waging an Indian War.

“Map Showing the Distribution of Indian Tribes of British Columbia,” circa 1883. TNA CO 700/16. This map is a problematic and static settler reflection of the more fluid and overlapping Indigenous territories in what is now known as British Columbia, Washington State, Idaho, and Montana. Nevertheless, it does show the West beyond the Rocky Mountains as fully inhabited by numerous and diverse Indigenous peoples. It also illustrates how the Coast Salish of the Pacific Northwest spanned the invented Canada-US border and shows how close Victoria (at the southern tip of Vancouver Island) was to the sites of the Indian War in Washington Territory directly across the Salish Sea such as Bellingham Bay.

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31 James Tilton to James Douglas, 1 November 1855, TNA, CO 305/6, 158.
Douglas responded to the request immediately. On 6 November 1855, Douglas wrote to inform Tilton, “I most cordially acknowledge the moral obligation which binds Christian and Civilized nations to exert their utmost power and influence in checking the inroads of the merciless savage; and it is a cause of sincere regret that our means of sending you assistance comes infinitely short of our wishes.” He stated, “We are I confess with sorrow, badly prepared for the exigencies of a state of warfare; there being at this moment only one hundred stand of arms in this colony and these are in the stores of the Hudson’s Bay Company.” Douglas informed Tilton that he purchased 50 stand of arms and secured ten barrels of gunpowder and a supply of ball which would be sent straightaway on the *Traveller*. Any ammunition the *Traveller* could not take would be sent down on the *Beaver* as soon as that ship arrived at Victoria. Douglas hoped that “the moral effect of the “Beaver’s visit to […Puget Sound] will be powerfully felt by the Native Indian Tribes, and may contribute in some measure to confirm their wavering allegiance and to detach them from the general Indian confederacy.” Douglas concluded his dispatch by stating, “I trust in God that such may be the event, and have again to express my deep regret that we have not a more efficient force to send to your relief.”

Given the circumstances, Douglas provided what he could in aid to help the Americans quell Indigenous peoples’ resistance to colonization.

Douglas closely monitored the Indian War to the south and he was in constant communication with British and American officials. He was acutely aware of the grave consequences should the war spread north. Douglas wrote to British Colonial Secretary, Sir William Molesworth, expressing his hope that the Indigenous peoples in the US could “receive a timely check, or the evil spirit may spread among the aboriginal population of

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32 James Douglas to James Tilton, 6 November 1855, TNA, CO 305/6, 160–161.
the British Territory, which is far more ignorant and barbarous compared with the native population of American Oregon.” He clarified that “in that case we would have to bear the brunt of an Indian war, which I trust a [sic] kind Providence may avert until we are better provided with means to encounter so dangerous an evil.”

Douglas, then, was not opposed to using force to protect the colony, he simply did not have the resources to mount an effective defence of the sparsely populated settlements. On 19 November 1855, Douglas explained to Tilton that “the Natives in this quarter continue quiet and friendly though evidently powerfully moved in favour of their race, a feeling which may exercise a mischievous influence on their excitable minds, while it constrains us to maintain a vigilant control over their movement.” Douglas also lamented, “it is not in my power to afford you more effective assistance,” and reassured Tilton of his faith that the Indigenous peoples would “soon be made to yield to the palm of victory.”

Charles H. Mason, who replaced Tilton as Acting Governor of Washington Territory, responded to Douglas thanking him for his assistance and assuring him that due, in part, to his timely aid, victories were achieved that he thought were “sufficient to prevent, at least for the present any hostile movement” on the part of Indigenous groups. Relatively pleased with his handling of the situation, Douglas wrote to Molesworth informing him that his actions as Governor were appreciated by American officials and, more importantly, that “the native tribes of this Colony continue their usual quiet and friendly demeanour, and have not given any cause of complaint.” By year’s end, it appeared that Vancouver Island would be spared from a general Indian War.

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33 James Douglas to Sir William Molesworth, 8 November 1855, TNA, CO 305/6, 153.
34 James Douglas to James Tilton, 19 November 1855, TNA, CO 305/6, 194.
35 Charles H. Mason to James Douglas, 26 November 1855, TNA, CO 305/6, 196.
36 James Douglas to Sir William Molesworth, 13 December, 1855, TNA, CO 305/6, 188.
On 17 February 1856, however, Isaac Stevens, the Governor for Washington Territory, wrote to Douglas with some disconcerting news. Stevens stated, “I have received information that the Northern Indians mostly I believe within your jurisdiction are meditating an attack upon our settlements.” Stevens continued, “The reports are that as soon as the winter breaks, they will dispatch a force of 16 war canoes, five of which will attack Bellingham Bay.”

Concerned by this new development, Douglas acted quickly. He first approached a number of merchants in Victoria about acquiring more supplies on loan but found “no willingness,” as there was little guarantee of repayment. Given the importance to colonial security of avoiding cross-border conflict, Douglas took matters into his own hands. He informed Stevens: “Unable to procure supplies from the merchants of this place on the terms proffered I decided on purchasing some sugar, coffee, and the number of blankets wanted with a supply of gunpowder and lead out of my own private funds and have delivered them to Captain Robinson with the view of meeting your pressing necessities, leaving the payment for your settlement in any manner that will secure me from loss.”

Douglas dipped into his personal funds to help put down the Indian War in American Oregon in hopes that it would dissuade northern groups from joining the fray.

While merchants were not willing to loan the supplies necessary for the defence of southern settlements, colonists in Vancouver Island were nevertheless genuinely concerned about northern Indigenous groups combining with groups across the border. In March 1856, Douglas received a petition by a “deputation of the most respectable inhabitants of the Colony praying that I would make a formal application that one of Her

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37 Isaac Stevens to James Douglas, 17 February 1856, TNA, CO 305/7, 33.
38 James Douglas to Isaac Stevens, 7 March 1856, TNA, CO 305/7, 30-32.
Majesty’s ships should be sent here for their protection.”\(^{39}\) The petition contained 17 signatures. The first signature, quite possibly identifying the author of the petition, was none other than the newly arrived chaplain and schoolmaster, Reverend Edward Cridge.

The petition read:

> May it please your excellency we the undersigned inhabitants of Vancouvers’ Island beg most respectfully to call your most gracious attention to the Indian war that is now raging on the American shores within a few miles of our own homes. From the most recent accounts the attacks of the Indians have been most frightful and daring atrocities have been committed on the persons of women and children. We are aware that a large number of Indians are on their passage here from the north and it is impossible for any person to calculate to what extent they may be influenced by the accounts. They must undoubtedly hear from the neighbouring Indians, under these circumstances and from a knowledge that we have no efficient force on the Island and cannot possibly organize such a force for some considerable time if at all.\(^{40}\)

Colonial anxiety was growing in Vancouver Island. Considering the gravity of the situation, the Colonial Office asked the Admiralty to order the frigate *President* to report to Vancouver Island immediately.\(^{41}\)

The Indian War generally, and the specific threat of northern tribes joining forces with those in the south, provided the impetus for political changes in the colony. Douglas explained to Colonial Secretary Earl Grey that in light of the recent events he had “sanctioned the establishment of a Police Force for the protection of the settlements which in consequence of the Indian war now raging in American Oregon may be considered more than ever necessary as a protective measure.” After explaining how the Indigenous groups continued successful guerrilla tactics, Douglas stated, “These events prove how formidable an enemy the Indian may become and react powerfully on the colonial...

\(^{39}\) James Douglas to George Grey, 7 March 1856, TNA, CO 305/7, 13.

\(^{40}\) Petition included in James Douglas to George Grey, 7 March 1856, TNA, CO 305/7, 17.

\(^{41}\) Colonial Office to James Douglas, 14 May 1856, TNA, CO 305/7, 15.
minds of the natives within the British Territory who naturally feel elated at the courage
and success of the colored races.” In response to the growing threat of Indigenous
peoples raiding from the north, the recently established colonial government
“commenced raising a militia force of 30 men and officers who will remain embodied
during the presence of those savages. This will lead to a serious expense, but I conceive it
would be unwise to neglect so necessary a precaution in the present circumstances of the
Colony more especially when it is considered that the maintenance of a small force now
may have the effect of preventing much future evil and expense to the Colony.”
Douglas also ordered greater surveillance of Indigenous peoples throughout Vancouver
Island. He explained, “The number of those Indians in the settlements though much
reduced is still considerable but their movements are vigilantly watched and the outlying
dwellings are regularly visited by parties of militia and otherwise everything in my power
is done that can tend to promote the safety and comfort of the people.” The colonial
government used the fear of possible Indigenous conflict as a form of sabre-rattling to
raise funds and mobilize settlers in defence of the young colony.

As the threat of violence continued to loom over the colony, Douglas’ largely ad
hoc initiatives concerning Indigenous peoples began to congeal into formal policy.
Indeed, historian Barry Gough has argued that Douglas’ early “Indian policy was
essentially crisis management.” Writing to Colonial Secretary Henry Labouchere on 20
August 1856, Douglas forwarded a copy of his address on the opening of the newly
created General Assembly at Victoria where he ruminated on the state of Indigenous

42 James Douglas to Sir George Grey, 14 March 1856, TNA, 305/7, 5–8.
43 James Douglas to Henry Labouchere, 10 April 1856, TNA, 305/7, 28.
44 Historian Barry Gough has argued that Douglas’ early “Indian policy was essentially crisis
management.” Gough, Gunboat Frontier, xiv.
resistance in the region. He began, “Through the blessing of God, […] Indigenous peoples have been kept from committing acts of open violence, and have been quiet and orderly in their deportment, yet the presence of large bodies of armed savages, who have never felt the restraining influences of moral and religious training, and who are accustomed to follow the impulses of their own evil natures, more than the dictates of reason or justice, gives rise to a feeling of insecurity which must exist as long as the Colony remains without military protection.” The Governor continued, “…I shall nevertheless, continue to conciliate the good will of the native Indian tribes; by treating them with justice and forbearance, and by rigidly protecting their civil and agrarian rights, many cogent reasons of humanity and sound policy recommend that course to our attention, and I shall therefore rely upon your support in carrying these measures into effect. We know from our own experience that the friendship of the natives is at all times useful, while it is no less certain that their unity may become more disastrous than any other calamity, to which the colony is directly exposed.” While the spread of a general Indian uprising on Vancouver Island failed to truly materialize, Douglas used colonial anxiety to justify forging a coherent Indian policy in hopes of more firmly establishing the power and control of the emerging settler capitalist society.

**Stolen Land and Missionary Schooling**

By the late 1850s, the colonial government started exploring new means to manage the Indigenous population. International pressure also helped produce a shift in Indian policy. Upon hearing of the conflict between settlers and Indigenous peoples in Washington Territory, the gold rush in the new mainland colony of British Columbia, and

45 James Douglas to Labouchere, 20 August 1856, TNA, CO 305/7, 89–90.
the Fraser Canyon War of 1858 between miners and the Nlha7kápmx (Thompson) discussed in “Chapter Two,” people in Britain voiced concern about the welfare of Indigenous peoples. In 1858, the Aborigine Protection Society penned a letter to the British Colonial Office “invoking the protection of Her Majesty’s Government” over the Indigenous peoples of the Pacific Northwest. This letter was subsequently transmitted to Douglas. Upon receiving this information, Douglas wrote to Sir Edward Lytton on 5 November 1858 clarifying:

While you do not wish to be understood as adopting the views of the Society as to the means by which that may be best accomplished you express a wish that the subject should have my prompt and careful consideration, and I shall not fail to give the fullest effect to your instructions on that head, as soon as the present pressure of business has somewhat abated. I may however remark, that the Native Indian Tribes are protected in all their interests to the utmost extent of our present means.\(^6\)

While the Colonial Office judged Douglas’ actions during the Oregon Indian War to be quite admirable, it was clear to Douglas that the state needed to do more to cultivate the good will of Indigenous peoples in the colony to facilitate the growth of a capitalist settler society in the region.

Douglas wrote to Colonial Secretary Edward Lytton the next day on the subject of missionaries coming to the Pacific Northwest. First, Douglas acknowledged a previous despatch from the Colonial Office informing the Governor that “the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel proposes to send one or two missionary chaplains to British Columbia with as little delay as possible.” To this news, Douglas responded, “I am glad to learn such is the intention of this society,” and he pointed out that “I shall be most happy to render every assistance in my power to the clergymen when they arrive.”

Douglas’ enthusiastic embrace of such missionaries is a departure from his earlier efforts\(^6\)

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\(^6\) James Douglas to Sir Edward Lytton, 5 November 1858, TNA, CO 60/1, 366.
to discourage Catholic missionaries from working in the colony some years earlier. His change of heart was likely because the new missionaries were Anglicans like himself. More importantly, though, Douglas now saw the potential for such agents to play a role in helping to neutralize Indigenous peoples’ potential threat to the emerging settler society by winning them over to the ways of whites through religious and educational training. In contrast to his views of the early 1850s, Douglas proclaimed that potential missionaries would find “an extensive field open to missionary enterprise, as vast among the white population as amongst the native Indian tribes.” By the late 1850s and early 1860s, it was open season for missionary work in the Pacific Northwest.47

While colonial officials in Vancouver Island and British Columbia desired missionaries to work among the Indigenous inhabitants, both of the British colonies were cash-strapped. How the colonies could afford to support the essential missionary work became a matter of some debate. The answer lay in the land. As miners flocked to the colonies in search of gold after 1858, the Indian Land question became a hotly contested issue.48 On 9 February 1859, Douglas wrote to the Colonial Office for advice. He suggested, “Attempts having been made by persons residing at this place to secure those lands for their own advantage by direct purchase from the Indians, and it being desirable and necessary to put a stop to such proceedings, I instructed the Crown Solicitor to insert a public notice in the ‘Victoria Gazette’ to the effect that the land in question was the property of the Crown, and that for that reason the Indians themselves were incapable of conveying a legal Title to the same, and that any person holding such land would be

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47 James Douglas to Sir Edward Lytton, 6 November 1858, TNA, CO 60/1, 374.
summarily ejected.” This, in effect, opened the door to an usurpation of Indigenous lands that was soon extended to the entire territory of Vancouver Island and British Columbia. Less than 100 years before, the Royal Proclamation of 1763 made it clear that settlers in British North American colonies needed to negotiate the surrender of Indigenous lands in the areas west of the Appalachian Mountains. In fact, in the years between 1850 and 1854, Douglas signed fourteen treaties with different Indigenous groups in Vancouver Island before running out of money to sign more. These treaties offered small amounts of money, clothing, and goods in exchange for lands; Indigenous peoples retained fishing and hunting rights in traditional territories. Only a few short years later, however, with the gold rush and increased pressure on Indigenous lands by settlers, the colonial government simply bypassed Indigenous peoples and asserted sovereignty over unceded lands in the name of the British crown. This bold move cost the crown virtually nothing in outlay but gave the colonial administration the power to sell off stolen lands to raise funds needed to aid colonial-capitalist social formation. This was the dispossession of so-called primitive accumulation in action in the Pacific Northwest.

The Colonial Office encouraged selling land to help raise funds needed to establish schools for Indigenous children. Permanent Under-Secretary for the Colonial Office, Herman Merivale, noted on the back of a despatch:

Might it not be desirable to suggest to the Governor that in any funds acquired from the Sale of Indian Reserves—which it might be intended to appropriate in the service of the Indians—a good portion should be set

49 James Douglas to Edward Lytton, 9 February 1859, TNA, CO 305/10, 16–17.
51 For more on the early treaties in Vancouver Island and the debate over British Columbia’s land policy see Cole Harris, Making Native Space: Colonialism, Resistance, and Reserves in British Columbia (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2002).
aside for the purpose of a school for the education of the children; & also earnestly to impress on him a caution against any feeling growing up amongst the Indians of relying exclusively on the Govt for support & maintenance whereby they would become useless to themselves, and an encumbrance to the Community. As V. Couver’s Isld and B. Columbia advance in prosperity they should not overlook the civilization & interests of the Indian, which so far as I can see can be best promoted by the establishment of industrial & educational Schools for the younger members of that race.\textsuperscript{52}

In essence, Merivale laid out a rationale for British Columbia’s new policy of selling portions of reserved and stolen lands and using the proceeds to create schools to teach new generations of Indigenous children to accept settler control and train them to fit into the emerging capitalist economy. Colonial Secretary Lord Carnarvon confirmed as much to Douglas: “In the case of the Indians of Vancouver Island and British Columbia…. I would enjoin upon you, and all in authority in both Colonies, the importance of establishing Schools of an industrial as well as an educational character for the Indians, whereby they may acquire the arts of civilized life which will enable them to support themselves, and not degenerate into the mere recipients of eleemosynary relief.”\textsuperscript{53} State assisted schooling, then, could play a crucial role in the settler strategy of containment.

The first laboratory for the new Indian Policy was Victoria, where the recently arrived Protestant missionary Reverend Alexander Charles Garrett and CMS missionary and cleric William Duncan worked among the Lekwungen. Duncan was the first CMS missionary to arrive in Vancouver Island, in 1857, with orders to establish a mission on the Northwest Coast near Fort Simpson. Garrett, an SPG missionary, arrived in 1859. It was Garrett, though, as an ordained priest, who rose to prominence in the missionary field in southern Vancouver Island. He was elected Principal of the Indian Improvement

\textsuperscript{52} Herman Merivale on the back of James Douglas to Edward Lytton, 9 February 1859, TNA, CO 60/10, 17.
\textsuperscript{53} Earl of Carnarvon to James Douglas, 11 April 1859, TNA, CO 410/1, 196–197.
Committee, which sought to better the conditions on the Lekwungen reserve across the harbour from Fort Victoria. Douglas recruited both Garrett and Duncan to advise him on Indigenous issues. In June 1860, Duncan, likely the Indian Improvement Committee’s secretary, forwarded a 15-point memorandum from the committee to the governor with a “view to improving the condition of the Indians at Victoria.” This memorandum suggested that lands be reserved for Indigenous peoples of a particular tongue and that they pay rent of two dollars per month. Further suggestions were that Indigenous peoples be “made to build their houses in streets, according to a plan to be laid out for them” and that “a spot for a Market place [should] be marked out in each village.” The committee also suggested that a “register of their names and movements of the Indians [should…] be kept” and “every Indian (not excepting those belonging to Victoria) over the age of 15 and under the age of 50 to pay a tax of one dollar per month in advance.” The money raised from such a tax could be spent on supporting services such as an Indigenous police force. The memorandum laid out further suggestions:

12. A large temporary room to be erected as soon as possible by public subscription to be used as a school and as a place of worship for all the tribes.

13. A site of land to marked out for a church—a school house—a clergyman’s residence—a school master’s residence—and Indian agent’s residence.

14. Any individual refusing to pay the tax, to be made to work a sufficient time on the chain gang until he has earned the amount due to him.

15. Any tribe of Indians or a majority in it refusing to comply with the regulations of the Colonial Government to be sent away.

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54 William Duncan (Memorandum) to James Douglas, 22 June 1860, BCA, GR-1372, B01326, Box 54, F496 1.
N.B. Employment of the Indians should be sought out. For females I would suggest that a large establishment be instituted for washing clothes at one dollar per dozen – or some neutral spot on ground.

Early missionaries played an influential role in directing Indian policy and they saw schooling as playing an important role in the larger transformation of Indigenous lifeways from a reliance on a subsistence economy to one more in line with the emerging capitalist economy.

In July 1860, Garrett wrote again on behalf of the Indian Improvement Committee to request that Douglas “be good enough to grant a site on the Indian reserve for a school house and master’s residence, for the benefit of the Indians.”55 In the fall, Garrett and the Committee redoubled their efforts, passing a number of resolutions. The first resolution was in the form of an application to the government for “an appropriation of fifteen (15) acres of land upon the Indian reserve near Victoria, as a site for a church, schools for industrial and educational training, residences for missionary clergymen and school teachers.” Garrett suggested that the land be held in trust for purposes of Indian improvement. He then stated, “That inasmuch as permanent institutions for the education and industrial improvement of Indians involve a considerable expenditure, and the work already undertaken and in progress, causes a large outlay, and further improvements being absolutely necessary, His Excellency be requested to secure, either from local sources or the Home Government, a grant of money to meet the sums offered on the part of the Church of England.”56 Garrett surmised that the initial outlay, over and above the grant of land to be held in trust, would be approximately £2000 and then a subsequent £1000 per annum.

55 Reverend A.C. Garrett to James Douglas, 26 July 1860, BCA, GR-1372, B01330 Box 64 F 634 1.
56 Reverend A.C. Garrett to Colonial Secretary, 24 November 1860, BCA, GR-1372, B01330 Box 64, F634 2.
Garrett’s request was among the first to the colonial state for pecuniary assistance by missionary agents in Vancouver Island or British Columbia. For fear of stirring up divisive religious tensions that could threaten colonial stability, the colonial state had a policy of not funding religious bodies. But Garrett reasoned that before missionary agents could “pledge Societies in England to a large outlay, they must have some satisfactory ground to show those parties that any money which they may grant or raise for the benefit of the Indians here, and place at the disposal of the committee, or of its Chairman; shall be so laid out as to secure the accomplishment of the objects of which it may be granted or raised.” Given that such a project would need “some substantial and reliable source from which to draw the necessary funds” Garrett suggested that “a grant of money at least equal to the amount that the Committee may be able to raise, would be required to meet the expenses of erecting the necessary buildings and also that one half the amount expenditure for the maintenance of the Institution, should be secured by the Government from some source local or otherwise, the Committee to raise the other half.”\(^57\) Essentially, Garratt proposed a cost sharing agreement between missionaries and the state, similar to those already in existence in New Zealand. However, Garrett also pointed out that if no money was at Douglas’ disposal, “a claim upon the Indian property, should be given to the Committee, or the Bishop, or some other fit and proper Trustee, for an amount at least equal to that which they may raise from other sources and expand upon the improvement of the Indians, according to the plan of His Excellency, and in conformity with the Rules of the Church of England.” Garrett stressed to Douglas the importance of the matter: “some provision would seem to be urgently required, as the work at present in progress

\(^{57}\) Reverend A.C. Garrett to Colonial Secretary, 24 November 1860, BCA, GR-1372, B01330, Box 64, F634 2.
has cost three hundred and twenty nine pounds, seven shillings, and five pence; and involves a constant outlay of about five hundred pounds per annum.” In closing, Garrett assured Douglas that in finding a way to support the initiative, he could help Victoria become “the seat of a flourishing and efficient establishment for Missionary and Industrial enterprise.”

Unfortunately, it is unclear exactly how Douglas decided to support Garrett’s Victoria mission. However, it appears that Garrett received some kind of assistance—either cash or a land grant—because he pressed on with his initiative. It seems most likely that a grant-in-aid was allotted to the Church of England to work on part of the Lekwungen reserve in Victoria. In 1861, Garrett explained the resulting situation, “The Songes Indians have now for a long period been watching with a jealous eye the occupation of their Reserve by the whites. They have consented to this occupation because they have been repeatedly informed by authority, that the funds would be obtained to be devoted to their own benefit, and especially to the education of their children and the care of the sick and aged.” As a result, Garrett proposed a plan for the funds to be used in the following ways:

I. Education of children

1. All children of the Songes tribe attending school shall have two suits of clothes a year.
2. A lavatory to be attached to the school where they shall be required to wash daily and attend to the general cleanliness of their persons before entering the school.
3. If any be very irregular in attendance, or refuse to comply with the regulations of the lavatory, they shall be excluded from any benefit….

58 Reverend A.C. Garrett to Colonial Secretary, 24 November 1860, BCA, GR-1372, B01330, Box 64, F634 2.
59 Reverend A.C. Garrett to Colonial Secretary, 27 November 1861, BCA, GR-1372, B01330, Box 64, F634 3.
III. Industrial Training
An industrial training school to be established as soon as possible, in which the young and rising generation of Indians shall be taught those various useful arts which shall make them independent of savage needs of life.

This institution to be conducted as follows:
1. One or more tradesmen to be engaged, either for the whole or part of the time, according as the funds will allow. The first should be a tailor, the second a shoemaker, the third a carpenter.
2. Materials to be supplied.
3. The Indians to receive a small remuneration according to the merit of their work.
4. The articles made to be sold, and the proceeds returned to the general fund.

IV. The Missionary Clergyman
The Missionary Clergyman might administer the funds appropriated for the above purposes, in the same way as charity trusts administered by the parochial clergy in England.\(^60\)

It is clear from this proposal that Garrett considered schooling to be a priority and that, in particular, industrial training was greatly desired for Indigenous children. Moreover, providing Indigenous peoples with industrial skills could also help raise much-needed funds to be used for their further advancement. While there are no records for the Victoria mission school, Garrett wrote in January of 1862 that of the total $256.50 appropriated from the fund in the hands of the Commissioners of the Indian Reserve Victoria, $98 was claimed for clothes for 14 school pupils, 7 boys and 7 girls. Boys were to receive a “Red jacket dark trousers and one pair of shoes each” while girls a “dark dress, red petticoat and one pair of shoes.” These clothes were distributed to the “seven boys and seven girls who have been in regular attendance at school.” Apparently, the colonial government approved this use of the fund, as Garrett wrote back to the Colonial Secretary stating, “the feeling in the tribe in consequence of this action of the

\(^{60}\) Reverend A.C. Garrett to Colonial Secretary, 27 November 1861, BCA, GR-1372, B01330, Box 64, F634 3.
Government is on the whole very good.”61 State-supported missionary work in the Pacific Northwest had begun, and soon new missionary agents would answer the call to spread the gospel in the colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia.

**Answering God’s Call: Carving out Spheres of Spiritual Influence**

By the late 1850s and early 1860s, state-supported missionary work took root in the colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia. The three most active religious denominations—Methodists, Catholics, and Anglicans—carved out their separate spheres of spiritual influence, or what historian Lynn A. Blake calls “denominational geographies.”62 The Methodists, perhaps the smallest in number, took interest in the Lower Fraser Valley, Vancouver Island, and the Northwest Coast and Haida Gwaii. Secular Catholics were active in Vancouver Island and the missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate dominated the mainland colony of British Columbia, especially the interior and the lower Fraser Valley. The Anglicans divided mostly into two major groups—those sent by the SPG and those by the CMS—took over the Northwest Coast and Fraser Canyon. However, Blake also points out that “theological differences in tandem with territorial overlaps led to frequent verbal sparring between missionaries, often to the detriment of evangelization.”63 Nevertheless, encouraged and assisted directly by the colonial state, these Christian missionaries together started an assault on Indigenous

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61 Reverend A.C. Garrett to A.G Young, Colonial Secretary, 24 January 1862, BCA, GR-1372, B01330, Box 64, F634 1.


63 Blake, “Oblate Missionaries and the ‘Indian Land Question,’” 28–89. Blake suggests that missionaries’ methodologies differed, reminiscent of different fur trading strategies (i.e. of establishing permanent trade-specific forts versus sending agents into the field to collect furs). Anglican agents, such as William Duncan, preferred to erect missions with the goal of attracting permanent settlement. The Oblates established permanent missions, but also travelled extensively evangelizing in different Indigenous communities.
lifeways through their preachings and teachings. The state-supported invasion of the Pacific Northwest by God’s armies supported the gradual shift in the balance of power away from Indigenous peoples in favour of the emerging settler society.

“British Columbia,” circa 1862. TNA, MPG 1069/273. This map, originally commissioned by Colonel R.C. Moody, shows emerging religious boundaries in the colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia.
“All children come to school”: Methodist Missionaries

Methodists entered the missionary field in the Pacific Northwest around the time of the gold rush in the late 1850s. In 1858, the Methodist Church sent out its first agents, including the Reverends Dr. Ephraim Evans, Edward White, Ebenezer Robson, and Arthur Browning. During the colonial period, these missionaries established a Methodist presence at Victoria and Nanaimo in Vancouver Island as well as at Hope, New Westminster, and Chilliwack in British Columbia. While originally interested in the white population around Victoria, the reverends increasingly became concerned about the state of the Indigenous inhabitants in the area. In 1859, Rev. Dr. Evans wrote about what he saw in Victoria: “The scenes which meet our eyes daily might well paralyze the hopes of any mere philanthropist, unacquainted with the constitution and past triumphs of the Mediatorial economy. The degradation of these poor savages must be seen to be at all understood….Nothing less than the exertion of the Divine energy, promised to the Church in her evangelistic struggles, can bring about the desired civilization of these wretched fellow-men.” In 1861, Rev. Robson wrote about the potential for proselytizing, “They seem ripe for the Gospel. I have often witnessed scenes of thrilling interest among them—crowds of almost breathless listeners, falling tears, shouts of gladness, entreaties to come again, shaking hands with hundreds….What is wanted is earnest, self-denying, heaven-baptised men and women to devote themselves to this work, and a great and glorious harvest will be gathered.”

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64 For a detailed description of Methodist activities in British Columbia see, Rev. C.M Tate, _Our Indian Missions in British Columbia_ (Toronto: Methodist Mission Rooms, 18--?). 65 Rev. Robson quoted in Crosby, _Among the AN-KO-ME-NUMS or Flathead Tribes of Indians of the Pacific Coast_ (Toronto: William Briggs, 1907), 22 and 23.
Methodist missionary, Thomas Crosby. In 1861, Crosby answered a call in a Methodist newspaper for missionaries to go to British Columbia and he arrived in Victoria on 11 April 1863. Like the other missionary agents, Crosby was concerned at the state of the Indigenous inhabitants located in and around Victoria. However, Rev. Garrett was already at work with the Lekwungen, and so the Methodists looked elsewhere for opportunities to spread their interpretation of the Gospel.

Based on the model of Rev. Garrett’s mission in Victoria, in the 1860s the colonial government began to actively support missionary activity, including the initiatives of the Methodists. On 17 February 1860, Douglas wrote to the Duke of Newcastle to inform him that he was doing “everything in my power to promote the good cause, by encouraging the residence of an ordained and educated Clergy in British Columbia.” Given the diversity of denominational sects in the Pacific Northwest, and the open animosity between many of them, as a general rule the colonial government tried to avoid favouritism by refusing public monies to religious bodies. Douglas explained, “Having no authority to apply to any part of the Public revenue to the aid and support of Churches, there was little in my power to bestow, beyond the sincerest sympathy and advice, in aid of the zealous Clergy of the Church of England and the Methodist Episcopal Church, who first entered the field of missionary labour in British Columbia.” Moral support was the primary means of early state assistance. However, Douglas clarified that he did not “hesitate to assize to the Clergy of those persuasions respectively, on their application, a church school, and dwelling house site forming a block of four

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66 For more on Crosby’s later life, and the importance of his wife Emma to his mission on the Northwest Coast, see for example, Jan Hare and Jean Barman, Good Intentions Gone Awry: Emma Crosby and the Methodist Mission on the Northwest Coast (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2006). For more on women’s role in the missionary world see, Myra Rutherdale, Women and the White Man’s God.
building lots, or about one acre of land in extent, in all towns where they resided. There
free grants to that extent, viz one acre, have been made for the use and benefit of the
Church of England, and of the Methodist Episcopal Church, respectively, in the Towns of
Yale, Hope, Derby, Douglas, and New Westminster, as a small return to the country by
the Clergy of those churches, who have hitherto received no other compensation from the
Government.” In asking for permission to sanction such grants, Douglas posited, “I
would take the liberty of recommending to Her Majesty’s Government, that free grants of
the hundred acres of rural land, should be made in aid of every [Church], formed in
British Columbia, provided they be not otherwise supported at the Public expense and
there be a resident clergyman and a place of Christian worship erected.” Douglas argued,
“A grant of land to that extent would not be burdensome to the colony, and would
nevertheless form an attractive inducement for Christian churches to devote their
attention to the country, until population increases, and other provision is made for the
maintenance of a Christian clergy, and the erection of places of Christian worship.” In
essence, Douglas offered free grants of unceded Indigenous lands to religious societies
willing to send missionary agents to work in the Pacific Northwest.

One of the first enclaves that Methodist missionaries carved out was in Nanaimo,
Snuneymuxw (Nanaimo) territory. After a brief stint in Hope, on the south bank of the
Fraser River, Rev. Robson established a religious presence in Nanaimo by the early
1860s and built a school for Indigenous children. In 1863, Rev. Dr. Evans transferred
the new recruit Crosby to Nanaimo to teach the school. Crosby was initially hesitantly

68 In Hope, Robson established a day school. Tate later recalled that “a number of children were gathered
into the parsonage for a day-school, and some of them, now grown to be old men and women, still speak of
their first lessons in civilization and Christianity as taught in Bro. Robson’s school” (2). See Tate, Our
Indian Missions in British Columbia, 2.
about taking up the position, as he did not know the language of the Indigenous peoples in the area. At the time, Nanaimo was a small coal-mining town with an Indigenous village approximately a mile away. Upon his arrival, Cornelius Bryant, a Methodist common school teacher in the town, greeted Crosby. With Robson and Bryant’s support, Crosby quickly got to work. He commented that his first pupils “were a wild-looking lot of little folk, with painted and dirt-begrimed faces and long, uncombed hair. Some of them were clothed in little print shirts; others had a small piece of blanket pinned around them, while some had no clothing at all.” Initially, Crosby’s lack of local language proved to be a barrier to his teaching. He wrote:

One of the first difficulties was my ignorance of their language. Hence I had to use the language of signs. Beckoning and pointing to the school-house, I sought to persuade them to come into school. They would look at me, laugh at my efforts, and make a bolt for the bushes nearby. Sometimes I made an attempt to capture them, but they would run like wild hares, and I could not get near them. I had always a love for children, and prided myself on my ability to win them; but these, I was afraid, were going to outdo me.

In order to coax children to come to his school, Crosby resorted to bribery. He went into the woods to find material to build a swing. “Then I started again with my sign language,” he said, “and at last succeed in getting one of them into the swing.” Crosby continued, “As I swing the little fellow to and fro I noticed the others peeping out curiously from among the bushes. Pointing to the swing and then to the school-house, I beckoned to them, as much as to say, ‘If you come here and have a swing you will have to go to school.’ By this means I got acquainted with them and won their confidence.” As Crosby learned the language and cultivated the good will of the village, school attendance grew. The first sentence he learned was “Muck-stow-ay-wilth May-tla ta school,” or “All
children come to school.” Once Crosby mastered this basic phrase, he walked through the village shouting it and encouraging children to follow him to the school. Crosby, like other missionaries, believed that evangelization and education went hand in hand, and so he taught in his school about the Gospel and about the importance of industry, order, cleanliness.

Snuneymuxw resistance to Crosby’s school in Nanaimo soon surfaced. Parents “showed little appreciation” for his efforts and frequently took their children away on hunting and fishing trips, interrupting Crosby’s lessons. Accordingly, Crosby explained that he “often had to follow them and teach school on the beach, or under a shady tree on the bank of the river.” After Crosby had been at work for some time, parents of the community also approached him about the matter of pay. They wanted to know how long they had to let their children go to the school before Crosby compensated them. Crosby was confused. He responded saying, “Oh, I couldn’t pay you. In our country the people pay the teacher.” Apparently, this directive did not go over well. The parents answered, “Oh, well…we cannot let them go much longer unless you pay us.” And it was not just the parents who began to resist the mission school. While Crosby’s swing and efforts like singing continued to attract some pupils, many children still stayed away from the school, especially in the summer. Crosby reasoned, “What boy or girl likes to attend school on a hot day? When I started to round them up they made for the beach, and when I drew near they would slip off their blanket or simple dress and make a bolt for the salt water. In they would go, the tide being up, diving and swimming away out of reach of everybody. For a little you would lose sight of them, then away in the distance you would see two or

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69 Crosby, Among the AN-KO-ME-NUMS or Flathead Tribes of Indians of the Pacific Coast, 42–43.
three little fellows pop up, shake their heads, rub their hands over their faces, and cry out, Ha! ha! ha!"70

In 1866, Crosby left Nanaimo to become a traveling preacher throughout the United Colony of British Columbia before being appointed to another stable teaching position at Chilliwack in 1869.71 In the early 1860s, Revs. Ebenezer Robson and Edward White had visited the Stó:lō (Stahlo) at Chilliwack and promised to soon send a missionary who could speak their own tongue. Crosby explained that in addition, a number of requests had been made by the Indigenous peoples along the Fraser River who had heard that Crosby could speak to them in their own tongue. Crosby had also made many exploratory trips, including one in the mid-1860s, to vaccinate hundreds of people against smallpox. The colonial government supplied him with a stock of vaccine to complete the task. On one such trip Crosby went as far inland as Chilliwack where, upon hearing him preaching the Gospel to a small audience in their language, Chief Atche-lalaha stepped forward and paid Crosby a dollar and a half. Crosby recalled the chief as saying, “Missionary…we want you to build a church here. You have opened our ears. No one ever told us the good word in our own language before.” Members of the community also gave the missionary financial donations. Crosby collected a total of $12.50. While Catholic priests had been working in the area, it was clear that Crosby’s mastery of the language was a difference maker, and the Stó:lō were desirous of Crosby’s services. Moreover, Crosby explained that, initially, the church that was subscribed to by

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70 Crosby, *Among the AN-KO-ME-NUMS or Flathead Tribes of Indians of the Pacific Coast*, 44–46.
71 For more on the Chilliwack mission and the creation of the Coqualeetza Home see, Tate, *Our Indian Missions in British Columbia*, 15–16.
whites and Indigenous peoples alike.\textsuperscript{72} With Chilliwack as a base, Crosby began visiting a number of Indigenous camps in the surrounding area to preach and teach.

According to Crosby, education was essential. However, he explained that because the Stó:lō were “scattered at such distances, and so few children in any one place, the only real teaching we could do was when we got them all together in a big rough house, put up for that purpose, near Atchelitz church, and here we gave them instructions every Sabbath.” Crosby saw this as merely the first step in Methodist missionary schooling in the area, writing later that “It became evident to all concerned that we must have an industrial or boarding school.”\textsuperscript{73} While nothing would be done in regards to constructing a formal industrial school until the 1870s, missionaries such as Crosby had laid an educational foundation. After almost ten years, they had, with some assistance from the colonial state, established a Methodist missionary presence in British Columbia, namely at Victoria, Nanaimo, New Westminster, Hope, and Chilliwack.

\textit{La diffusion de l'Évangile: Catholic Missionaries}

Catholic missionaries dominated the early missionary field in the colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia.\textsuperscript{74} After the mostly unsuccessful work done amongst the whites and Indigenous peoples by agents like Lempfrit at Victoria in the early 1850s, in 1858 Bishop Demers invited the Sisters of St. Ann to establish a school in Victoria for Indigenous and non-Indigenous children, which they continued to manage.

\textsuperscript{72} Crosby, \textit{Among the AN-KO-ME-NUMS or Flathead Tribes of Indians of the Pacific Coast}, 170, 175.
\textsuperscript{73} Crosby, \textit{Among the AN-KO-ME-NUMS or Flathead Tribes of Indians of the Pacific Coast}, 192.
\textsuperscript{74} For more on Catholic missionaries in British Columbia see Blake, “Oblate Missionaries and the ‘Indian Land Question.’”
throughout the colonial period. Demers also invited the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, the most active missionaries in the field. The Oblates quickly established a station at Esquimalt in 1858, under the direction of Oblate Superior Louis-Joseph d’Herbomez, and started to visit Coast Salish communities in the area. With Esquimalt as their base, missionaries travelled to different Indigenous settlements around Vancouver Island. While a split soon emerged between Demers and d’Herbomez that saw the Oblates abandon Vancouver Island for the mainland, overall, Catholics as a whole, made the most advances in missionary schooling during the colonial period, and received substantial encouragement and financial support from the colonial state. This is especially significant given that many of the local elites, including Governor Douglas, were stanch Protestants.

Father Charles Pandosy ran the first mission for Indigenous peoples at Esquimalt between the years 1858 and 1863. Describing these early actions, d’Herbomez, in his capacity as Vicar of Missions for Vancouver Island, wrote in 1859: “Nous avons le projet d’établir, tout près d’Esquimalt, une réduction modèle pour les meilleurs sauvages, afin de les initier à toutes les vertus du christianisme et à tous les avantages d’une civilization chrétienne.” Agents also attempted other initiatives throughout the colony in the early 1860s. In April of 1860, at the request of Father d’Herbomez, Fathers Léon Fouquet and Eugene Chirouse travelled to visit Indigenous groups on the east coast of Vancouver Island and in the north at Fort Rupert. The next year, in 1861, d’Herbomez sent Fathers François Jayol and Paul Durieu to visit with Indigenous groups in the west part of Vancouver Island. By the summer of 1863, the Oblates felt that it was time to open a permanent mission around Fort Rupert, and Father Charles Pandosy and Brother

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Georges Blanchet were chosen to found a mission there dedicated to the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, approximately 500 kilometers from Victoria. This mission did not receive a lot of interest from local Indigenous groups and so the agents moved it 60 kilometers south of Fort Rupert to the small island of Harbledown. The missionaries placed this new mission at Rouraïs under the patronage of St. Michael. Oblate missionaries laboured there for close to ten years but in 1874 d’Herbomez withdrew his agents and redeployed them to the Kootenay region in the south-eastern part of the mainland. The Oblates made other attempts to establish a presence among Indigenous peoples of the north, including around Fort Simpson and along the Nass River on the mainland and on the separate island of Haida Gwaii. Overall, this early missionary work in Vancouver Island and on the Northwest Coast did not yield a lot of success.

In 1859, the Oblate missionaries shifted their activities to the mainland colony of British Columbia. Their first permanent base of operation was in the Okanagan valley. After some delay in the selection of a proper location, Fathers Charles Pandosy and Pierre Richard opened an Okanagan mission on 8 October 1859 near what is today Kelowna and dedicated it to the Immaculate Conception. At first, the Oblates received little attention from the Syilx (Okanagan) in the area. However, in 1863 Father Durieu wrote, “Sous le rapport spiritual, notre mission de L’Immaculée Conception commence à donner une compensation aux premiers sacrifices. Depuis un an et demi notre ministère a été très fractueux, surtout chez les sauvages. Comme nos Indiens ne peuvent pas voyager facilement […] nous avons résolu d’aller passer un certain temps dans chaque tribu pour
Little is known about the early activities at the school, but the Okanagan mission was active into the 1870s.

The second Oblate establishment on the mainland was created in 1860 at New Westminster, the capital of the colony of British Columbia. In September of that year, Fathers Fouquet and Charles Grandidier along with Brothers Blanchet and Gaspard Janin laid the foundation for the mission. Two chapels were built, one for whites and one for Indigenous peoples. From this base, the Oblates travelled further inland and went as far as Fort Hope and Fort Yale, mostly communities of whites surrounded by Indigenous peoples. Soon, Fouquet began to explore options of opening a mission solely for Indigenous peoples away from the influences of whites, somewhere in the vicinity of the lower Fraser Valley. In 1861, Fouquet established the St. Mary’s mission exclusively for Indigenous peoples and chose a location near the mouth of the Harrison River, now known as Mission City, that was mid-distance between New Westminster and Fort Hope. This site, on the north bank of the Fraser River, was strategically chosen as it allowed a variety of Coast and Interior Salish groups to travel to the mission by water. In 1862, Brothers Janin and Félix Guillet built a residence for the first resident priest, Father Florimond Gendre. An industrial school for Indigenous boys was subsequently started in 1863. St. Mary’s would go on to become the most successful Oblate mission in British Columbia.

Within a few years, the colonial government took a keen interest in the St. Mary’s mission. Fouquet wrote to Governor Douglas on 11 April 1864 informing him of the

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Oblate’s actions and requesting pecuniary aid to support the institution, specifically for the purposes of education:

That the mission of St Mary, to which your memorialist belongs has already an educational and industrial school at the Lower Fraser, where there are at present forty two boys of the aboriginal tribes, supported and provided for by the Mission, and taught the usual branches of common education, viz. Reading, writing, arithmetic…[as well as] catching and curing fish. And other economical pursuits; and arrangements have been made for establishing a school for girls there, to be under the management of Sisters….

For consideration of the foregoing mentioned exertions for the amelioration and improvement of the aborigines, your memorialist respectfully requests that some portion of the money appropriated by the Legislature for educational purposes, may be granted to St. Mary’s Mission, and to the school of Okanagan Lake, for those objects.

In this letter, Fouquet showed his understanding that common schooling was expanding throughout British Columbia and asked that the colonial regime similarly fund the mission schools for Indigenous children. Perhaps aware of the state policy against using public funds to aid religious organizations, Fouquet renewed his efforts in the fall of 1864 and wrote to Douglas again: “I beg to inform your Excellency that we have at the present time fifty boys attending the school at the St Mary Mission and we board forty five or six of them entirely at the expenses of the Mission. Over two hundred enrolled their names for admission, but we are not in position to receive them all. We intend to have an establishment for the girls on the same footing under the management of the sisters of charity….I hope your Excellency will grant some aid towards the school so that we will be able to receive many more children.”

St. Mary’s was already operating at capacity. When Frederick Seymour took over from Douglas as Governor of British Columbia in 1864, he was eager to continue to cultivate the good will of the Indigenous

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78 Léon Fouquet to James Douglas, 11 April 1864, BCA, GR-1372, B01329, Box 59, F 584 2.
79 Léon Fouquet to James Douglas, 27 October 1864, BCA, GR-1372, B01329, Box 59 F584 2.
population and was generally in favour of assisting missionary schooling. One of the reasons that Seymour was keen to build the trust of Indigenous groups in the mid-1860s was, again, because of growing colonial anxiety about Indigenous people’s resistance to the colonial project. In April 1864, Tsilhqot’in (Chilcotin) warriors waged war on the whites in the area of Bute Inlet on the North West Coast, killing 19 men. In 1862, Alfred Waddington, who became the Superintendent of Education for the common school system in Vancouver Island, lobbied and received support to build a wagon road through the interior to connect up with the Cariboo Road on the way to Barkerville and the gold fields in British Columbia. As construction on the road continued north to the location of Bute Inlet, a ferryman named Timothy Smith was killed on 29 April 1864 for apparently refusing food to a group of Tsilhqot’in. The next morning, the same Tsilhqot’in group attacked the remainder of the road construction camp killing all but one person. The group then moved further north, killing foreman William Brewster and three others as well as a William Manning, a settler at Puntzi Lake. When news of the war reached Seymour, who had only been Governor for one month, he took immediate action by sending a number of parties led by settlers like Chartres Brew and William Cox to capture the assailants. Under false pretences of amnesty, five Tsilhqot’in men—Telloot, Klatsassin, Tah-Pitt, Piele, Chessus—were arrested and charged with murder. While Klatsassin protested that the killings were acts of war and not murder, Supreme Court judge Matthew Baillie Begbie found all five men guilty and sentenced them to be hanged. The colonial state flexed its muscle by sending a clear message to all Indigenous peoples that resistance and violence against white settlers would not be tolerated. Such actions,
however, were not without cost. The entire proceedings drained upwards of $80,000 from already cash-strapped colonial coffers.80

Thus, in an attempt to cultivate good will and avoid further costly conflicts, Seymour held the first of many successive gatherings of Indigenous groups from the Fraser River at New Westminster in May 1864 to celebrate Queen Victoria’s birthday. Seymour was conscious of the esteem that many Indigenous peoples held towards Governor Douglas, and he wanted to counteract the impression that “their protector was withdrawn and would have no successor.” Seymour wanted to create a summit to “make myself known to the natives and show them that I had succeeded to all the power of my predecessor and to his solicitude for their welfare.” Seymour commented that at the gathering many discussed the recent events around Bute Inlet and confirmed that “vague rumours were in circulation of a general insurrection of the Indians being imminent.”81 In an address to the participants, Seymour announced:

I am glad to see you and to find that so many have come down to show their loyalty to our Queen. You are right. The Queen has a good heart for the good Indians. I shall be good to them but harsh and severe to the bad ones. I will punish them as they deserve…

As you say, there is plenty of land here for both white men and Indians. You shall not be disturbed on your reserves. I shall protect [you] both from bad white men and bad Indians.

I am glad that you wish to be civilized and raised to an equality with the white man. Cultivate your lands, send your children to school, listen to what the clergymen tell you and believe in it.82

80 For more on the Tsilhqot’in War see, for example, William Turkel, “Chilcotin War,” in The Archive of Place: Unearthing the Pasts of the Chilcotin Plateau (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2007), 177–224.
81 Frederick Seymour to Edward Cardwell, 31 August 1864, TNA, CO 60/19, 95–97. For more on the role of such celebrations see Keith Thor Carlson, The Power of Place, the Problem of Time: Aboriginal Identity and Historical Consciousness in the Cauldron of Colonialism (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 253–279.
82 Frederick Seymour Speech in Frederick Seymour to Edward Cardwell, 31 August 1864, TNA, CO 60/19, 103.
In short, Seymour quickly saw sagacity in Douglas’ strategy of trying to contain Indigenous peoples by cultivating their good will, and he identified schooling as an important tool.

Seymour thus took particular interest in missionary work and especially the industrial school at St. Mary’s. In the spring of 1865, Seymour and British Columbia Colonial Secretary Arthur Birch travelled up the Fraser River from New Westminster to St. Mary’s to investigate the facility. Upon his return to the colonial capital, Seymour wrote to British Colonial Secretary Edward Cardwell. He explained, “As soon as the vessel which conveyed us was in sight a feu de joie was fired by some Indians who had come to the Mission to see the first inspection of the native schools made by the Governor of the colony. On our landing a salute was fired likewise with all the muskets available. We were then escorted through an arch erected by the boys and extremely well decorated under the direction of the priests. A song of welcome to me was then sung by the boys in Chinook and addresses read to me by them in English and French. Immediately afterwards they sang ‘God Save the Queen’ in English extremely well and then we followed them to the school room.” This warm welcome impressed the Governor. Seymour continued on with his report claiming, “There were forty-eight boys present, of whom, I believe upwards of forty were of pure native race. The remainder had some intermixture of white blood.”

Again, it is important to note that métis children in the colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia at this time moved in between worlds and school systems. The métis children of HBC officers in the 1850s attended common schools while the métis children in areas that did not yet have common schools

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83 Frederick Seymour to Edward Cardwell, 22 May 1865, TNA, CO 60/12, 547–548.
or were deemed to be more “Indian” than white attended mission schools, again, where available. Accessibility as well as race greatly determined school attendance throughout the colonial period, including at St. Mary’s.

Governor Seymour’s report on St. Mary’s offers a rare look into the living and learning conditions of an early industrial school in Western Canada. Seymour commented on the pupils in attendance: “Their ages ranged from eight to fourteen years. Their fine healthy appearance and good clothing at once satisfied me, that in this institution at least the native race was not weakening and dwindling by contact with Europeans. Indeed the pupils appeared more robust and active than the boys of their age whom I had seen in the forests and their cheerful faces presented an agreeable contrast to the worn and anxious countenances of the seniors who came to be present at the inspection.” In terms of the school’s amenities, Seymour stated, “The school room was large, clean and well ventilated. It had been decorated with flags, boughs, and ribbons by the boys.” In addition, the dormitories were “thoroughly ventilated, and supplied with double rows of small beds as neat and clean as any children of the lower classes could desire.” Concerning pedagogy, Seymour observed: “I found them on examination to have made very considerable progress in arithmetic, geography, and spelling. Some of the handwriting was extremely good. The priests have almost entirely thrown aside the inconvenient Chinook medium and teach the boys in English. Even better than the writing was the singing.” The pupils at St. Mary’s established themselves as excellent musicians, specifically as singers. Seymour remarked, “I have not heard in any school with which I have officially come into contact, here or elsewhere, any piece of music so well delivered as was one Catholic hymn by these Indian boys.” In 1864, a St. Mary’s
brass band was formed that helped establish the mission’s reputation for musical excellence. Overall, Seymour’s visit was enough to convince him that “the native race can thrive and improve under civilized habits. Mind and body seemed to have expanded together, and the cultivation of the brain, if one could judge by the demeanor of the students towards their preceptors, to have improved the impulses of the heart.” Upon receipt of Seymour’s report on St. Mary’s, Cardwell asked Seymour to convey to the Catholic priests his approval and “appreciation of the services which they have thus rendered to the colony.”

Seymour was so impressed with the boys at St. Mary’s that he decided to invite them to be a part of the second annual gathering of Indigenous groups at New Westminster in May 1865 to celebrate Queen Victoria’s birthday. In recounting the events of the important summit, Seymour explained: “It rained heavily on the morning of the 24th of May, but a procession was formed of nearly one thousand canoes, extending from one bank of the Fraser to the other. Each boat had its flag and the more civilized of the natives sang a Catholic hymn, which had a very fine effect proceeding from thousands of voices upon the water. The Indians landed on the park reserve near the camp where the addresses were interchanged. Though rain came down in torrents the chiefs stood bareheaded before me.” As part of the grand spectacle, Seymour “distributed to each [chief] a Union Jack, some agricultural implements and garden seeds, and I left the ground while God Save the Queen was sung by the Indian boys of St. Mary’s Mission, and the Indians generally cheered vociferously.” Seymour also remarked that, “It was generally observed that the Indians had made considerable progress in civilization and wellbeing since I first met them on the 24th May 1864. It was obvious that they were

84 Edward Cardwell to Frederick Seymour, 3 September 1865, TNA, CO 60/12, 548–552.
better dressed, and nothing could be greater than the respect with which they treated the
consstituted authorities of the Colony.” As a result, Seymour suggested that “I allow
myself to hope that the native conflicts will soon cease throughout the wide extent of the
colony, and the white man will be able to travel anywhere without molestation.”\(^8^5\)

Against this backdrop, Fouquet requested that the colonial government provide
pecuniary assistance to aid the work being done at St. Mary’s. On 24 August 1865,
Fouquet wrote to Seymour stating that because of:

> the kind interest you have personally showed for the welfare of the Indians, I have the honor to state for the consideration of your Excellency
> that an average of fifty Indian boys have attended regularly the school at St Mary during the last session with results as satisfactory as we could
> expect. A great many more Indian boys are seeking admission for the next
> session, but our limited means do not allow us to receive them. Your
> Excellency is aware that on account of their distant villages and for their
> better improvement and civilization the Indian boys are kept as boarders….I respectfully request that a portion of the public
> money….should be granted for the benefit of their children.

On the back of this letter appears the following funding decision: “Authorize a grant of
£50 from the school fund for St. Mary’s Mission and School.”\(^8^6\) That the grant from the
public school fund was indeed approved is further confirmed by the Colonial Secretary
Birch, who wrote to Fouquet informing him, “I am directed by the Governor to acquaint
you that he had been pleased to sanction a grant of £50 in aid of the St Mary school and
mission [and I am] instructed to pay you the same on application.”\(^8^7\) Fouquet was thrilled
with news of the grant. He wrote back to Birch, “This mark of interest on the part of the
government will not only be an encouragement to us to continue to use our utmost
endeavours to make the Indians under our care good Christians and good citizens, it will

\(^8^5\) Frederick Seymour to Edward Cardwell, 7 June 1865, TNA, CO 60/22, 74–76.
\(^8^6\) Léon Fouquet to Frederick Seymour, 24 August 1865, BCA, GR-1372, B01329, Box 59, F584 3.
\(^8^7\) Colonial Secretary to Léon Fouquet, 26 August 1865, BCA, GR-1372, B01329, Box 59, F584 3.
moreover be an inducement as well to the school boys, as to the Indians generally, to improve more and more their condition.”

Upon receipt of the government grant for the boys of St. Mary’s, Fouquet immediately made a similar request for a school for girls. He wrote and explained to Birch, “we have established a school for girls at New Westminster under the direction of the Sisters of St Ann with two departments, one for white children and the other for half breed and Indian children. Although the average of pupils in both departments did not exceed twenty two during the first year there are still good prospects of seeing it increased.” He then suggested that “in consideration of the foregoing your memorialist asks that the government will grant some assistance to the school for the boys at St Mary and the school for girls at New Westminster, even if the pecuniary assistance cannot be but a small amount.”

Later in the month, Fouquet responded to Henry Maynard Ball, Magistrate for New Westminster, stating, “I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 25th inst informing me that the sum of £250 has been appropriated towards the education of the Indian children in our schools of the New Westminster District and to thank the government for it.”

Even if only temporarily, the colonial coffers were opened for missionary schooling.

Birch informed the British Colonial Office of the financial transactions. He forwarded a report sent to the British Columbia government by Fouquet, as requested, recording the progress at the St. Mary’s mission and the educational initiatives for the Indigenous peoples living on the banks of the Fraser River. Birch claimed, “I recently visited the school at St. Mary’s and was much struck with the progress made by the

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88 Léon Fouquet to Arthur Birch, 28 November 1865, TNA, CO 60/22, 462.
89 Léon Fouquet to Arthur Birch, 20 July 1866, BCA, GR-1372, B01329, Box 59, F584 3, 5.
90 Léon Fouquet to Henry Maynard Ball, 31 July 1866, BCA, GR-1372, B01329, Box 59, F584 6.
children since my visit with Governor Seymour in May 1865…A similar school is established in the Okanagan valley and is well attended. The Indians are all anxious to have their children educated. Many of the chiefs of the various tribes I met during my recent tour have sent their sons to these mission schools.” 91 In Fouquet’s report for the year 1865-1866, he stated: “The grant we have received from the Government in August 1865 has enabled us to admit ten additional boys from amongst the numerous applicants who were most anxious to become partakers of a good education and thus we increased our number to an average of sixty boarders.” He claimed, “In the beginning our endeavours have been more especially directed to develop the moral intellectual and physical facilities of the boys and furnish them with ideas and notions absolutely required before they can read with interest and understand what they read, and one of our greatest satisfactions is to notice the wonderful diffusion of those notions not only amongst the school boys but amongst the Indians in general.” Moreover, Fouquet explained that “the school boys are also taught how to cultivate the soil and notwithstanding the natural indolence of the native race the fields and gardens at St. Mary’s will demonstrate the progress they have made in this respect. I must state moreover that these boys do all that is to be done in the establishment; some are fishermen, some wood choppers and bakers, some cooks….and filling their respective offices with a sort of point of honour they do much better than we could ever have expected.” He also clarified that “to their new habits of industry and various bodily exercises as well as to their cleaner and more comfortable lodging and their better regulated diet, we attribute the remarkable improvement in their health which has taken place.” Overall, Fouquet claimed, “The Indians seem to

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appreciate more and more the benefit which their children are deriving from their new
mode of training.”

Included in Fouquet’s report is rare documentation of a student voice in the form
of an address made to Birch on his last visit to the school. The address was likely
prepared or at least checked by a mission authority before the student delivered it;
however, it remains an important example of students acknowledging the funding St.
Mary’s received from the colonial state. It reads:

We the school boys of St. Mary’s have the pleasure of once more
welcoming your honor on this your second visit to our school.

We have already had proof of the kind interest you take for the welfare of
us poor Indian children and we gratefully remember your canoeing here
last year in company with his Excellency Governor Seymour.

We are most happy of having another opportunity of thanking you as the
representative of Her Majesty as well for your kind visits and for the
pecuniary assistance which we have already received and which shall
always be remembered by us with feelings of the most sincere gratitude.

Your honor may perceive that our numbers have considerably increased
since last year and that now a large number of poor Indian boys have the
happiness of participating in a good Christian education.

In conclusion we wish once more to return our best thanks to Her
Majesty’s government for the grant bestowed upon our school last year
which has enabled our good Farther Gendre to enlarge very considerably
the number of pupils and to work with increased energy in the
amelioration of our condition.

Upon receiving Fouquet’s report and the copy of the address given on behalf of the boys
of St. Mary’s by Peter Ayessick, who would later became a prominent Stó:lō chief, the

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92 Léon Fouquet to the Officer administering the Government, 25 October, 1866, TNA, CO 60/25, 184–187.
93 Copy of address presented to his Honor A.N. Birch by the school boys of St. Mary’s Mission, TNA, CO 60/25, 188.
Earl of Carnarvon expressed to Birch his great “satisfaction at the present state and the progress of the Roman Catholic Mission school at St. Mary’s.”

Building on their success at St. Mary’s and in the Okanagan, the Oblates continued to explore new missionary fields. They soon took an interest in the interior of the mainland of British Columbia. Oblate missionaries visited numerous sites around what is today Williams Lake, Secwepemc (Shuswap) territory, in the mid-1860s. Fouquet visited the area in 1854, Gendre in 1865, and Grandidier in 1866. In 1866, d’Herbomez sent Father James McGuckin to establish a permanent mission in the Cariboo. McGuckin first travelled to the miners’ centre of Richfield before finding a suitable property near Williams Lake in the spring of 1867. Shortly thereafter, a mission, known as St. Joseph’s, was established, adding to the Oblates’ dominance of the missionary field in British Columbia. St. Joseph’s originally served both white settlers and Indigenous peoples from the surrounding areas, and in 1886 it was converted into a residential school.

By the late 1860s, the colonial state viewed Catholic missionaries as providing an invaluable service to the colony that warranted some state assistance. The colonial state offered grants of land to religious bodies and, after the Tsilhqot’in War and growing colonial anxiety about a general Indigenous uprising in the mid-1860s, it extended funds to the St. Mary’s mission to facilitate the industrial education of Indigenous boys and girls. In responding to a controversy sparked by comments made by Birch about the lack of Protestant missionary success in British Columbia, Governor Seymour wrote to the Earl of Carnarvon to confirm that “without defection to the Church which I belong I say that that of Rome is supreme among our native population on the mainland and with

94 Earl of Carnarvon to Frederick Seymour, 5 January 1867, TNA, CO 60/25, 189.
infinite benefit to the Indians and to the white inhabitants of the territory.” While Methodists and Anglicans were also active in what is now British Columbia, it is clear that Catholic missionaries were seen by the state as providing the greatest service to the growing settler society by educating and training Indigenous peoples in the ways of Christian civilization.

“One soweth, another reapeth”: Anglican Missionaries

In addition to Methodists and Catholics, Anglican missionaries were also active agents in the Pacific Northwest. For the most part, Anglican missionaries concentrated their efforts in Victoria, the North West Coast, and the Fraser Canyon. Anglicans, however, were not a monolith. There were many different denominations and societies, and the two most active were the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG) and the Church Missionary Society (CMS). Reverend Alex Garrett, as already mentioned, was a SPG missionary and he continued to labour among the Lekwungen in Victoria in the 1860s. He also travelled throughout Vancouver Island visiting different Indigenous groups. In 1866, the new Governor of Vancouver Island, Arthur Kennedy, informed Colonial Secretary Edward Cardwell that Rev. Garrett had continued his work as Principal of the Indian Mission in Victoria. Garrett wrote to Kennedy to update the Governor on his work and to inform him that Indigenous peoples from the north, particularly the Haida, were still creating problems in the settlements. In response, Garrett proposed a plan similar to that discussed earlier with Governor Douglas, namely to provide schooling for Indigenous children. Kennedy informed Cardwell, “I am of opinion that some such plan as that suggested by Mr. Garrett would

95 Frederick Seymour to Earl of Carnarvon, 11 January 1867, TNA, CO 60/27, 67.
effect a great improvement. Mr. Garrett is about to take up his abode again upon the reserve and a schoolmaster is daily engaged under him at the Mission. I counted recently 70 children present in the school. They fluctuate, but some come steadily and make progress.”

Rev. A.C. Garrett’s SPG mission in Victoria was perhaps the first sustained Protestant schooling initiative for Indigenous peoples.

Garrett, though, was soon eclipsed in terms of importance by his spiritual colleague, William Duncan, a CMS missionary who founded a mission at Fort Simpson on the Northwest Coast. In the mid-1850s Captain James Prevost of the Royal Navy wrote to the CMS claiming that the Indigenous inhabitants of the Northwest Coast lived “in a state of heathen darkness and complete barbarism” in spite of manifesting “a great desire and aptitude to acquire the knowledge and arts of civilized life.” Prevost suggested that the CMS send out its agents immediately to work among the Indigenous population. Prevost’s prodding, combined with Douglas’ requests that Protestant missionaries be sent out to Vancouver Island referenced at the beginning of this chapter, pressured the CMS to eventually send out William Duncan as the society’s first agent in 1856. Duncan quickly became the most widely known and acclaimed missionary in the field, and his mission was held up as a model for other Protestant initiatives throughout British Columbia in the colonial period. Duncan arrived on Vancouver Island in 1857. Before traveling to the Northwest Coast, he worked in Victoria briefly to familiarize himself with the political landscape. In the colonial capital, Duncan made connections with figures such as Rev. Garrett and others who joined the Indian Improvement

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96 Arthur Kennedy to Edward Cardwell, 6 February 1866, TNA, CO 305/28, 152.
97 For more on Duncan and Protestant missions on the Northwest Coast see for example, Susan Neylan, *The Heavens are Changing: Nineteenth-Century Protestant Missions and Tsimshian Christianity* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2003).
98 Fisher, *Contact and Conflict*, 126.
Committee. Duncan likely would have preferred to stay in Victoria and work among the Lekwungen; however, Garrett was already firmly at work in the area. Moreover, Duncan had originally been commissioned to work on the Northwest Coast with the Ts’msyan (Tsimshian) located in the vicinity of Fort Simpson. Thus, Duncan left Victoria for the Northwest Coast in the fall of 1857.

Duncan arrived in Fort Simpson on 1 October 1857 and soon began working with the Ts’msyan. He wrote in his journal, “To attempt to describe the condition of these tribes on my arrival would be but to produce a dark and revolting picture of human depravity. The dark mantle of degrading superstition enveloped them all, and their savage spirits, jealously and revenge were ever hurrying them to deeds of blood. Thus their history was little else than a chapter of crime and misery.”

He was initially hesitant about taking-up his post: “About a month elapsed, and I was beginning to think of returning to Victoria.” However, he soon received letters from friends in the colonial capital that informed him “the Rev A.C. Garett and another gentleman had undertaken the work among the Indians and that therefore my services were no longer required there.” Duncan stated that such letters “greatly relieved my mind. I felt again free to remain where I am and to pursue my…course of duties among the Tsimshian Indians.”

Duncan decided to make his stand at Fort Simpson.

While at Fort Simpson, Duncan learned to speak the Sm’algyax language from Ts’msyan hereditary chief and HBC employee, Arthur Wellington Clah, and his mastery of the local tongue helped support his early missionary efforts. By the spring of 1858, he had translated parts of the bible into Sm’algyax and he began preaching and teaching to

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100 William Duncan to James Douglas, 25 October 1860, BCA, GR-1372, B01322, Box 45, F 498, 2.
the Ts’msyan in their own language.\footnote{101} To spread his influence, Duncan also established a school at the fort. In the summer of 1858, a new school was built outside the fort walls and Duncan began teaching there in November 1859. The students were taught a variety of subjects including reading, writing, and singing in addition to religious teachings. Such mission schools were important institutions of acculturation and gave missionaries like Duncan daily access to Indigenous peoples to try to transform their ways of life.

Duncan’s teachings started to bear fruit. His success, though, was not restricted to Fort Simpson. Many of his students travelled to trade in Victoria where, with their good behaviour, they caught the attention of Governor Douglas. In early 1860, Douglas recruited HBC schoolmaster and common school inspector, Rev. Edward Cridge, to write to Duncan inquiring about his mission. On 4 January 1860, Cridge wrote to Duncan to inform him that Douglas wished to “express to you the great gratification he has received from conversing with several of the Indians who have been under your instruction at Fort Simpson, and who are now at Victoria, and his please at witnessing the great improvement of manners, learning and religion, which you have succeeded in effecting in their condition.” In the context of the recent Indian War in Washington Territory and the fear of northern Indigenous peoples coming to Victoria and stirring up the anxieties of settlers, Douglas was likely interested in learning how to perhaps replicate Duncan’s successful “civilizing” methods in Victoria. Thus, Cridge further informed Duncan, “His Excellency also wishes me to say that he will feel obliged by your reporting to him from time to time on the progress of your mission, any suggestions you may make with regard to measures which may occur to you as likely to prove beneficial to the Indians under

your care. Such as setting them in any particular locality or setting apart a reserve of land for their use, will receive his Excellency’s best attention, who will also if necessary represent such measures with his favourable recommendation to Her Majesty’s Government.”¹⁰² Duncan’s labours were starting to pay off; he now had the ear of the Governor.

Duncan took advantage of the opportunity to formalize a relationship with the colonial regime and to impress upon the government the good effects of his missionary work. Duncan wrote to inform Cridge, “I feel indeed truly thankful to His Excellency for the very kind interest he manifests in the mission and I shall rejoicingly avail myself of the privilege he extends to me, in making such communications to him from time to time as circumstances may suggest and opportunities afford.”¹⁰³ In the response, Duncan outlined the nature of his labours at Fort Simpson. The first activity he mentioned was his school: “I began a school here in November 1858 which I shall continue to carry on. My pupils number about 200 of whom only 30 are adults. The daily attendance varied from 80 to 130 souls excepting the times when they go away in great numbers to procure fish, which occupies about four months of the year and at such times our daily attendance is from 40 to 80 souls.” It is difficult to determine the approximate population of Indigenous peoples at Fort Simpson and the surrounding area, especially as it was a trading hub, but the daily attendance of between 40 and 80 is much higher, comparatively, than the common schools operating in the colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia at the same time. In terms of pedagogy, Duncan stated, “the instruction I give them is in reading; writing; counting; singing; and religious

¹⁰² Edward Cridge to William Duncan, 4 January 1860, TNA, CO 60/7, 126.
¹⁰³ William Duncan to Edward Cridge, 7 February 1860, TNA, CO 60/7, 129.
knowledge.” He clarified that while his religious teachings continued to be in the Sm’algyax language, “everything [else] is in English.” Because of his mission school, Duncan argued that many adults “seem anxious for their children to learn and walk in the good way.” Duncan was most interested in converting the Ts’msyan and changing their life practices to be in accordance with what was deemed to be a superior Christian civilization.

While Duncan spoke enthusiastically of his work at Fort Simpson, he suggested that his current mission was not necessarily an ideal learning environment. Duncan desired to establish an independent missionary settlement. To this effect, he wrote Cridge to ask that he bring to the attention of Governor Douglas the necessity of “a place being founded in which Indians may find a home, and where there may be no lack of remunerative labour put into their hands. I confess my only hope of seeing the Indian races of this coast diverted from the destructive courses to which they are now so strongly tempted, lays in the carrying out of some such place as the above for their benefit.” Duncan felt strongly that promising converts, especially the “rising generation,” must be “removed from the evil influence” of the Fort Simpson settlement. He continued: “I now see from instances which have already occurred that the children I am teaching will be drifted from me as they grow up, and become victims to the same vices which enslave their parents.” Duncan concluded that such observations made him “feel a growing anxiety for a safe retreat.”

Douglas followed Duncan’s work at Fort Simpson with great enthusiasm. He wrote to the British Colonial Secretary, the Duke of Newcastle, on 18 February 1860 to introduce Duncan to the Colonial Office. Douglas began, “The desire manifested on the

104 William Duncan to Edward Cridge, 7 February 1860, TNA, CO 60/7, 129–133.
part of Her Majesty’s Government for the improvement and well being of the aboriginal races of British Columbia, induces me to lay before your grace the enclosed correspondence between Reverend Edward Cridge, District Minister of Victoria, and Mr. William Duncan, an exemplary and truly worthy gentleman, who has, for some years past, been devotedly labouring with a wonderful degree of energy and perseverance as a Christian Missionary among the Indian population, at and about Fort Simpson.”

Duncan’s “very marked success” gives rise to “the gratifying hope that the Natives will yet, through God’s blessing, be rescued from ignorance and assume a respectable position in British Columbia.” In an effort to further encourage Duncan’s good work and support his plan to create a separate settlement, Douglas asked for Imperial sanction to “reserve several hundred acres of land” to “enable Mr. Duncan to carry this useful and benevolent plan with effort.”

Again, Douglas’ basic idea was to reserve specific lands for Indigenous peoples but keep these lands in a trust managed by the colonial regime leaving Indigenous peoples “no power whatever…to sell or alienate the estate.” The Colonial Office approved this course of action. A comment on the back of Douglas’ dispatch captures the Colonial Office’s feelings on the subject: “It would be a bright future in British Colonization; and an example to the United States if we can succeed in converting to Christianity and introducing to civilization the native inhabitants, or any portion of them, of British Columbia. To grant a reserve of land as a missionary settlement for converts seems to me a very proper and justifiable proceeding…”

On 3 August 1860, Douglas wrote to Newcastle thanking him for sanctioning the reserve of

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105 James Douglas to Duke of Newcastle, 18 February 1860, TNA, CO 60/7, 122.
106 Mr. Elliot on the back of James Douglas to Duke of Newcastle, 18 February 1860, TNA, CO 60/7, 123.
several hundred acres in the area of Fort Simpson “for the use and benefit of the Indians.”

Duncan’s plan for establishing a permanent Protestant missionary settlement was approved by the Colonial Office and colonial regime as early as the summer of 1860; however, it would still be two years before he attempted a move away from Fort Simpson. In order to relocate his followers, Duncan required financial backing and, once again, he turned to his new friend in Cridge to broach the subject of pecuniary assistance to the Governor. In April 1862, Duncan wrote to Cridge regarding a potential summer move: “The need of this step is becoming more and more urgent as miners are already rushing up here after gold and I have an idea that many of them will make this place their winter quarters and hence will spring up a serious train of evils….I feel assured that it is the best step to be taken.” Separation from Fort Simpson was the key objective. Duncan stated, “I can then take a child or two from each of the surrounding tribes under my care and I have a hope of sending them back to teach in their own people; but this I cannot do at Fort Simpson. Parents have frequently told me that they feel afraid to have their children in this heathen camp, but will have no fear of their being with me under this new arrangement.” At this new settlement, Duncan planned to continue his school and religious teachings, but also place a marked importance on developing in children the habits of industry. He wrote, “I have thought of a few things which they can be taught to do, and these are brick making, teaching….preserving berries, growing potatoes, besides that and canoe making. But to start these things requires both money and time.” On the subject of money, Duncan said to Cridge:

107 James Douglas to Duke of Newcastle, 3 August 1860, TNA, CO 60/8, 11.
108 William Duncan to Edward Cridge, 24 April 1862, BCA, GR-1372, B01322 Box 45, F395 28.
When I was last in Victoria I had a long conversation with his Excellency the Governor which turned principally on this subject viz. promoting industry among the Indians at their own homes. He assured me that the government would render what assistance they could to promote so considerable work. Hence I thought of writing to him and begging some government aid to purchase a few garden tools and seeds; also windows, nails, door handles and hinges for house building…these things to be shared out to every family….Will you kindly take the favourable opportunity of mentioning the matter to him?109

Further progress on the Northwest Coast necessitated greater financial support from the colonial state.

On 21 June 1862, Cridge wrote to Duncan with good news on the financial front. He stated, “It is with great pleasure I convey to you, at the request of His Excellency, the Governor…approbation of your plan, and his intention of granting you the sum of £50 towards the expenses of carrying it out.” Cridge concluded his correspondence by conveying to Duncan: “The Governor also begs me to state that he continues to feel the warmest [regards and…] he will be always happy to hear of [the settlement’s] progress and success.”110 That Douglas did in fact grant Duncan £50 to set up a separate Anglican missionary settlement is confirmed by a letter from 6 March 1863 in which Duncan thanked the Governor for his assistance. Duncan wrote, “The Tsimshian Indians who have lately removed from Fort Simpson under my supervision and settled here are very anxious to tender your Excellency their warmest thanks for the very liberal and timely aid, which you have rendered them, in building their new village.” Duncan elaborated on the use of government funds, “The 150 window sashes and 100 lbs Nails which came of your bounty of £50 arrived quite safely in September last in the Hudsons Bay Company’s Steamer ‘Labouchere’, and have been duly distributed….Ground for several more houses

109 William Duncan to Edward Cridge, 24 April 1862, BCA, GR-1372, B01322 Box 45, F395 28.
110 Reverend Edward Cridge, 21 June 1862, BCA, GR 1372-B01322, Box 45, F395, 29.
has already been spoken for and I have a hope that many of the Indians left at Fort Simpson will soon be induced to join us.”\textsuperscript{111} The foundation for a new missionary settlement on the Northwest Coast was laid with governmental assistance in the form of a free grant of land and a sum of £50.

Crucial to Duncan’s state-supported missionary experiment was the continuation of his school. He wrote to Douglas shortly after the move to Metlakatla, “We have succeeded in erecting a strong and useful building capable of containing at least 600 souls which we use as Church and School.” Again, the supplies purchased with the £50 were likely used to help construct the building. While religious teaching was Duncan’s first priority, he quickly turned his focus to schooling. He explained in a letter written to Douglas, “Through the multiplicity of my duties I was not able to begin school in our new building till 19 January. I have about 100 children who attend morning and afternoon and about 100 adults (often more) in the evening. I occupy the principle part of the time with the latter in giving them lectures on the following subjects—Geography, astronomy, natural history, or morals—these lectures they seem greatly to prize.”\textsuperscript{112} Duncan’s focus on education at Fort Simpson thus carried on in the new Metlakatla settlement.

Throughout the colonial period, Duncan’s mission was held up as a model for what could be achieved in the missionary field. At the request of the Lord Bishop of British Columbia, and being invited by Duncan, Rev. Edward Cridge made the journey to visit Metlakatla with his family late in the summer and early fall of 1867. The Cridges stayed with Duncan for seven weeks. On the eve of Cridge’s departure, the Reverend sat

\textsuperscript{111} William Duncan to James Douglas, 6 March 1863, TNA, CO 60/15, 368.
\textsuperscript{112} William Duncan to James Douglas, 6 March 1863, TNA, CO 60/15, 374–375.
down to write up his observations, which he subsequently passed along to the CMS to publish as *Sketch of the Rise and Progress of Metlahkatlah in the Diocese of British Columbia*. Cridge began, “After ten years’ acquaintance with my dear Christian friend and brother, Mr. Duncan, and many communications with him on the subject of his work, I have been at length permitted by a kind Providence to see with my own eyes that which God hath wrought by him.” Cridge claimed, “The spiritual results of ten years’ labours are manifested in a congregation of some 400 adults, of whom about 300 are baptized...Many belonging to the surrounding tribes have heard the Word, and though they have not yet come out as Christians, the good seed, we may hope, is sown, and prepared in God’s good time to spring forth for the further extension of His kingdom.”

While commenting on almost every aspect of the settlement, Cridge stressed Duncan’s efforts to train the Ts’msyan. He wrote, “A soap manufactory, saw mill, blacksmiths’ and shoemakers’ shops, are being, or about to be, constructed, the machinery and appliances being on the spot.” However, Cridge spent even more time evaluating the education that Duncan was providing at Metlakatla. While Cridge’s visit overlapped with fishing season during which Duncan allowed many Ts’msyan to leave the settlement to fish, he wrote that “still the general school has occasionally assembled, and now that we are leaving it is in full work again.” Drawing on his experience as a schoolmaster and inspector for the common schools around Victoria, Cridge provided one of the few outside reports on the early conditions of Duncan’s mission school:

> The conclusions resulting from my inspection are in the highest degree favourable; in fact the regular technical school has evidently formed a main feature in Mr. Duncan’s system, and a chief fulcrum of his success. The progress of the scholars is remarkable. They read, write, cipher, and

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can translate easy books into their own language and *vice versa*. They have made some progress in geography and history. I certainly think Mr. Duncan, in view of the special relations of this people, has done well in preferring the ordinary English to the syllabic system, as the vehicle for expressing their thoughts in writing.

While Cridge praised Duncan’s pedagogy overall, he did express his disapproval that instruction continued to be in Tsimshian rather than English. Cridge hoped that soon an emphasis would be made on developing English conversational skills.\(^\text{114}\)

Cridge also observed that surveillance and discipline were key features in the making of Metlakatla. Cridge commented that “Mr. Duncan’s ever-watchful eye and open ear nipped in the bud incipient schemes, from without as well as from within, from which otherwise mischief would have spread like wildfire through the institution.” There was a particular focus on the girls of the settlement. He explained that the girls “are not angels, but creatures just emerged from heathenism, learning and trying to be good: some of them only a short time there, ripe for every temptation, competent for any riot.” Cridge claimed that Duncan could prevent such “mischief” due to his mastery of the Sm’ałgyax language. In terms of disciplining students, particularly the girls, Cridge wrote: “One day Mr. Duncan brought before me (whom he generally addressed in all such cases) two girls for a fault. One being innocent, was released; for the other I interceded, and not in vain. He spoke to her for some time without apparent effect. At last he reminded her that she was an orphan, without a friend in the world except within those walls. The poor girl could not withstand his appeal; I saw her frame shake with emotion, and she sobbed with all the sensibility of an English girl.” Emotional abuse, then, was used as a form of pedagogical discipline at Metlakatla. Moreover, Cridge stated, “Tyranny might do

\(^\text{114}\) Cridge, *Sketch of the Rise and Progress of Metlahkatlah in the Diocese of British Columbia*, 8 and 11.
something with its iron rod; but the authority of love can only be effectual through a medium which the heart can understand.”

While Duncan was perhaps the most celebrated Anglican missionary labouring in the Pacific Northwest, he was certainly not the only Anglican agent working in the field. In the early to mid-1860s new SPG missionaries entered the field. One such influential SPG missionary was Robert Christopher Lundin Brown. Brown was educated at the University of Edinburgh and ordained by the Church of England in 1858. Shortly thereafter, in 1860, he was sent to British Columbia to preach in the gold fields. Brown travelled extensively through the lower Fraser canyon and visited many gold mining towns, included Barkerville. He settled in the Lillooet district and established St. Mary’s Church in 1861. Brown mostly ministered to white gold miners but also took an active interest in the Indigenous peoples. His concern was most pronounced when, in 1862, a smallpox epidemic ravaged much of what is now British Columbia. He wrote seeking state assistance in that time of need: “Permit me to appeal to your Excellency on a subject of urgency and importance. Your Excellency is aware that the native population around Lillooet have for the last six months been suffering the visitation of small-pox…sweeping off whole families….It is acknowledged that upwards of 150 have perished in this neighbourhood alone.” He then described some of the horrors from this attack including an incident where, having already lost her own children, an Indigenous woman adopted an orphaned child. Sadly, the child died the next day. In the context of such dire

115 Cridge, Sketch of the Rise and Progress of Metlahkatlah in the Diocese of British Columbia, 12–13. Duncan’s “authority of love,” especially for the young Tsimshian girls, was carefully scrutinized by Cridge to insure that no impropriety took place. For more on the concerns that Duncan used his “authority of love” to establish intimate relations with his female boarders see, Adele Perry, “The Autocracy of Love and the Legitimacy of Empire: Intimacy, Power, and Scandal in Nineteenth-Century Metlakahtla,” Gender & History 16, no. 2(August 2004): 261–288.
circumstances, the town raised approximately $500 to support the many orphans living in Lillooet. The funds, however, were insufficient. Brown wrote to Douglas, “So I venture to ask you for some assistance on their behalf….these four orphans are left on our hands – are they not a trust left to us by the Almighty? Can we escape the duty of caring for them and educating them? Can we turn them out of our hospital and leave them to die? I know your Excellency will not allow us to entertain such an idea…” In suggesting the government provide $100 per month, Brown argued that “providing for the necessities of the children will be the first efforts made in this part of the country for the education of that people…”

It is unclear as to whether the colonial government offered assistance in this case, but Brown soon left Lillooet to return to London where he continued to advocate for an increased support for missionary work in the Pacific Northwest through such publications as *British Columbia: the Indians and Settlers at Lillooet: Appeal for Missionaries.* By the end of the 1860s SPG agents like Brown were active in Victoria, Cowichan, Saanich, Nanaimo, Comox, Alberni, New Westminster, Yale, Hope.

The most successful SPG missionary active in the field in the 1860s was Reverend J.B. Good. Good laboured in British Columbia around the Fraser Canyon area, specifically in Lytton. Historian Brett Christophers argues that the Anglicans considered Good’s mission in Lytton to be the finest next to Duncan’s at Metlakatla. Good first came to Victoria in 1861 and then started a mission at Nanaimo to compete with the already established Methodist presence. After 5 years at Nanaimo, Good abandoned his station and moved to the mainland in May 1866. Anglican Bishop George Hills posted him at

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116 R.C.L. Brown to Colonial Secretary, 18 February 1863, BCA, GR-1372, B01311, Box 24, F214 3.
Yale at the foot of the Fraser Canyon. In the fall, Good wrote to Chief Commissioner of Land and Works, Joseph Trutch, applying for a grant of land near the Indian Reserve at Yale “for the purposes of erecting thereon a building to be used as a school for the instruction of Indians and as the residence of the teachers…” While Trutch’s response to Good did not survive, the former did summarize his thoughts in a letter to the British Columbia Colonial Secretary:

I have the honor to state that I am of opinion that it is not advisable to make further free grants of Public Land in the colony to religious bodies for any purposes whatever. There can be no doubt that good results might be anticipated from the establishment of the school proposed by Mr. Good, but I do not estimate these prospective advantages highly enough to warrant a free grant being made to the Church of the site for such a school house. Which would as it appears to me establish a precedent for many future applications of similar character and lead to much embarrassment. I want to further recommend that instead of a free grant a lease be granted of a lot of land for a term of seven years conditional on the erection thereon of a schoolhouse….  

Not only did this establish a precedent for shifting policy away from giving missionaries free grants of land, as was done for earlier missionaries, but it discouraged Good from continuing his work at Yale. By the time Good received the news, three groups of Nlha7ápmx from the north visited him at Yale in March 1867 inviting him to travel north. Reverend David Holmes took over Good’s post at Yale which freed Good to take up residence in Lytton.

Good arrived in Lytton in June 1867. Governor Seymour, still cautious about Indigenous relations after the Tsilhqot’in War, did not approve of Good’s relocation. Seymour had worked hard to try to cultivate the good will of the interior groups, especially the supposedly warlike Nlha7ápmx, and did not want that negated by Good’s activities. Moreover, Catholic agents, whom Seymour favoured, were also angry at what

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118 Joseph Trutch to Colonial Secretary, 12 November 1866, BCA, GR-1372, B01340 Box 82, F947 13a.
they perceived to be Good’s encroaching on their spiritual territory. In fact, Father Charles J. Grandidier had built a church in Lytton in 1860 and the Oblates claimed it as a spiritual centre, but did not establish a lasting mission. To solidify his presence, then, Good created a permanent facility as his base to launch his assault on Nlha7ápmx lifeways. Good taught about Christianity and tried to direct Nlha7ápmx followers towards “the formation of habits of steady industry, economy, and sobriety.” In the first months of his mission, he started a boys’ school to instil “habits of instant obedience.” By the late 1860s, SPG missionaries like Good had established a Protestant presence in the lower mainland of British Columbia to compete with the Catholic missionaries.

The greatest missionary success in the colonial period for Protestants, however, continued to be on the Northwest Coast by CMS agents. The model of Metlakatla shone brightly throughout the colonial period. Before Duncan relocated to Metlakatla, while he worked at Fort Simpson in the late 1850s and early 1860s, he received an invitation from the Nisga’a (Nishga) to visit their settlements. Duncan made the journey north up the Nass River and visited several Nisga’a villages, and was even hosted by two chiefs, Kadounaha and Kinsada. Though little is known about this visit, apparently Duncan felt there was an opportunity among the Nisga’a and he urged the CMS to send out additional missionaries to answer the call. In the meantime, the Nisga’a travelled to Duncan’s separate settlement at Metlakatla to visit and trade.

In 1864, the CMS sent out Robert Doolan, a Church of England deacon, to establish a mission among the Nisga’a modelled after Duncan’s Metlakatla settlement. Doolan was a graduate of the University of Cambridge and was just 31 when he travelled

119 Fisher, Contact and Conflict, 136.
120 Patterson II, Mission on the Nass, 33.
to the Northwest Coast. He arrived first in Metlakatla where he learned the local language. With Metlakatla as a base, Doolan travelled up the Nass River and established a missionary settlement at Quinwoch, which was one of five major Nisga’a villages. In this initiative, Doolan was supported by trader and lay missionary Robert Cunningham and his métis wife, who was a former pupil of Duncan’s. The Cunninghams and Robert Dundas, who also worked with Duncan at Metlakatla, helped support Doolan’s mission in the early days; Dundas, having a command of the language, gave the sermons. Doolan made three separate tours to Quinwoch in the mid-1860s: November 1864 to April 1865; May to June 1865; October 1865 to mid-May 1866. These tours roughly corresponded to the Nisga’a subsistence cycle whereby the Nisga’a would spend the summer fishing at the mouth of the Nass River and return to villages upstream in the fall and winter for ceremonial life. Doolan’s activities, like Duncan’s and that of other missionaries, aimed at disrupting Indigenous ways of life by targeting cultural practices and ceremonies and trying to supplant them with Christian and “civilized” ways. To cultivate good will, Doolan tended to the sick and provided medical services.

Like at Metlakatla, schooling also played a prominent role in Doolan’s work. Historian E. Palmer Paterson II claims that at Quinwoch a “day school was conducted with children and adults present, the latter coming out of curiosity. The formal atmosphere of the schoolroom was very difficult to establish and maintain. There was much coming and going and moving about, and there was the problem of keeping the building comfortably heated.”¹²¹ According to Doolan’s journal, the average daily school attendance for the fall of 1865 was approximately thirty-five children.¹²² However, by the

winter of 1866, during Doolan’s last tour at Quinwoch, resistance to his initiative began to grow. While school attendance remained steady, Nisga’a chiefs visited the school and apparently disrupted classroom activities. When one of Doolan’s scholar-boarders drowned in a river not far from Doolan’s house, many Nisga’a held Doolan responsible. Moreover, Nisga’a resistance to Doolan’s presence took on more sophisticated forms, such as attempts to undercut Doolan’s legitimacy. Some Nisga’a members even suggested that Roman Catholic missionaries were better suited to work among the Nisga’a.

Doolan returned from his last tour on the Nass dejected. While wintering at Metlakatla Doolan learned that, as a result of money problems and a lack of personnel, the CMS decided to suspend the Quinwoch mission. In the summer, Doolan lamented his inability to carry on his work, “I feel sorry to leave the Nass Indians, over whom I was beginning to obtain a little influence for good, and from whom I have generally received much kindness…my stay amongst them has been most influential for myself, as I have learnt more of the dense darkness and superstition of the heathen than could ever be learnt here, and also learnt some little of the workings of the heathen mind.” However, Doolan’s fate changed when the CMS decided to resume its work on the Nass and sent out another missionary.

The CMS dispatched missionary Robert Tomlinson who arrived at Metlakatla on 20 May 1867. In early June, Tomlinson joined Doolin and Cowcælth, who was baptised and renamed Philip Latimer, on a journey to Quinwoch. On 10 June 1867, Doolan, Tomlinson, and Cowcælth, as well as five others, travelled downriver approximately 25 kilometres where they picked a site for a new settlement called Kincolith. The village,

which was modelled on Metlakatla, included a mission house, a school, and five residences for converts. While the early period of Kincolith was largely in Doolan’s hands, Paterson II emphasizes that its survival and success very much depended on the adherence of those Nisga’a who came to live as well as their willingness to participate and cooperate with its purposes.\textsuperscript{124} While the missionaries were philosophically and theologically opposed to Nisga’a practices and spirituality, they were forced to compromise many of their beliefs in order to cultivate the good will of the Nisga’a and build the Kincolith settlement. Late in the summer of 1867, Doolan learned that his stepfather had died and he quickly travelled back to England, never to return to the North Pacific Coast. Tomlinson thus inherited the Kincolith mission.

Under Tomlinson’s tutelage, Kincolith became known as the “eldest daughter” of Metlakatla.\textsuperscript{125} Tomlinson received medical training from Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland, and he used his medical knowledge to bolster support for Kincolith as well as to spread the word of the Gospel to surrounding villages. In April 1868, Tomlinson returned to Victoria to marry Alice Mary Woods, daughter of an Anglican clergyman in Victoria. Reverend Cridge performed the ceremony. With Alice’s help, Tomlinson and a core of Nisga’a supporters built a church, school, and residences for the missionaries. In total, nine houses were constructed for the first Nisga’a living in the new settlement. The school trained young men to extend the mission work to other communities in the area. In 1870 the total population of Kincolith was approximately 60. While not as large as Metlakatla, Kincolith became another Protestant missionary beacon in the North Pacific.

\textsuperscript{125} Paterson II, \textit{Mission on the Nass}, 50.
As Kincolith was being established, Tomlinson reached out to the colonial government for financial assistance. In particular, he wrote to Trutch in June 1869 to apply for a site for the mission buildings and a reserve. Tomlinson, like Good, asked for a free grant of land to be held in trust by the government for the CMS:

A mission has been opened for the benefit of the tribes resident on the Nass River, and a mission settlement has been formed and mission buildings at Kincolith, which lies at the mouth of the Nass River on the northern bank.

As the missionary in charge of this station, I beg to apply for a grant of a piece of ground for building purposes, to be held in trust by the Government for the Church Missionary society. This piece of ground, on which some buildings have already been erected, is triangular. The apex of the triangle is formed by the junction of the Kincolith and Nass Rivers…

I also beg to apply for a reserve to be appropriated for the benefit of those Indians who have already, or may hereafter, settle at this mission station.

I make this petition on behalf of the Church Missionary Society, because a grant similar to the one prayed for had been accorded to the mission of the Church Missionary Society situated at Metlakatla.126

Tomlinson’s request was processed quickly. An announcement was published in a newspaper on 1 September 1869, which was signed by Trutch, informing the public that a tract of land of approximately 4,000 acres on the northern shore of the Nass River was being surveyed. In October, Trutch replied directly to Tomlinson informing him that the Governor of British Columbia, Frederick Seymour, was pleased to authorize the use of land he had requested. Given the colonial state’s previous support for missionary activity, this was hardly surprising.

However, while the government of British Columbia continued to be willing to support missionary work, a shift in policy was evident. Trutch informed Tomlinson that the land was not to be granted to the CMS for free, as had been done with Metlakatla and

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126 Tomlinson quoted in Patterson II, Mission on the Nass, 52.
other missions, but rather leased to the CMS agent for a seven year period at the rate of ten dollars per year. Tomlinson was angry. While thanking Trutch for the government’s assistance, he wrote:

With respect to the lease of the ground to be procured by the C.M.S. I would wish to make a few remarks. The C.M.S. sends forth its labourers to teach not only the distinctive doctrines of Christianity but also the practice of it and to further in every way the civilization and moral improvement of the natives. To overthrow dark superstition and plant instead Christian truth to change the natives from ignorant, bloodthirsty, cruel savages into quiet useful subjects of our Gracious Queen has been the object held out to those whom the Society sends forth as its agents. Two stations (Metlakatla and Kinkelith) have been opened and buildings erected for the purpose of carrying out his object…

Tomlinson went on to protest that as missionaries promoted peace between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples and given the previous support granted to Metlakatla and other missions like St. Mary’s, the government should further support the mission at Kinkelith. The uncertainty of the lease was not desirable and placed the financial burden solely on the missionary society and its agents in the field.

Speaking for the colonial government of British Columbia, Trutch saw the situation differently. In the late 1860s there continued to be a number of conflicts between Indigenous peoples, traders, and settlers along the Northwest Coast. While Governor Seymour at times hesitated in responding to every incident in a timely manner, he did increasingly call on gunships to patrol the North West Coast and impressed upon Indigenous groups the authority of the colonial regime. As had already been established in the Indian War in Washington Territory in the mid-1850s, the Fraser Canyon War of 1858, and the Tsilhqot'in War in 1864, conflicts with Indigenous peoples were expensive and threatened the safety and stability of the emerging settler society. The colonial

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127 Tomlinson to Trutch, 25 January 1870 quoted in Patterson II, Mission on the Nass, 52.
regime was thus keen on having missionaries play a role in containing the threat through their preachings and teachings, easing colonial anxieties. However, the state continued to have its doubts about far-flung missions, fearing that they could also potentially stir up bad feelings among Indigenous groups. A delicate balance was required. Missionary activity was only good if it helped solidify settler control. Moreover, the united colony of British Columbia was riddled with financial problems and was looking for ways to make money. One such way was to charge rents on the Indigenous lands the colonial regime had, effectively, stolen and claimed as property of the Crown. In this context, Trutch addressed Tomlinson’s concerns with a measure of skepticism:

And here it may be observed that however admirable the spirit and intention of such Mission Stations and however valuable their humanizing influences in many cases on the surrounding savage tribes, tending directly to the discontinuance of barbarous customs such as have given rise to the outrages and disturbances under reference, it is questionable how far the establishment of such posts should be encouraged in situations so remote from the centre of Government as Kincolith, while a field for missionary labour extending for four hundred miles southward along the coast from Metlakatla remains entirely unoccupied.

It would appear more judicious and advisable that Missionary enterprise should radiate gradually from the centre of civilization instead of isolating itself at once at points like Kincolith on the utmost verge of the Colony. So long, however, as that Station is continued it must, most assuredly, be held under the protection of the Government, but it is evident that the very remoteness alone of such posts render efficient protection a matter of much practical difficulty, and in many cases on the Colonial Government considerable embarrassment and pecuniary outlay.  

Like the concerns Douglas expressed to the Colonial Office in the early 1850s in relation to the Catholic missionary Lempfrit, Trutch’s response to Tomlinson reveals that the colonial regime continued to be willing to support, fund, and direct missionary activity,

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but in ways that ultimately facilitated colonial-capitalist social formation. Trutch’s fear was that Tomlinson’s work among the Nisga’a would create unnecessary antagonisms that could draw the colonial government into conflict with Indigenous peoples and risk the stability of a growing settler society in the Pacific Northwest. Nevertheless, Tomlinson, like other Anglican, Methodist, and Catholic missionaries, continued to spread the gospel without significant state assistance in British Columbia into the 1870s, when the colony joined Canadian confederation and Dominion government’s willingness to fund new schools for Indigenous children profoundly altered the missionary landscape.

Conclusion

Throughout the colonial period, the governments of Vancouver Island and British Columbia played an active role in inviting, directing, and supporting early missionary work among Indigenous peoples as part of a larger strategy of Indigenous containment. By 1870, however, it was clear that changes to the colonial situation were on the horizon. Increased settlement was bringing settlers into greater contact with Indigenous peoples and conflicts ensued over land and rights to game and resources as the capitalist economy developed. Largely ad hoc policies were no longer adequate. In January 1870, Trutch responded to a letter by Mr. William Green of the Aboriginal Protection Society who criticized the colonial government for its lack of consistent Indian policy. On the defensive, Trutch stated, “On the contrary for the past ten years at least during which I have resided in this colony – the Government appears to me to have shown the extent of its powers to protect and befriend the native race and its declared policy has been that the Aborigines should in all material respects be on the same footing in the eye of the law as
people of European descent – and that they should be encouraged to live amongst the
white settlers on the country and so by their example be induced to adopt habits of
civilization.” Truch stated, “I will only remark further on the general subject of the
condition of the Indians in the Colony that it is unhesitatingly acknowledged to be the
particular responsibility of government to use every endeavour to promote the civilization
– education – and ultimate Christianization of the native races within our territory and
that any practical scheme for advancing their object which it would be within the scope
of the pecuniary ability of the colony to carry into effect would be adopted with
alacrity.” In reality, as was evidenced by Trutch’s denial of the pecuniary support
requested by Good and Tomlinson, by the late 1860s the colonial state no longer found it
“practical” to grant free tracts of land to missionaries, especially when a rent on stolen
land could be charged.

While Trutch acknowledged the colony’s responsibility to promote the education
of Indigenous peoples, he suggested that the financial burden should rest with missionary
societies and individual agents. He explained, “At present this good work is almost
exclusively in the hands of the missionaries of various denominations and much has been
effected by their labors in those stations where the Indians under their teaching are not
subject to those temptations which seem almost inevitably to overcome them when
brought into close contact with the white population of the towns.” In terms of the

129 Joseph Trutch, Memorandum on a letter treating on condition of the Indians in Vancouver Island
addressed to the Secretary of the Aborigines Protection Society by Mr. Wm. Green, 13 January 1870, TNA,
CO 60/32, 66–67.
130 Joseph Trutch, Memorandum on a letter treating on condition of the Indians in Vancouver Island
addressed to the Secretary of the Aborigines Protection Society by Mr. Wm. Green, 13 January 1870, TNA,
CO 60/32, 80–81.
131 Joseph Trutch, Memorandum on a letter treating on condition of the Indians in Vancouver Island
addressed to the Secretary of the Aborigines Protection Society by Mr. Wm. Green, 13 January 1870, TNA,
CO 60/32, 80.
colonial regime’s involvement in supporting these missionary efforts, Trutch stated, “But the government although giving cordially to these missions every countenance and moral support in its power has found it impractical to grant them any pecuniary aid from the consideration that by doing so it would be involved in the invidious position of appearing to give special state aid to particular religious bodies.”  

Either Trutch was unaware of the level of earlier support given to Methodist, Catholic, and Protestant missionaries by Douglas and Seymour, or he was simply lying to normalize his recent reversal of policy. Trutch did have a history of ignoring or deliberately misrepresenting previous colonial policies regarding Indigenous peoples, especially relating to land claims. Indeed, this chapter has shown that the governments of Vancouver Island and British Columbia actively supported missionary efforts, though admittedly in different forms and to varying extents.

Trutch’s comments illustrate an important policy shift that was pronounced by the late 1860s. On the eve of British Columbia joining Canadian Confederation, it was clear that the colonial government no longer wanted to directly fund missionary work. The state, of course, continued to encourage missionary labour but did so in ways that ultimately shifted financial responsibility back onto missionary and religious societies. Moral support for missionaries, instead of financial assistance, was the new directive of the colonial state. In the 1870s, the responsibility of further supporting religious bodies active in schooling Indigenous peoples for containment in British Columbia fell largely to the newly founded federal government. The federal government’s involvement in

132 Joseph Trutch, Memorandum on a letter treating on condition of the Indians in Vancouver Island addressed to the Secretary of the Aborigines Protection Society by Mr. Wm. Green, 13 January 1870, TNA, CO 60/32, 80–81.
providing education for Indigenous peoples in British Columbia will be more closely examined in Chapter Five. However, it is crucial to first explore how the new provincial government of British Columbia consolidated colonial power and expanded a system of public education in the context of an emerging capitalist economy.
CHAPTER 4: SCHOOLS FOR THE PEOPLE: PUBLIC SCHOOLING IN THE PACIFIC PROVINCE, 1871-1900

In July 1871, the colony of British Columbia became the sixth province to join the Dominion of Canada. British Columbia’s decision to confederate with Canada was mainly a matter of convenience: the beleaguered British colony was broke. By the early 1870s, in the wake of the gold rush boom of the 1850s and 1860s, the colony’s economy was severely depressed and its debt continued to soar as officials struggled to support a scattered and growing settler population. Meanwhile, the Dominion of Canada made it clear that western expansion was one of its primary objectives by its purchase of Rupert’s Land in 1869, its efforts to put down the resulting Mètis resistance led by Louis Riel, and its creation of the new province of Manitoba in 1870. In joining confederation, then, British Columbia shed its colonial status and had its extensive debts wiped clean by the new federal government. In return, the Dominion of Canada secured a much-desired Pacific port and promised to pay for, and build, a national railway to link the westernmost province to the rest of Canada and connect east-west trade to international markets in the Pacific.¹

With its account books back in the black and a prospective flood of immigrants soon to be following a completed national railway west to take advantage of the province’s rich resources, British Columbia once again set its sights on schemes to assist

¹ For more on the importance of railways to capitalist development see, for example, Rosa Luxemburg, The Accumulation of Capital (London: Routledge, 2003), 420–425.
colonial-capitalist social formation. One aspect of this provincial boosterism was the newly-configured state’s efforts to transform the colonial era’s notoriously imperfect system of common schooling into an organized form of free public education available to children in all parts of the province. To assist this educational shift designed to attract new settlers to the region, the provincial legislature passed *An Act Respecting Public Schools (The Public Schools Act, 1872)* on 11 April 1872. Victoria’s *The Daily British Colonist* praised the government’s commitment to a new system of public schooling:

> The deplorable condition of the public schools—perhaps it would be more correct to say the absence of them—long constituted one of British Columbia’s chief grievances, and no measure was more distinctly or more unanimously demanded than a system of free non-sectarian education. Listening to the unequivocal voice of the people, it was one of the earliest acts of the new government to introduce a bill for the purpose of supplying this great public want…the new School Bill, although making no pretentions to perfection, was admitted on all hands to present a fair basis to work upon; and the country rejoiced at the near prospect of having a free education placed within the reach of every child.²

Within only a few years, the state shifted education in British Columbia from sporadic, fee-based common schools to a centralized system of free public schools lauded by many as “schools of the people.”³

British Columbia’s new school system, however, was not one “of the people,” by the people, but rather was one designed and controlled specifically by the state “for the people” to help integrate the province’s growing population into an emerging capitalist settler society. The state used schooling to assist social formation. This chapter highlights the changing educational circumstances and arrangements of public schooling between 1870 and 1900 while also emphasizing continuity in state strategy. *The Daily British Colonist*’s claim that free schools were a “great public want” is not denied, but the view

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² *The Daily British Colonist*, 18 April 1872, 3.
³ British Columbia, *Annual Report of the Public Schools 1874* (hereafter ARPS), 1874, 32.
that the state simply listened to the “unequivocal voice of the people” and was pressured into providing free public schooling is contested. In the 1860s, the colonial government of British Columbia held fast to the idea that parents had to shoulder part of the financial burden of education. By the early 1870s, however, it was clear that if the state wanted to win over parents with a new standardized system of state-controlled schooling that could be used to train children for their duties as citizens of an industrial settler society, it would need to pay. British Columbia’s schooling compromise came with a price tag. Yet, the state still needed to follow through on its promise to build a new educational system and ensure the population’s compliance.

Starting in 1872, the government assembled what was called at the time “educational machinery”—new schools, teachers, administrators, curriculum—capable of expanding state-controlled schooling throughout the vast province. Yet, the state still needed to follow through on its promise to build a new educational system and ensure the population’s compliance.

Gradually state officials put this new machinery in motion and worked to increase its efficiency as well as the overall number of children attending the province’s new public schools. However, while growing numbers of children, including Indigenous students, attended the new provincial schools, the average attendance rate continued to hover at only 50 per cent for much of the nineteenth century. In an effort to increase average attendance, the state started to target parent’s resistance to schooling by educating them on its necessity for their children’s social mobility. The state also increased expectations for teachers, who were trained, certified, and surveilled as part of the state’s efforts to expand its educational reach in British Columbia. In addition, as the school system became an entrenched part of society the state introduced curriculum changes that sought to better train students for their proper roles as citizens in an emerging capitalist settler society. In

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4 The Daily British Colonist, 18 April 1872, 3.
tracing these developments, this chapter shows how the state built a new public school system and manufactured consent to extend its legitimacy and power over the people as part of a strategy to facilitate colonial-capitalist social formation.

**A New Act to Follow**

The poor condition of British Columbia’s common school system was well known to parents and observers during the colonial period. By the late 1860s and early 1870s, there were 21 schools in operation throughout the entire colony accommodating about one fifth of all school-aged children.\(^5\) In response to growing demands for reform, the colonial government passed *The Common School Ordinance, 1869* and the *Schools Amendment Ordinance, 1870* as temporary stopgap measures to appease public demand for a state-funded system of free, non-denominational education. The state agreed to pay a $500 grant to each eligible school to cover basic costs including a teacher’s salary, but communities were still on the hook for additional expenses that were met by charging fees and issuing local levies. However, the colony’s depressed financial climate meant that many settlers refused to pay and some parents simply kept their children at home to avoid fees. Thus, only a few short years of the revamped common school system proved “sufficient to demonstrate the fact that nothing short of an absolutely Free School system would meet the requirements of the Colony.”\(^6\)

With is debts paid by the federal government, the new provincial government was no longer able to claim financial difficulties as a reason to download school finances onto parents and guardians. The state thus assembled an ambitious plan to provide free public

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\(^6\) ARPS 1872, 2.
schooling for all children, based loosely on educational models in existence elsewhere in North America and Europe. Instead of a dramatic departure from the state’s educational philosophy from the colonial period, British Columbia’s system of public schooling was more of a continuation of the state’s promotion of education as an important agent of colonial-capitalist social formation. Therefore, at a time when state and settler power were still tenuous, the state decided that it was necessary to pay for an expanded public school system. Free schools were an incentive for people to stay in British Columbia to work and help build the legitimacy of settlers’ claims to a vast territory already inhabited by numerous Indigenous Nations. Free, state-supported public schools could support the kind of population growth and social formation needed to shift the balance of power away from Indigenous peoples and in favour of settlers.

*The Public School Act, 1872* established a strong foundation for British Columbia’s new public school system, which would essentially remain unaltered until the 1930s. The new provincial legislation contained 38 sections and formed the basis for a highly centralized educational system for the establishment, maintenance, and management of public schools throughout the Pacific province. Forty thousand dollars from the General Revenue of the Province was initially set aside for educational purposes in what was called the “Public School Fund.” The state covered the full costs of education in the vast province. The Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council was charged with overseeing public schools and was empowered to establish new school districts where a petition was made by parents showing “at least fifteen children of school age, between five and sixteen years of age” to be resident in and around a community to warrant the

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8 For more on the school act see, Johnson, *A History of Public Education in British Columbia.*
creation of a school district. The first Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council, Joseph Trutch, was charged with appointing “six fit and proper persons” to staff a Board of Education to serve under the position of Lieutenant Governor. The duties of the Board of Education were wide-ranging and included everything from the appointment and examination of suitable teachers to the selection of textbooks.

The most important school-related duty of the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council was to appoint a Superintendent of Education to serve as ex officio Chairman of the Board of Education and to oversee the school system. Promoting and supervising British Columbia’s new public schools was, essentially, entrusted to this one office-holder. Accordingly, the Superintendent was provided with a generous annual salary of two thousand dollars as well as additional travel funds. The appointee had to be suitably accredited; candidates were eligible for the position only if they held a first class teaching certificate granted from outside the province and possessed at least five years teaching experience. The act further specified that the Superintendent should visit all provincial public schools, at least once a year, to examine and report on the material and pedagogical conditions. As well, the Superintendent had to report on the “order and discipline observed, the system of instruction pursued, the mode of keeping the school registers, the average attendance of pupils, the character and condition of the buildings and premises, and to give such advice as he may judge proper.” Lastly, the Superintendent was required to provide a public lecture on education in each school district, with an eye to stimulating greater public interest in schooling. The Superintendent, in essence, was both a provincial administrator and a crucial school

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9 The Public Schools Act, 1872, NA, CO 61/3, 40.
10 The Public School Act, 1872, NA, CO 61/3, 45.
promoter. As will be made clear in this chapter, some parents still needed to be sold on the merits of state schooling.

At the local level, the Superintendent of Education was assisted in educational matters by trustees and teachers. Trustees were elected at the local level to be responsible for “the custody of and safe-keeping of all Public School property.”

In their roles as trustees, these officials could call community school meetings, receive and distribute school funds, and generally act as liaisons between local interests and the Superintendent.

*The Public School Act, 1872* gave instructions to teachers in terms of their duties:

*Public School Teachers and Their Duties*

1. To teach diligently and faithfully all the branches required to be taught in the School, according to the terms of his engagement with the Trustees, and according to the rules and regulations adopted by the Board of Education.

2. To keep the daily, weekly, and monthly registers of the School.

3. To maintain proper order and discipline in his School, according to the authorized forms and regulations.

4. To keep a visitor’s book (which the Trustees shall provide) and enter therein the visits made to his School, and to present such book to such visitor, and request him to make therein any remarks suggested by his visits.

5. At all times, when desired by them, to give to Trustees and visitors access to the registers and visitors’ book appertaining to the School, and upon his leaving the School to deliver up the same to the order of the Trustees.

6. To have at the end of each half-year public examinations of his school, of which he shall give due notice to the Trustees of the school, and through his pupils to their parents and guardians.

7. To furnish to the Superintendent of Education, when desired, any information which it may be in his power to give respecting anything connected with the operation of his school, or in anywise affecting its interests or character.

8. To classify the pupils according to their respective abilities.

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11 *The Public School Act, 1872*, NA, CO 61/3, 45.
From the start, then, teachers were to occupy the lowest rung on British Columbia’s educational hierarchy (second only to students) while being entirely responsible for staffing the front line of provincial schools.

Overall, The Public Schools Act, 1872 established the framework for British Columbia’s “schooling machinery.”13 The school act initiated a highly centralized and hierarchical educational system controlled by the state and managed, at the top, by the Board of Education and Superintendent of Education, on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor, with trustees in the middle and teachers at the bottom. Teachers were instructed to operate their schools on strictly non-sectarian principles and were to inculcate the highest possible morality. The stated objective of the new schooling system was to “give every child in the Province such knowledge as will fit him to become a useful and intelligent citizen in after years.”14 By agreeing to pay for the new system, the state usurped responsibility from parents for determining the kind of “knowledge” best suitable for making children into future useful citizens. With only a handful of amendments receiving assent between 1872 and 1930, The Public School Act, 1872 laid the foundation for mass state schooling in British Columbia for the next fifty years.

Setting the Schooling Machinery in Motion

With the new school act in place by the spring of 1872, all that remained was for the state to set the new educational machinery in motion throughout the Province. This task was entrusted to British Columbia’s first appointed Superintendent of Education, John Jessop. Growing up in the United Province of Canada (Canada West), Jessop

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13 ARPS 1872, 2.
14 Johnson, A History of Public Education in British Columbia, 45.
became acquainted with that colony’s system of state-supported common schooling and the ideas of infamous school promoter Egerton Ryerson. In 1859, after receiving his teaching certificate from the Toronto Normal School and teaching for a few years, Jessop, at the age of thirty, put his school career on hold to travel west to try to strike it rich in the Cariboo gold fields in the new colony of British Columbia. Jessop’s efforts, like those of his many fellow gold-seekers, did not pan out. Disheartened, Jessop decided to stay in the area and turn his attention once again to schooling. However, as there were only a handful of colony-assisted schools in Vancouver Island in the 1860s, Jessop stepped out on his own and opened a successful non-sectarian private school in Victoria in 1861. When the free school system was initiated in Vancouver Island in the mid-1860s, the colonial government appointed Jessop as Principal of the Victoria schools.

Jessop quickly developed a reputation as a school expert. With the colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia merging in 1866, Jessop, like other educational promoters such as Amor De Cosmos, criticized Governor Seymour for opposing the extension of Vancouver Island’s system of free schools throughout the entire colony. When it became clear that the state was going to compromise on the issue of fee-based common schooling and implement free public schools in the early 1870s, Jessop was consulted on drafts of The Public Schools Act, 1872. Given his background, Jessop emerged as a natural candidate for the new position of Superintendent of Education. In only a few short years, Jessop’s politicking secured him a coveted position of privilege. Like his idol, Ryerson, Jessop was given the opportunity to forge a system of free public

For more on Ryerson see, for example, J.H. Putman, Egerton Ryerson and Education in Upper Canada (Toronto: W. Briggs, 1912). While Ryerson is often lauded for his efforts to bring public schooling to Upper Canada, John Milloy also points out in “A National Crime”: The Canadian Government and the Residential School System, 1879–1986 (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1999) that Ryerson strongly favoured separate schooling for Indigenous children, 15–16.
 schools. However, the Superintendent of Education was not just a symbolic position of political patronage; it was to be a post of gruelling toil, travel, and, as he would unhappily discover later, paper-pushing. Indeed, *The Public School Act, 1872* essentially made the Superintendent “a one-man department, the central official in a highly centralized system.”

Jessop set British Columbia’s schooling machinery in motion while serving as superintendent between 1872 and 1878.

In the spring and summer of 1872, Jessop embarked on his first tour of duty as superintendent to personally inspect and survey the province’s existing schools and to gain the necessary knowledge to plan for the system’s expansion to support increased social formation. Jessop’s travel was extensive and his observations offer a window into the early public schools in British Columbia. In his first year on the job, Jessop logged hundreds of kilometres on foot and on horseback and by canoe, as well as other modes of transport. He examined schools as far north as Barkerville and as far east as the Okanagan Valley. Jessop aimed to collect information on each school in an effort to simplify schooling administration as well as to make British Columbia’s schooling

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16 Johnson argues that Jessop “had a clear vision of a great public education system for his province and he drove himself and his teachers to achieve it. Without a doubt he was the ‘Ryerson of British Columbia.’” It is likely that Jessop would have viewed such praise as the highest compliment. F. Henry Johnson, *John Jessop: Goldseeker and Educator; Founder of the British Columbia School System* (Vancouver: Mitchell Press Limited, 1971), 53.

population, in the words of James C. Scott, “legible” to the state and thus more easily controllable.¹⁸

Jessop’s preliminary findings, which he recorded in the Supplementary Report of the Public Schools of British Columbia for 1872, presented a sketch of an incomplete schooling system for a scattered population. The initial picture was bleak. As of 31 July 1872, Jessop reported only fourteen schools in operation throughout the province, a drop from the 21 common schools apparently in existence just a year earlier. The number of students on the school registers was 286 with an aggregate attendance of 201; of this number, 117 were boys and 84 were girls. Jessop suggested, though, that the total school population for the year, counting children between the ages of five and sixteen, was 534. Given his best estimates, Jessop reported that throughout the province there was a total of 1,768 children of school age and that “there are, therefore, fully 900 children not attending any school; more than 200 are in the Upper Country, where, at present, there are no schools within their reach.”¹⁹ Jessop had his work cut out for him.

¹⁸ James C. Scott argues that “legibility” is a central problem in statecraft. In Seeing Like a State, he argues that pre-modern states were essentially “blind” and could not fully comprehend, understand, or “translate” the populations they sought to control. This led to a series of unsuccessful state interventions. More modern states tried to “simplify” populations and make them more “legible,” and thus controllable, by creating disparate practices such as imposing permanent last names, standardizing weights, registers, and languages, and keeping population statistics. However, he also argues that such “state simplifications” did not always succeed either: “designed or planned social order is necessarily schematic; it always ignores essential features of any real, functioning social order” (6). James C. Scott, Seeing Like A State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999).

¹⁹ British Columbia, Supplementary Report of the Public Schools of British Columbia by the Superintendent of Education for the Year 1872, 36. It is unclear whether Jessop’s estimates included Indigenous children living in or near local settlements. As will be argued later in this chapter, Indigenous children certainly attended British Columbia’s public schools. However, it is uncertain how many of these children attended school and how they were counted in relation to their white classmates. The census information for the 1870s is speculative at best; the white population in this period was approximately 8,576 or only 23.7 percent of the total population whereas the Indigenous population was approximately 25,661 or 70.8 percent. It seems likely that Jessop’s number of 1,768 included some Indigenous children, especially those near remote settlements or those who were considered “half-breeds,” but Jessop’s count certainly is not reflective of the total number of Indigenous and settler children in the province. See Jean Barman, The West Beyond the West: A History of British Columbia (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 429.
One of Jessop’s first orders of business was to issue a clear set of *Rules and Regulations for the Government of Public Schools in the Province of British Columbia*. These general operating procedures appeared as an appendix in the first annual school report in British Columbia for the year ending 31 July 1872. According to this document, the hours of teaching in each school should be from 9:00 AM to 12:00 noon and from 1:00 PM to 3:30 PM from April to September, and from 9:30 AM to 12:00 noon and from 1:00PM to 3:00PM from October to March. Teachers were to allow a fifteen-minute recess in the middle of each morning session. There were two annual vacation periods: students were given one month’s leave in either July or August, to be decided by local Trustees, and two weeks at Christmas and New Year. While schools were operated on strictly non-sectarian principles, the rules deemed it acceptable to open and close each school day with a reading of the Lord’s Prayer. Jessop imposed these rules and regulations as a way of standardizing the schooling experience throughout the province.

In addition to stressing the need for greater order and regularity, Jessop’s early reports highlighted the difficulty of securing children’s regular attendance at schools, an issue that plagued the system well into the twentieth century. Many parents wanted the state to pay for public schooling but very few actually chose to send their children to public schools regularly. The state saw this as unacceptable. *The Public School Act, 1872* stated that children between the ages of five and sixteen should attend school. While common schools in populated areas such as Victoria and New Westminster successfully became public schools, the true test of the new system was to expand schooling to all parts of the province. The state would only benefit from paying for schooling if it could

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be used as an effective means to mould the population in its own image. As a result, Jessop and the Board of Education tried to increase attendance by passing new legislation. In 1873, the provincial government amended the school act to empower trustees to create by-laws compelling parents and guardians to send their children of school age to school.\(^{21}\) In 1874, the government passed a new set of *Rules and Regulations* that attempted, among other things, to tie teachers’ salaries to attendance records to force teachers to pressure parents to send their children.\(^{22}\) In 1876, the government amended the school act again to give the existing measures more teeth by stipulating that every child between the ages of seven and twelve “shall attend some school or be otherwise educated for six months in every year.”\(^{23}\) To enforce this amendment, the government empowered the Superintendent of Education and local trustees to lodge formal complaints with a magistrate against any parent or guardian refusing to send their school-age children to school. If charged and found guilty, a parent or guardian could be fined up to 10 dollars.\(^{24}\) These initial efforts were mostly unsuccessful, though, as trustees, teachers, and parents found ways to either subvert or ignore the state’s attempts to increase attendance. The nascent state was not yet strong enough to simply coerce the population into accepting state-controlled schooling; it had to cultivate consent.\(^{25}\)

\(^{21}\) MacLaurin, “The History of Education in the Crown Colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia and in the Province of British Columbia,” 151.

\(^{22}\) See “1874 Rules and Regulations,” The Homeroom: British Columbia’s History of Education Website: http://www2.viu.ca/homeroom/content/topics/Statutes/rules74.htm.


\(^{24}\) MacLaurin, “The History of Education in the Crown Colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia and in the Province of British Columbia,” 143.

The issue of poor attendance was particularly pronounced in the interior regions of the province, and therefore rural regions attracted Jessop’s attention.\textsuperscript{26} The Public School Act, 1872 did not contain a “compulsory clause” making attendance mandatory because officials rightly felt that such a clause could not yet be properly enforced, especially in remote areas. Thus, rural schooling needed to be improved before the state would consider making children’s attendance at schools compulsory. In 1872, Jessop explained the predicament:

The question as to how the educational wants of the interior of this Province are to be supplied, is one that I approach under a deep sense of the responsibility involved in attempting to deal with it. There are 402 children, of all ages, scattered along the Fraser, from Yale to Quesnel; the waggon road from Lytton to Barkerville; the Thompson, south and north branches, from Cache Creek to Shuswap and Clearwater; from Duck & Pringles, along the Okanagan Lake, down to Osoyoos; along the Nicola Valley and Similkameen. Of these 287 are of school age, that is from 5 to 16; and 115 under five years.

The remoteness of the province’s rural population was one issue, but the distance between scattered settlements, which made it difficult to choose one suitable location for a school in some areas, also contributed to the problem of schooling in remote areas. Jessop lamented, “The families to which these children belong, with the exception of a few in Lytton, Lilooet, and Clinton, are living from two or three to twenty-five or thirty miles apart. They are, therefore, so isolated as to render it almost impracticable to get more than from six to ten together at any one point.”\textsuperscript{27} The conundrum of rural schooling was the major issue confronting Jessop’s early tenure as Superintendent.

\textsuperscript{26} For more on rural schooling in British Columbia see for example, Joan Adams and Beck Thomas,\textit{ Floating Schools and Frozen Inkwells: The One-Room Schools of British Columbia} (Vancouver: Harbour Publishing, 1985); Bernard C. Gillie, “When it was easy to go teaching,”\textit{ British Columbia Historical News} 29 (Winter 1995): 19–22.

\textsuperscript{27} \textit{Supplementary Report of the Public Schools of British Columbia by the Superintendent of Education for the Year 1872}, 38.
Setting the school machinery in motion in the vast reaches of British Columbia required ingenuity. As a school in every small hamlet across the new province was impractical given the province’s sparse population, a number of people began discussing the possibility of establishing a boarding facility, or network of boarding schools, to service the educational needs of rural areas. Jessop outlined the basic premise of such a plan as early as 1872:

A system of Schools, combining the Day and Boarding, might be considered practicable; each District to embrace an area of from forty to one hundred miles. A school house, large enough for the District, and a teacher’s residence, capable of accommodating a few boarders, in addition to those children who might attend as day scholars, or board with the settlers contiguous to the school, to be built by the Government. The teacher to be a married man, who, with his wife, should take the management, responsibility, and expense of the Boarding department, under certain restrictions and supervision, and look to parents and guardians for a fair remuneration.28

Unlike other free public schools in the province, parents and guardians who were eager to send their children to the boarding school would be charged an additional fee to cover room and board. The idea, of course, was to extend educational opportunities to those children in the far-corners of the province in the most economical way; however, the underlying ambition of such a project, as Jessop explained, was actually to put the state “in a position to insert a COMPULSORY CLAUSE in the School Act; which certainly will become a necessity as soon as the means of education can be placed within the reach of every family; and ought even now to be applied to all districts where, at great expense to the General Revenue, public schools are established and maintained.”29 Thus, Jessop’s

28 Supplementary Report of the Public Schools of British Columbia by the Superintendent of Education for the Year 1872, 38–39.
29 Supplementary Report of the Public Schools of British Columbia by the Superintendent of Education for the Year 1872, 39.
efforts to increase school attendance in rural parts of the province must be understood as part of a larger strategy to expand the reach of state schooling.

In 1874, rancher-turned-politician Charles Augustus Semlin introduced *An Act Respecting the Management of Public Boarding Schools* to the legislature to open a single boarding school at Cache Creek in the interior of the province. While the act passed, the resulting school was mired in controversy from the beginning. First, Jessop and the Board of Education preferred that the school be located in Kamloops but the school was instead built at Cache Creek. Second, Semlin and two local land owners were appointed as the trustees rather than elected, as the public schools act outlined. And third, to add insult to injury, the two land owners who “donated” land to the school soon started charging rent.\(^3\) Despite these initial difficulties, the Cache Creek Boarding School officially opened on 2 June 1874. Most of the students at Cache Creek were thought to be starting “at the very bottom of the ladder of learning.”\(^3\) Jessop, though, explained the institution’s early advances: “The school has been going on for some days previously, while arrangements were being made for the opening; eighteen pupils, of both sexes, were then enrolled. The number has since increased to thirty-six, about as many as the building can accommodate. The success of the Boarding School experiment is now placed beyond a doubt.”\(^3\)

However, new controversy soon surrounded the boarding school at Cache Creek. After only two years, Jessop fired the original school master, Mr. T.T. Jones when it was discovered that he was neglecting his teaching duties and moonlighting as a teamster. Moreover, the Joneses let the material condition of the building slip into disrepair. After

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\(^{31}\) ARPS 1874-1875, 98.  
\(^{32}\) ARPS 1874, 22.
Jessop hired new school staff, everything appeared to be going smoothly at the Cache Creek school until the spring of 1877, when Mr. Irwin, the new principal, uncovered details that would shock the Victorian sensibilities of the province:

About three weeks ago I made the discovery that the girls had, on at least two occasions in the dead of night, left their dormitory, passed down stairs, unfastened the door between the dining room and the passage leading to the boys’ dormitory and entered the boys’; and that they had as often admitted the boys into their dormitory. (I may explain that the door before alluded to was fastened from the inside of the dining room so as to prevent the boys reaching the girls’ room. I never for a moment supposed the girls would be the aggressors). The first offence happened sometime before Christmas; and it was repeated some six weeks ago. I may also explain that the discovery was made through a quarrel arising among the girls, some of the smaller and not guilty ones, through spite, informed Mrs. Irwin on the guilty ones. Otherwise, I am convinced from the slyness with which these irregularities were carried on and from the untruthfulness of the children when previously questioned that they might have continued for a much greater period undetected.\textsuperscript{33}

That supposed sexual hijinks were happening under the noses of school officials was unfathomable to many British Columbians and, indeed, to the local trustees who in turn released the staff. Jessop, though, supported the firings to douse the flames of controversy and protect the school system from ill repute. Thanks in part to his actions, Jessop managed to save the reputation of Cache Creek school and keep the rural schooling experiment going.\textsuperscript{34}

Nevertheless, Jessop become a lightning rod for criticism during the scandal. Moreover, in 1876 he was targeted by the Leader of the Opposition, George Anthony


\textsuperscript{34} The Cache Creek boarding school remained in operation until a decline in enrolment, due to population growth and the opening of new rural schools, precipitated its closure in 1890.
Walkem, for having an unnecessarily extravagant salary. Jessop managed to weather the storm of provincial politics for two more years, but when Walkem won the 1878 provincial election in June, Jessop did not last the summer. On 23 August, a resolution was placed before the house to reduce the Superintendent’s salary by almost half. As justification, Walkem suggested that Jessop was “unfit in point of education for the position he held” and, as proof, cited the Superintendent’s annual school report for 1876, which apparently contained over 300 grammatical “blunders.” In Walkem’s eyes, errors of grammar and syntax were suitable grounds for dismissal, especially for the province’s most important education official. Instead of accepting the pay cut and continuing to work under Walkem, Jessop resigned on 26 August 1878, thus bringing the first era of British Columbia’s public schooling to a close.

In review, Jessop’s reign as British Columbia’s first Superintendent of Education proved to be moderately successful. Jessop set the province’s schooling machinery in motion. The number of school districts in the province almost doubled from 25 in 1872-1873 to 45 in 1877-1878. Similar growth was recorded in the aggregate enrolment in British Columbia schools, which doubled from 1,028 to 2,198. The average daily attendance rose from 55.93 percent to 64.49 percent by 1877-1878. This growth is partly explained by modest population gains and because schooling was becoming more accessible and standardized throughout the province, thanks to Jessop’s attention to rural schooling. Moreover, the state maintained its commitment to fully fund the school

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35 In 1876, Robert Beaven, who had been the Chief Commissioner of Lands and Workers under Walkem alleged that Jessop was taking home a salary of $5000. Jessop was defended in the legislature by John Mara who pointed out that Jessop’s salary was $2000 plus approximately $500 in travel expenses necessary for his school inspections, thus only half of what Beaven had presumed. For more see Johnson, John Jessop, 152.

36 Johnson, John Jessop, 156.
system, with the total schooling expenditure rising slightly from $36,763.77 to $43,334.01 between 1872 and 1878. But while the new public school system was an improvement over the chaotic colonial common schools, more work was needed still to truly bring British Columbia’s schooling population to the point it could justify the educational expenditure.

**Expanding British Columbia’s Educational Reach**

From the late 1870s to 1900, the work of expanding British Columbia’s educational reach continued with the ultimate goal of spreading state schooling to all corners of the province to assist colonial-capitalist social formation. In the lead-up to Jessop’s resignation in August 1878, the Board of Education resigned to protest Walkem’s attempt to bully Jessop. Waiting until Jessop was out of the picture, the Walkem administration then responded by passing new education legislation in the form of the *Public Schools Act, 1879*. This act abolished the six-person board and effectively transferred its duties to the Superintendent of Education, who, now with a reduced salary, would be assisted only by two staff members to help with the examination and certification of provincial teachers. Such changes made British Columbia’s schooling system even more centralized and concentrated educational power in the position of Superintendent.

Indeed, the Superintendent position, still at the top of British Columbia’s emerging educational hierarchy, remained essential to expanding the schooling project. Colin Campbell McKenzie and Stephen D. Pope picked up where Jessop left off in terms

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37 ARPS 1877-1878, 183.
of expanding British Columbia’s system of public schooling.\textsuperscript{38} McKenzie was born at Fort Vancouver in Oregon Territory in 1836 to métis fur-trading parents, and he was educated in Winnipeg and at St. Peter’s College in Cambridge, UK.\textsuperscript{39} Like Jessop before him, McKenzie served as Principal of the Victoria Boy’s Public School from 1872 until being appointed as Superintendent in September 1878. In 1884, Pope succeeded McKenzie, the latter moving on to higher levels of provincial politics. Pope remained British Columbia’s Superintendent of Education until 1899. Unlike McKenzie’s fur trade upbringing, Pope was born in the United States, in Philadelphia on 13 October 1842. His family moved to the United Province of Canada where he attended grammar school before enrolling at Queen’s University in Kingston in 1857, at the age of fourteen. Known around campus as “The Boy Bachelor,” having graduated before turning 19, Pope soon chose the vocation of schoolmaster. Arriving in Victoria in the summer of 1876, Pope quickly rose through the ranks of British Columbia’s schooling elite before being promoted to Superintendent in 1884. Expanding British Columbia’s system of state schooling was largely left in the hands of McKenzie and Pope until a Council of Public Instruction was formed in 1891. The Council of Public Instruction, in which the Superintendent served as \textit{ex-officio} secretary, took on the responsibilities of setting public school curriculum, authorizing suitable textbooks for use in classrooms, creating school


\textsuperscript{39} John A. Gemmill, ed., \textit{The Canadian Parliamentary Companion} (Ottawa: J. Durie and Son, 1891), 373.
districts and defining boundaries, and laying out the general rules and regulations for the school.\textsuperscript{40}

Gradually, in the 1880s and 1890s, new administrative positions were created and new forms of reporting and surveillance were established to assist the Superintendent to increase the overall reach and capacity of British Columbia’s public school system. To lighten the duties of the Superintendent, the 1879 shake-up by the Walkem administration empowered the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council to appoint, on a temporary basis, a school inspector. The school inspector position was to take over the Superintendent’s travel duties and was responsible for reporting to the latter on “the process and average attendance of the pupils, the discipline and management of the school, the system of education pursued, the mode of keeping the school registers, the condition of the buildings and premises and such other matters as he may deem advisable in furtherance of the interests of the School.”\textsuperscript{41} Ideally, inspectors were to play an important role in being the eyes and ears of the educational state, performing the necessary surveillance to ensure that the school machinery continued to run smoothly. Historical sociologist Bruce Curtis has outlined how methods of inspecting and reporting on schools were essential tools and techniques of rule used to facilitate colonial-capitalist social formation in

\textsuperscript{40} MacLaurin, “The History of Education in the Crown Colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia and in the Province of British Columbia,” 155.

\textsuperscript{41} Johnson, \textit{A History of Public Education in British Columbia}, 90.
In reflecting on the importance of having school inspectors, Pope surmised, “The advantages to both teachers and pupils of frequent inspection are manifold but the schools of the province are so scattered that it is impossible for the superintendent to spend the time necessary in order to visit as frequently as desirable even those schools that are easily accessible. The increased clerical work of this office, consequent upon the enlarged number of schools, precludes the possibility of his giving to them that amount of supervision which he knows to be indispensable to their efficiency.”

David Wilson, previously employed as the Principal of the Boys’ School in New Westminster, was hired in 1887, and by the late 1890s inspectors played invaluable roles in surveying British Columbia’s schools and ensuring compliance.

By the 1899-1900 school year there were four inspectors performing the required schooling surveillance. D. Wilson, S.B. Netherby, F.M Cowperthwaite, and William Brown divided up the different regions of the province to inspect schools located everywhere from Vancouver Island, the Gulf Islands, and the Lower Mainland to the Fraser Canyon, Okanagan Valley, and the eastern Kootenay region. British Columbia’s inspectors kept the Superintendent informed on the condition of public schools and

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42 See Bruce Curtis, *True Government by Choice Men? Inspection, Education, and State Formation in Canada West* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992). For more on the role of school inspectors in British Columbia see, Thomas Fleming, “‘Our Boys in the Field.’” Fleming argues that most of the nineteenth century inspectors were born and educated outside of British Columbia and came to the province as teachers after confederation. They were, according to Fleming, “gentlemen, scholars and individuals of high character who took great pride in the province’s educational development and the quality of school leaders it attracted. Indeed, the early inspectors were a group of learned men, certainly when compared to others at this time” (290). Moreover, many teachers were attracted to the position of inspector because it offered not only job security “but also opportunities for administrative advancement, for playing a larger role in the provincial school system, and for travel. After teaching assignments in isolated, ungraded schools, or administrative positions in small-town high schools, few principals could resist the lure of the open road” (292).

commented on the progress being made in each institution. Ruminating on the value of such inspections to the overall growth and reach of the schooling system, Netherby stated in his report for 1898-1899:

I believe the inspection which endeavours to encourage and help both teacher and pupil of vastly more service to the school than that which brings the weak points in teaching forward or the discovery of what the pupils do not know. By observing the usual work of the school one learns how, and in what spirit, instruction is given, what influences are working upon the moral, mental, and physical powers of the pupils, in what manner they apply themselves, and whether the surroundings of the school are such as will develop or crush the nobler instincts of their nature.\(^{44}\)

Inspections and school examinations often came as a surprise to teachers to keep the latter on their toes and to ensure their continued diligence in teaching the provincial curriculum. Journalist Jan Gould recounted one such experience:

At Spences Bridge in the 1890s, young teacher Miss Hopkins ran over to her neighbour, Jessie Ann Smith, complaining that a strange man appeared to be following her everywhere. What should she do? Mrs. Smith advised her to open the school as usual and promised to send her husband to the school to keep an eye on everything. No sooner had Miss Hopkins started the day’s work than she glanced out of the window and saw the stranger marching up the school path. With the help of the larger children in the class, she pushed hard against the door. The stranger pushed from the other side. Harder and harder she and the children pushed until finally they gave up and stepped back. The stranger staggered into the room and fell to the floor: ‘I am Mr. Cowperthwaite,’ he said slowly as he picked himself up. ‘The school inspector.’\(^{45}\)

As will be discussed below, teachers in the nineteenth century had little job security and so could not afford to be ill prepared or behind in their lessons; a poor inspection could be extremely detrimental. Thus, the fear of surprise reviews applied pressure to teachers to always be prepared.

\(^{44}\) ARPS 1898-1899, 259.
\(^{45}\) Schooling in British Columbia, 1849-2005, 83.
Inspections also served another purpose. During their visits, inspectors collected valuable information and statistics on matters such as attendance. The state used statistics derived from inspections to devise new techniques to try to combat truancy and induce greater compliance from the people. Statistics made schooling legible to the state. For example, by the late 1880s the state instructed teachers to keep detailed school records as well as complete monthly reports to be forwarded up the chain of command to the Secretary of the Board of School Trustees. Instructions for such reporting were included in the annual school report for the 1881-1882 school year:

**DIRECTIONS FOR MAKING UP THE REGISTER AND THE MONTHLY REPORTS**

At the commencement of the School year (August), the teacher shall give to each pupil his or her Register Number for the year or for each part of the year as he or she is enrolled in the school or in the division of the school. The Register number shall be the cardinal numbers 1, 2, 3, 4 &c., consecutively, and without omission. The same Register Number shall not be given to any two pupils, so that the highest Register Number in use shall always indicate the number of pupils enrolled.

In addition to assigning each student a number and keeping track of their daily attendance at school, the teacher had to document each child’s age. In effect, such reporting provided the state with information useful for planning educational matters and, as James C. Scott has suggested, for devising strategies of simplification and “legibility” to more effectively monitor and manage the population.

Overall, the educational structures that McKenzie and Pope put in place between 1879 and 1900 allowed British Columbia’s public school system to expand its reach and accommodate a spike in population leading up to, and especially following, the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway. In 1882, four years before the CPR was completed, there were 48 school districts with an aggregate enrolment of 2,571, an
average daily attendance of 1,367, and an attendance percentage of only 53.16. Not even ten years later, by 1891, there were 141 school districts with an aggregate enrolment of 9,260, an average daily attendance of 5,134.91. By the school year of 1899-1900, there were 231 school districts with an aggregate enrolment of 21,531. British Columbia’s classrooms swelled with new students.

**Students: Classroom Composition**

Like the common schools of the colonial period, British Columbia’s new public school classrooms accommodated a student body that reflected the province’s heterogeneous population. As a result, classrooms proved to be important laboratories of socialization that sorted children, both formally and informally, according to class, gender, and race and fixed their places in the hierarchy of British Columbia’s emerging capitalist patriarchal settler society. While we know a lot about the number of schools, school districts, and the number of children regularly attending schools, statistics were not kept about the individual identities of most schoolchildren; however, existing partial evidence provides glimpses into the class, gender, and racialized dynamics of British Columbia’s expanding public school system.

Concerning class, British Columbia’s public schools were officially open to all social classes, but informally the vast majority of students were likely of working-class origin. More affluent parents who could afford to pay tuition fees or who preferred denominational to secular education sent their children to separate private schools in the province. Private schools, as Jean Barman and John Porter have argued, served to
socialize the elite in British Columbia as they did in the rest of Canada.\textsuperscript{46} For those parents unable or unwilling to pay private fees, public schools were simply the best for educating their children in hopes that they could attain the necessary knowledge and skills to advance in society. Although her focus is on schooling in Upper Canada, historian Alison Prentice argues that nineteenth-century education was “at once the best means to rise and the only real insurance against social and economic decline.”\textsuperscript{47} Moreover, she contends that public schooling was often pushed by the state as being open to all classes as a way of brokering a social peace between the rich and poor. Nevertheless, Prentice maintains that rather than abolishing class inequality, public schools normalized the unequal relations of capitalism as being the result of a fair and open competition for social mobility.

While little is known about the class identities of British Columbia’s schoolchildren, historian John Belshaw confirms Prentice’s view of early education amongst nineteenth-century miners in Vancouver Island. Many miners, argues Belshaw, saw public schooling as a project pushed by elites as a way to undercut the local family economy and to break up informal methods of education in which parents passed down necessary information and training directly to their children.\textsuperscript{48} Put simply, for many working-class families, children’s labour was seen as more remunerative than their


attendance at school. Public schooling was not yet part of miners’ “strategies of survival.”

Nevertheless, miners’ children found their way to public schools for a number of reasons. In the event of a strike, for example, children could be encouraged to attend school. As well, Belshaw argues that employers slowly started hiring Asian workers instead of miners’ daughters for certain jobs and thus the later were encouraged to attend school to better their prospects. In the main, Belshaw argues that many mining families remained skeptical about the benefits of British Columbia’s public schooling. By the 1890s, however, as British Columbia’s compulsory clause gained traction, working-class resistance to schooling was weakened, and the threat of financial penalties likely forced working-class parents to comply and send their children to school to be educated. Many working-class parents simply could not afford to pay the fines to keep their children at home, even if they wanted to. Within a generation, working-class parents in British Columbia embraced public schooling as an essential means of social mobility for their children. This set the stage for the introduction of manual training programmes into schools by 1900, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

British Columbia’s classrooms were also profoundly gendered spaces. In the 1870s, the state still felt public pressure to keep girls and boys in separate classrooms, and ideally in entirely different schools. There is evidence to suggest that this practice continued in some early public schools, such as in the Nanaimo School District. In fact, *The Public School Act, 1872* stipulated that the Board of Education had the power to “establish a separate School for females in any District where they may deem it expedient to do so; and such School, when so established, may be presided over by a female

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49 Belshaw, *Colonization and Community*, 212.
Teacher or Teachers, but otherwise shall be subject to the same obligations and regulations as Public Schools generally under this Act.”\textsuperscript{50} This reflected the prominent Victorian notion that the separation of the sexes, pedagogically and otherwise, was best practice. However, poor conditions in separate schools were often the result. In his annual report for 1875-1876, Jessop outlined such a situation in a separate school for girls in Victoria: “The girls are still closely confined in the inconvenient and badly ventilated building on Broughton Street, with scarcely a foot of breathing room outside the schoolhouse, except on the public street. In the heat of summer the close, impure atmosphere in the building…cannot be otherwise than deleterious to the health of both pupils and teachers; while in the cold and damp of winter the absolute necessity for so many open windows generates violent colds, which are equally, if not more injurious.” Jessop concluded, “Better accommodation must be provided, at an early day, for the constantly increasing number of pupils seeking admission to the girls’ department of the public school.”\textsuperscript{51}

The practice of gender segregation in British Columbia’s public schools, however, was soon challenged. In 1877, a letter to the editor of \textit{The Daily British Colonist} outlined the issue: “Is the world to stand still and must man go on considering himself to be the lord of creation, and woman to be a silly, simple creature fitted only to administer in his holiday hours to his wishes? And must woman go on quietly accepting her position of dependency upon man, looking to him as her master and guide, a being of higher order than herself? If so, then let me Lord Bishop and you, Mr. Editor, put the brakes upon the wheels of progress by continuing to teach boys and girls in separate educational

\textsuperscript{50} \textit{The Public School Act, 1872}, NA, CO 61/3, 41.
\textsuperscript{51} ARPS 1875-1876, 25.
establishments.” The sharply worded letter, possibly written anonymously by Victoria school teacher and suffragist Agnes Deans Cameron, continued: “But if we are to march forward and break down the senseless division walls that exist between male and female in the formation of society, then the system of teaching boys and girls in the same classes is more calculated to accomplish the object than anything I know….It seems strange that when the most impossible-of-change conservatism of the old world should be giving away before the progress of the age, and admitting the superiority of the mixed system that you, sir, should be so laggard in the ideas as to wish to hold on to medieval and oriental customs.”

Public pressure dovetailed with economic necessity to establish mixed gender classrooms as the norm throughout the province by the 1880s. Many school districts, especially those in remote locations, struggled to maintain the required number of pupils to keep the school open, let alone to qualify for separate departments based on gender.

Overall, British Columbia’s total schooling population was fairly equal in terms of boys’ and girls’ attendance. In the supplementary school report for 1872, Jessop claimed that the total attendance was 534 children. He clarified that of this total the “number of boys attending the public schools as per returns, which are very incomplete, [was] 250.” The number of girls recorded was 162. For every school year in the 1872-1900 period, boys outnumbered girls in school attendance; however, the gender gap started to narrow by 1900. In 1899-1900 the reported total school population was 21,531;

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52 The Daily British Colonist, 28 April 1877, 2. Agnes Deans Cameron was a school teacher, administrator, journalist, and suffragist. In 1894, Cameron was selected as the Principal of the South Park School, making her one of the first women to hold an important educational administrative position in the province. She subsequently was a strong advocate for women’s rights and constantly stuck up for female teachers in particular. Later in life, Cameron was the first white woman to reach the Arctic Ocean and she wrote a best-selling book about her adventure. See Agnes Deans Cameron, The New North: Being some Account of a Woman’s Journey Through Canada to the Arctic (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1910).
and the number of boys was 11,076 and the number of girls was 10,455. While these numbers suggest approximate gender parity in terms of schooling opportunity, it must be kept in mind that it is likely that boys continued to have special access to higher education as a gateway to highly sought-after professions and upward social mobility while girls were often accepted into high schools to train them to become school teachers.

While British Columbia’s growing classrooms were mixed in terms of students’ class backgrounds and gender, the issue of race proved to be more complicated. Officially, the colonial era practice of allowing students of all racial backgrounds to attend common schools continued in provincial public schools. With Confederation, however, Indigenous peoples became the responsibility of the federal government and the province was not, officially, supposed to provide for their education. Yet, as Chapter 5 will discuss in more detail, in the 1870s and 1880s the federal government lacked the power, influence, and staff to adequately take control of “Indian Affairs” in the Pacific province. Thus, in the main, the past practice of Indigenous students attending public schools continued despite widespread confusion on the part of many local Trustees and teachers.

There are ample references that confirm that Indigenous children continued to attend British Columbia schools. Jessop’s detailed diary of his first visits to British Columbia’s early public schools is filled with references to Indigenous students. On 10 March 1874, Jessop visited Breyegers Bay School, finding only 6 students in attendance. In taking stock of the children of eligible school age, though, Jessop counted 23 in total, “3 whites” and “20 halfbreeds.” His reports from other schools, mostly on Vancouver

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53 Supplementary Report of the Public Schools of British Columbia by the Superintendent of Education for the Year 1872, 36; ARPS 1899-1900, 193.
Island, offered similar findings. Griffith settlement had 8 total children all of whom were “halfbreeds;” Maple Bay had “7 whites, 4 halfbreeds;” Cowichan Flat had “3 whites, 8 halfbreeds;” and at Gabriola Island Jessop “found 16 children in attendance. All halfbreeds but well-behaved.”

On the mainland, the situation was similar. In May 1876, Thomas S. of Lillooet wrote to Jessop explaining, “The majority of the scholars is half-breed children of the Cloothehmen, some of whom are at present living with whitemen, and some are not….all the half-breed children of school age that I know anything about with but one exception have attended the school.” A month later, Alex Deans wrote to Jessop to clarify that “there are 6 or 8 Indian children of school age in the immediate vicinity [of Lillooet] whose parents express a willingness” to send their children to public school. Similarly, in October Jane Trenaman, the teacher at Hope, wrote to Jessop informing him of “Indian” children attending her school:

Once again I have to trouble you as I am so inexperienced in school matters I do not know what I ought to do in the case.

It is this: a week ago an Indian boy sent another boy to me to get a book as he wanted to learn to read. I sold him the book and his cousin (a halfbreed coming to school) told me he wanted to go to the mission but his father would not allow it. So I told her if he…[wants] to learn he could come to school as long as he behaved properly. He has come ever since and is acquainting himself creditably….

Since then another Indian boy has come to me wanting to come. I permitted him to do so with the same conditions.

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54 Notes Regarding Superintendent of Education’s Visits to Schools, BCA, GR-1467, Vancouver Island, Board of Education, File 4.
55 Thomas S.[Sedire?] to John Jessop, 22 May 1876, BCA, GR-1445, B2017.
56 Alex Deans to John Jessop, 26 June 1876, BCA, GR-1445, B-2017.
It seems clear from such references that, officially or not, British Columbia’s public schools were open to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous children.

Because references to “race” are omitted from the annual school reports throughout the 1872-1900 period, it is almost impossible to discern exactly how many or what percentage of Indigenous children attended British Columbia’s public schools. It seems clear, though, that previous accounts have understated the case. One previously overlooked cluster of sources that can shed further light on the question of Indigenous children’s attendance in British Columbia public schools is photographs. Historians, as Carol Williams argues, need to be careful in using photographs as primary sources, especially when dealing with “race” in colonial contexts. Nevertheless, she contends that photographs are important sources that can augment and corroborate findings about colonial dynamics in settings such as the Pacific Northwest.

Textual evidence suggesting that Indigenous children attended British Columbia’s public schools throughout the nineteenth century is supported by numerous surviving

58 Jean Barman briefly traces this phenomenon in “Schooled for Inequality: The Education of British Columbia Aboriginal Children,” in Children, Teachers, and Schools in the History of British Columbia, eds. Jean Barman, Neil Sutherland, and J. Donald Wilson (Calgary: Detselig Enterprises Limited, 1995), 57–80. Barman’s chapter, while a crucial contribution, offers only a few scattered references to clear the path for different points about the rise of segregated schooling in the form of boarding and industrial schools. However, new research suggests that the practice of Indigenous children attending British Columbia’s public schools was less of an anomaly, especially in rural parts of the province. See Helen Raptis, “Blurring the Boundaries of Policy and Legislation in the Schooling of Indigenous Children in British Columbia, 1901-1951,” Historical Studies in Education 27, no. 2 (Fall 2015): 65–77.

59 Carol Williams, Framing the West: Race, Gender, and the Photographic Frontier in the Pacific Northwest (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003). Williams argues that much of the nineteenth century photography in the west “propagandistically served a utilitarian and fundamental purpose: to lure Euro-American immigrants into a region where the potential for indigenous resistance had supposedly been put to rest” (7). Photographs were an extension of the colonial project that attempted to make Indigenous peoples and territories knowable and thus controllable. As a result, she cautions: “One must approach the photographic artefact from an oblique angle to gain a more nuanced understanding of the contest of power that was at the heart of colonial encounters between Euro-American settlers and indigenous populations” (7). Williams, however, does not comment on school photographs, which were often taken as part of the state’s attempt to count, quantify, and legitimize the new system of public schools. That Indigenous peoples were caught up in this process was largely coincidence, although it is important to remember that all photographs are selective representations that result from decisions about what to include and exclude from the “frame.”
photographs of school children. For example, an image of the “Lower Nicola School”
around the Kamloops area circa 1875 depicts a teacher and a small class, with two
students who look “not quite/not white.”60 Similarly, in 1886 a school photograph was
taken of “whites and Indians” outside of the Hastings Sawmill School in Vancouver. This
image clearly shows a number of children with identifiably darker features in comparison
to some of their other classmates. Some of the boys in front and the girls in white dresses
on the right hand side by Mr. Palmer appear to be the “Indians” identified in the
photograph’s caption, which would not be unusual given that the Hastings Sawmill
employed a number of Indigenous men as longshore workers at the time.61

60 Homi K. Bhabha, “Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse,” October 28,
Discipleship: A Special Issue on Psychoanalysis (Spring 1984): 132.
61 For more on Indigenous longshore workers on Burrard Inlet see Andrew Parnaby, “‘The best men that
ever worked the lumber’: Aboriginal Longshoremen on Burrard Inlet, BC, 1863-1939,” The Canadian
“Lower Nicola School, built in 1875; Kamloops.” KMA Photo 534.

“Hastings Sawmill School, first school, 1873, whites and Indians. Mr Palmer, teacher on walk, approx date 1886.” BCA D-05546.
More than ten years later, in 1899, a picture of the first public school in Hazelton similarly shows a class outside the schoolhouse with a few students and an adult who appear to be of Indigenous descent. These sources, of course, are imperfect and partial reflections of “race,” but they further suggest that British Columbia’s public schools were not homogeneous spaces. Instead, British Columbia’s classrooms are best understood as contact zones and sites of mimicry.62 Bhabha argues that “not quite/not white” forms of colonial mimicry – as displayed in the preceding photographs – were confusing for colonizers and seen simultaneously as “resemblance and menace,” as being “against the rules and within them.”63

“Hazelton Public School.” BCA B-01336.

Indeed, at first the provincial government of British Columbia did not place any official restrictions on Indigenous children’s attendance in public schools. Given that schooling for Indigenous peoples was a federal responsibility, the issue of Indigenous children attending provincial public schools continued to be a matter of some confusion provincially and federally. In July 1884, Laurence Vankoughnet, Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, wrote to George W. Bunbridge, Deputy Minister of Justice, seeking clarification on whether or not the provincial government could impose a poll tax on Indigenous peoples not living on reserves. He also sought clarification on whether those living “like white people” could send their children to “attend the public schools in the province.”\(^\text{64}\) Bunbridge responded by confirming that that the Government of British Columbia could impose a poll tax on “Indians not residing on their reserves” and that such peoples possessed the “right to send their children to the public schools of the province.”\(^\text{65}\) On 11 August 1884, Superintendent Pope clarified to John Robson, former school promoter turned Premier, that the province’s public schools “are free to all without distinction of race or creed.”\(^\text{66}\) In specific relation to Indigenous children, Pope responded to a query raised by Thomas Holchey of the Merns public schools two years later, “As to admission of Indian children, allow me to state that they may be admitted as pupils.”\(^\text{67}\) Teachers frequently wrote to Pope for clarification on the question of admitting Indigenous students. Walter Hunter, a teacher in Lilooet, wrote to Pope asking, “There are a few bright looking native children here. Would it be alright if I got [sic] them to

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64 Laurence Vankoughnet to George W. Bunbridge, 2 July 1884, Library and Archives Canada (LAC), “Poll Tax,” Department of Justice Records, No 51/1884, 2–3.
attend the school. The attendance will be rather low this winter."\textsuperscript{68} By the late 1880s and early 1890s, however, a noticeable shift occurred. Pope began to change his tune. He wrote in a letter, “Indian children are wards of the Dominion Government and are not presumed to be entitled to attend the Public Schools of the Province.”\textsuperscript{69} In discussing a recent closure of a school in Port Essington, in which Pope had earlier discussed Indigenous children attending, he wrote to Reverend D. Jennings informing him that “I can assure you that the Department was unaware of the fact that a large proportion of the pupils, reported as being present, were Indians.”\textsuperscript{70} It is unclear if Pope was trying to calm Jennings down, or if Jennings was complaining that the province was hindering his attempts to establish a mission school. What is certain is that from this point forward, Pope’s position on the issue of Indigenous children’s attendance seemed to harden.

Nevertheless, on the ground, teachers and trustees continued to be uncertain of how to deal with Indigenous children, especially in regards the establishment of a new school. O.N. Hughett, the Secretary of the Genoa Trustees Board, wrote to Pope about a request to open a local school, “In sending you the list of children of school age we did not include any but white children, I wish to say, whether it will make any difference or not in the help of the government, that there are three Indian, and one half breed children that wish to attend the school when it is established.”\textsuperscript{71} A similar situation existed in Port Kells. M.E. Sheirs wrote to Pope in October 1891 about the attendance of “Indians” at the school: “very little time is required for Indian children beyond what is given to others in the same standing; and the children are quiet, tidy and more devoted to study than the

\textsuperscript{68} Walter Hunter, to Superintendent S.D. Pope, 7 August 1886, BCA, GR-449, B-2020.
\textsuperscript{69} S.D. Pope to ? 29 1889, UBC Microfilm, BCA, GR-450, Vol 178, R7377 Box 8509.
\textsuperscript{71} O.N. Hughett to S.D. Pope, 21 September 1891, GR-1445, BCA, B-2028.
average child. I asked the Trustees to ascertain if the other parents were willing that Indian children should attend this school and the report is favorable to their attendance.”

A month later, William McAdam, likely a trustee, wrote to clarify the issue as well, “With regard to the Indian children attending the Port Kells School permit me to say that all the requirements have been complied with…..And the rate-payers seem to be of the opinion that it is of advantage to the community if the young Indians who reside here was educated. Their [sic] is only two attending and as they have good character the Trustees have decided to let the two Indians attend school so long as they comply with the regulations, and the parents of the white children do not object, but in the event of noncompliance with regulations or if objections are made by the parents or guardians of other children that they are not in favor of the Indians attending the Trustees will take immediate steps to have the matter remedied.”

This letter not only suggests that Indigenous children were attending the school, but that settler parents felt that it was in the best interest of the community to encourage such attendance to bolster the school’s numbers. Pope’s exchange with school officials in Port Kells reveals that the common practice would be allowed to continue so as long as there were no disturbances or complaints.

One of the first recorded complaints regarding Indigenous children attending a public school was made in the fall of 1892 by Mr. White of Sooke, just south-west of Victoria. On 10 October, Pope wrote to the teacher in Sooke, J.J. Stephenson, informing him, “Complaint has been made by Mr White in regard to the sections of the Indian children attending your school. He says that they use the vilest of language outside the

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72 M.E. Sheirs to S.D. Pope, 13 October 1891, GR-1445, BCA, B-2028.
73 William McAdam to S.D. Pope, 27 November 1891, GR-1445, BCA B-2028.
school building, and incite other little boys to quarrel and fight.” In light of such accusations, Pope explained: “It is your duty to watch closely the actions of the Indian children who are permitted at present to attend the school, and to see to it that they do not by word or action violate any rule without receiving proper punishment. Should they continue in a course calculated to injure the school, you must report the matter to the Trustees, who will doubtless take prompt steps to put a stop to their attendance.”

The Trustees in Sooke were also made aware of Mr. White’s complaints, and Trustee Samuel Cutler explained to Pope that he hoped the children “will conduct themselves properly in future.” Apparently, Pope was pleased with a cautious course of action and proposed that the Indigenous children might be let out of school some time before the white children to avoid further conflict. Indeed, he clarified that “if the teacher considers such a course advisable in the interests of the school, there will be no objection to his allowing them to leave before the other pupils.”

For the time being, it appeared that the matter was solved.

But tensions in Sooke soon boiled over again. Before the beginning of the school year, on 1 August 1893, Pope wrote to Cutler clarifying that there was no “regulation on the matter” of Indigenous children attending British Columbia’s public schools and confirmed that the issue was “left entirely in the hands of the Board of Trustees.” Later that fall, however, Pope wrote to Cutler again, this time explaining that after discussing the matter with the Minister of Education, “I am directed to state that if any parent

74 S.D. Pope to J.J. Stephenson, 10 October 1892, UBC Microfilm, BCA, GR-450, Vol 18, R 7377 Box 8513, 731.
75 Samuel Cutler to S.D. Pope, 31 October 1892, GR-1445, BCA, B-2028.
76 S.D. Pope to Samuel Cutler, 2 November 1892, UBC Microfilm, BCA, GR-450, Vol 18, R 7377, Box 8513, 797.
77 S.D. Pope to Samuel Cutler, 1 August 1893, UBC Microfilm, BCA, GR-450, Vol 20, R7377, Box 8513, 312.
objects to the attendance of Indian children at a Public School, the Trustees must notify
the Teacher not to admit them as pupils.” Pope pointed out that such a position was
consistent with a circular on the question of Indian children’s attendance supposedly sent
out to Trustees on 3 October 1891. Concerning the details of the circular, Pope explained
that “the third condition on which Indian children could be admitted to the school is as
follows, ‘That the consent of the parents (other than Indians) sending children to the
school has been given.’ A ruling has now been made that in the event of any one parent
objecting to the attendance of such pupils, the teacher must not allow them to attend the
school.”78 Unfortunately a copy of the circular does not exist and there are only a few
mentions of such a document in the surviving Superintendent correspondence records.
Regardless, just a few weeks later, Pope wrote to Cutler clarifying “regulation made in
regard to the attendance of Indian children at Public Schools is in force.”79 Although it is
unclear what the end result was in Sooke, the complaints made by Mr. White forced
Pope’s hand; he was pressured to clarify the issue with the Minister of Education and, in
response, it was decided that parents not wishing their children to attend a school with
“Indians” could simply lodge a complaint and have the Indigenous children barred from
attending a particular school. Still, the issue was dealt with on a school-by-school basis.

Thus, by the early 1890s, a change in “custom” but not in law had occurred.
Indigenous children, likely no longer needed to meet the minimum enrolment
requirements for schools in light of British Columbia’s growing population, were being
pushed out of some, but clearly not all of, British Columbia schools and encouraged to

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78 S.D. Pope to Samuel Cutler, 27 October 1893, UBC Microfilm, BCA, GR-450, Vol 20, R7377, Box 8513, 680.
attend new boarding and industrial institutions set up by the federal government expressly for Indigenous peoples. Pope explained that the government’s new position to Miss R. Young, a teacher in Clinton, in early 1894: “allow me to say that Indian children can only attend a Public School on the conditions named in the circular inclosed, I would add that it has been decided that if a single parent objects to the attendance of Indian pupils, they cannot be permitted to attend.”

Pope noted to an Agassiz Trustee that only the names of “white and half-breed” children were to be included on the list of names of children able to attend a school if opened; “Indian children” he clarified “must not be counted.”

Similarly, Pope explained to C.F. Pound in St. Elmo that in order for a school to be established, “A petition signed by the parents and accompanied with list of at least fifteen children of school age between 6 and 16 must be forwarded. Indian children being wards of the Dominion Government cannot be included in such list.”

In June 1895, Pope wrote to Reverend Jennings regarding the re-opening of the public school in Port Essington and explained, “Indian children being wards of the Dominion Government cannot be counted in making application for a public school.”

Despite such pronouncements, however, Indigenous children continued to find their way into British Columbia’s public schools well into the twentieth century.

Overall, by the 1880s and 1890s, the state’s educational machinery was fully operational and increasing numbers of children were attending public schools. By 1899-1900 there was an aggregate enrolment of 21,531 with an average daily attendance of 13,

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80 S.D. Pope to Miss R. Young, 27 March 1894, UBC Microfilm, BCA, GR-450, Vol 21, R7377, Box 8513, 336.
81 S.D. Pope to R.J. Brough, 20 December 1893, UBC Microfilm, BCA, GR-450, Vol 20, R7377, Box 8513, 913.
82 S.D. Pope to C.F. Pound, 14 January 1895, UBC Microfilm, BCA, GR-450, Vol 23, R7377, Box 8516, 47.
438.41 and an average attendance percentage of 62.41, an improvement from just 55.45 percent in 1891. While these figures reflect British Columbia’s population growth after the completion of the CPR in 1886, and the resulting spike in enrolment, they also highlight a core concern of British Columbia’s educational system: attendance. Both average attendance and the percentage of attendance significantly lagged behind aggregate enrolment and this was seen as unacceptable by state officials who had to justify to the public the growing school expenditure, which rose from $37,763.77 in 1872-1873 to $284,909.10 just thirty years later. The primary objective of British Columbia’s school administrators, then, was to combat truancy and get more children attending school regularly. The expansion of public schooling in British Columbia in the late-nineteenth century became less about simply establishing “schools of the people” and more about disciplining the population, cultivating compliance, and creating the normalcy of mass, state schooling so it could be used to properly train children for the duties of citizenship in an industrial settler society.

**Taking Aim at Parents and Teachers**

While total school enrolment in British Columbia grew at an accelerated rate after the completion of the CPR in 1886, the average attendance only rose by 11 percent between 1881 and 1900, from 51.21 to just 61.41 percent. In the 1890-1891 school report, Superintendent Pope lamented, “The percentage of average attendance was 55.45. This is a very credible showing; however, when we take into consideration that fifty-five per cent of regular attendance means forty-five per cent of irregular attendance, it is to be
hoped that improvement in this respect will be made during the present school year.”  

By the 1880s, the state started to flex its muscles to try to increase attendance. In particular, Superintendent Pope cracked down on non-complying school districts. And if school districts failed to heed his warnings to ensure the proper enrolment, he was not afraid to pull the trigger: “As the average daily attendance of your school for the past month has fallen below the requirement of Statute, it is my duty to close the same forthwith. I regret the loss to the children of school facilities and trust that the Trustees will at an early day, be in a position to make application for the re-opening of the school, which they can do when they feel assured that the average daily attendance required by the school act (10) will be maintained.”

Despite the state’s best efforts to enforce attendance through threats of school closures, irregular attendance continued to plague the province. An inspector wrote to the Superintendent: “Irregularity of attendance, although decreasing year by year, still continues to be a hindrance to progress in many of our rural schools. This is no doubt frequently unavoidable at certain seasons of the year. By it, not only are those who have been absent unable to keep up with the classwork, but those who have been present are compelled to go over work already known, for the benefit of those absentees, or the teacher is obliged to devote additional care and attention to them by individual teaching.” Therefore, creative tactics were needed to more effectively wage the war on tardiness and truancy, and British Columbia’s educational officials targeted parents and teachers.

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84 ARPS 1890-1891, 176.
86 ARPS 1893-1894, 214.
Parents were perceived to be a big part of the attendance problem. As early as his the second annual school report, Jessop that argued support for schooling on the part of parents and guardians was crucial to the success of British Columbia’s public schools. He wrote, “A little judicious pressure brought to bear upon negligent parents in our school districts, by Trustees, will soon make chronic non-attendance almost a thing of the past. In several parts, public schools are entirely a new feature; and parents themselves, in some instances, require to be *educated*, in order properly to realize the fact that instruction is requisite of their offspring.” Jessop explained that “in my visiting and lecturing tour this autumn, I shall endeavour to awaken a more lively interest in the education of the young; to show parents and guardians that everything possible is being done for them, and that it is their bounden duty to avail themselves of the very great educational privileges already provided for the benefit and advancement of those committed to their charge. The steady progress made so far, is but an earnest of what may yet be done by promoting the spread of sound and useful knowledge among the youth of our land; who, in a few years, will take the place of those who are now actively charged in the bustle and business of life. A beginning has been made, and we believe a good one.” Parents, then, were to play a key role in facilitating the expansion of schooling in British Columbia.

It is important to point out that parents and guardians were not simply ignorant about the potential “educational privileges” of British Columbia’s public schools. Parental resistance to mass, compulsory schooling existed throughout the province and

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87 ARPS 1873, 13. Emphasis in original.
88 ARPS 1873, 13.
was partly responsible for irregular attendance. In the 1875-1876 school report Jessop cited an example of such resistance from North Saanich on Vancouver Island:

After a trail of nearly 12 months, the school in this district had to be discontinued on account of so few pupils in attendance. As the trustees have neglected to send in their annual report, I am not able to state exactly the number of school-going children, but there must be between 20 and 25. For the same reason I cannot tell what the average attendance for the year has been; but probably not more than six. On December 3 last, I found seven children at school, all that were on the register, it being examination day. On my next visit, April 14, there were five, one of whom was under school age. The persistent refusal of two heads of families, representing at least seven children of school age, neither of whom are more than two and a half miles from the school house, to send their children to the school, prevents its being reopened. The responsibility of a closed school rests upon these parties.\textsuperscript{89}

Poor weather, the need for family labour, and long distances to schools all contributed to some parents’ refusal to send their children to school regularly. Strained parent-teacher relations could also contribute to truancy. Pope wrote to Miss M.R. Smith about recent difficulties in the school district: “I regret that your relations with some of the parents of the district are not as pleasant as you would wish them to be. It is well for the teacher not to be too sensitive and to be willing to throw the mantle of charity over remarks made that are annoying or even offensive.”\textsuperscript{90}

Because parents and guardians played such an important role in their children’s lives, the state tried to train them as part of the war on truancy. Women, and mothers in particular, were specifically targeted in the state’s attempts to break down parental resistance. In the early 1880s, the school act was amended so that the franchise was extended to “the wife of every voter.” It was believed that such a move “contributed to

\textsuperscript{89} ARPS 1875-1876, 26.  
\textsuperscript{90} S.D. Pope to Miss M.R. Smith, 11 April 1894, UBC Microfilm, BCA, GR-450, Vol 21, R 7377, Box 8515, 435.
the awakening of no little enthusiasm in both civic and rural districts.” In 1890, legislation was also passed so that women could run and serve as elected school trustees, but only in city districts. In the school report for 1890-1891, it is suggested that the progress of pupils largely depends on the parents’ willingness to emphasize the importance of school by ensuring their child’s attendance: “Every parent is, or should be, solicitous for the progress of his children at school. The success of the child does not alone depend on the ability and energy of the teacher; the parent is a very important factor in the matter.” It was argued that “the rapid advancement of the pupil will be best assured when the parent unites with the teacher in efforts made to accomplish this end.”

The 1890-1891 annual school report laid out a number of additional points stressing parental responsibility. First, it was argued that children must regularly attend school because “a single day’s absence causes the loss of a day’s lessons, which cannot but discourage the pupil and disarrange the work of the teacher.” Moreover, “repeated absence has a demoralizing” cumulative effect, as students are placed at the disadvantage of having to continuously try to catch up with their more regular counterparts. It was stated that “it is the experience of teachers everywhere that those who are loudest in their complaints in regard to the failure of their children at examinations are those parents who have allowed their children to average one or two days’ absence for each week of the term.” The real concern regarding irregularity of attendance is summed up: “The allowing of children to be frequently absent from school on the merest semblance of an excuse, or on any avoidable pretext, tends to create in them a desire for freedom from the

91 ARPS 1883-1884, 152.  
92 ARPS 1890-1891, 261.  
93 ARPS 1890-1891, 261.
labours and restraints of the school-room, and too often causes the habit of irregular attendance to become chronic.”

But regular attendance was not enough on its own. Tardiness was also an issue. Thus, the second point raised was that “want of promptitude in arriving at the school is a loss to the pupil of possibly one or more recitations of lessons, disturbs those who were punctual, is an annoyance to the teacher, and, what is worst of all, tends to cultivate the wretched habit of procrastination. The habit of punctuality is essential to success.” Regularity and punctuality, ultimately, were seen as habits that must be passed down from parents to their children at home. Lastly, then, the report explains: “The proper preparation of home lessons is a duty which the pupil owes to himself, in order that he may make rapid progress in his studies.”

In summary, the report concludes that it was, in the end, parents’ responsibility to ensure that their children were present and properly prepared for school. The report stated, “The right performance of these three school duties on the part of the pupil in a great measure depends upon the parent. He who is anxious for his children to make rapid progress must also see to it that they attend with regularity, that their attendance is marked with punctuality, and that they properly prepare their home lessons.”

Additionally, parents and guardians should attempt to visit the school and cultivate respect for the schooling process as well as for the teacher. It was argued that “it should be borne in mind that the pupil must have a thorough respect for his teacher in order to receive the full benefits of his instruction; hence, parents should be careful not to speak of the teacher disapprovingly or disparagingly in the presence of their children.” For all of these reasons, it was concluded that: “the progress of the pupils depends little
less on the efforts of the parents than on those of the teacher” and for this reason it was suggested that “in a district possessing a really good school, it will be found that teacher and parent act together in securing the advancement of the pupils.”

Parents, then, needed to be educated about the benefits of schooling and brought on board to support the state’s efforts to successfully expand education throughout the province.

The state asked parents to play a pivotal role in preparing and sending their children to school, but teachers played the most important roles in British Columbia’s provincial public schools. Teachers were the glue that held the educational experiment together. As a result, teachers were highly regulated and supervised by the state. In the school report for 1872-1873, a detailed list of duties was issued for British Columbia’s teachers:

It shall be the duty of every Teacher of a Public School
1. To teach diligently and faithfully all the branches required to be taught in the School, according to the terms of his engagement with the Trustees, and according to the rules and regulations adopted by the Board of Education.
2. To keep the daily, weekly, and monthly registers of the School.
3. To maintain proper order and discipline in his School, according to the authorized forms and regulations…..
8. To classify the pupils according to their respective abilities.
9. To observe and impress upon the minds of the pupils, the great rule of regularity and order, -- A TIME AND PLACE FOR EVERYTHING, AND EVERYTHING IN ITS PROPER TIME AND PLACE.
10. To promote both by precept and example, CLEANLINESS, NEATNESS, and DECENCY. To personally inspect the children every morning, to see that they have their hands and faces washed, their hair combed, and clothes clean. The School apartments, too, should be swept and dusted every evening.
11. To pay the strictest attention to the morals and general conduct of the pupils; to omit no opportunity of inculcating the principles of TRUTH and HONESTY; the duties of respect to superiors, and obedience to all persons placed in authority over them.

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94 ARPS 1890-1891, 261–262.
95 ARPS 1872-1873, 48.
These are just a handful of the 20 duties required to be completed by every teacher in British Columbia.

All teachers were vitally important to British Columbia’s public schools; however, not all teachers were treated equally. The teaching profession was hierarchical and highly stratified by rank and status. Ranking was based on a rigorous certification process the state put in place to control and standardize teaching in the province. In the school report for 1872-1873, the superintendent laid out the “Rules for the Examination of Public School Teachers and Issuance of Certificates of Qualification.” To be certified as a teacher, potential candidates had to arrange an examination to be overseen by the Superintendent and one Board of Education member that would test the candidate on a number of branches of knowledge. The candidate could choose from a variety of subjects with different marks and certificates issued based on their scores. There were six levels of certification correlating to the percentage of correct answers: “First Class (A), 80 per cent.; First Class (B), 70 per cent.; Second Class (A), 60 per cent.; Second Class (B), 50 per cent.; Third Class (A), 40 per cent.; Third Class (B), 30 per cent.” Of the sixteen teachers employed in British Columbia in 1872, “eight held certificates from Board of Education, eight were teaching under temporary arrangements.” In addition, seven teachers who obtained certificates from other Canadian provinces and the US submitted their credentials for validation by the Board of Education, making the total number of

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97 ARPS 1872, 21.

98 ARPS 1872, 37.
accredited teachers twenty-three.\textsuperscript{99} As British Columbia’s population grew, however, so too did the number of candidates seeking professional teaching credentials. By the 1899-1900 school year there were a total of 218 teaching certificates issued in British Columbia: 15 First Class, Grade A; 13 First Class, Grade B; 56 Second Class, Grade A; 41 Second Class, Grade B; 10 Third Class, Grade A; and 83 Third Class, Grade B.\textsuperscript{100} Of the total number of candidates, 4 withdrew from the exam and 53 failed to obtain a certificate.

Teaching certificates not only qualified successful candidates to teach in British Columbia classrooms, but also dictated the wages teachers were due. First Class teachers received higher pay than teachers holding lesser certificates did. The 1872 school report listed a total of 29 teachers employed in British Columbia public schools. The highest paid teacher was future Superintendent Colin Campbell McKenzie at the Victoria City boy’s school who held a BA from Cambridge and a certificate from the Board of Education and thus received $100 per month. The lowest monthly salary, paid to seven teachers, was $40 per month, and most of these teachers held Third Class certificates issued from the Board of Education. The average salary for British Columbia school teachers in 1872 was $58. Unfortunately, the statistics on teacher salaries was not consistent over the 1872-1900 period, making direct comparisons difficult. However, according to the 1899-1900 school report 494 teachers were paid a total of $196,077. This means that the average teacher salary was approximately $396, or just $30 per month. While there were a few teachers listed as earning a monthly salary of $30, most teachers earned between $40 and $60 per month, with a few earning up to $125 monthly.

\textsuperscript{99} ARPS 1872, 1.
\textsuperscript{100} ARPS 1899-1900, 200.
to teach at high schools in places like Victoria and New Westminster. Overall, it appears that wages for educational work did not keep up with expanding educational opportunities.

While no statistics were kept regarding the ethnic background of teachers, the teaching profession was clearly stratified by gender. Teaching was historically a profession reserved for men but past practice was challenged by the many women seeking employment in British Columbia schools. In the second annual school report, Jessop surmised:

It is a generally conceded fact that female teachers, as a rule, possess greater aptitude for communicating knowledge, and are usually better disciplinarians, especially among young children, than males. Women’s mission is pre-eminently that of an educator. Her softening, refining, and elevating influence contributes largely to success in the schoolroom. Patient and painstaking, she rules through the affections; her authority being thus based upon love, this trait of character is reciprocated by those who she comes in contact….I feel no hesitancy in stating, therefore, that Trustees would advance the best interests of the rising generation by securing the services of efficient female teachers whenever and wherever they can be obtained.

As a result, more women entered the teaching profession in British Columbia. Of the 29 teachers listed in British Columbia’s public schools in 1872, 18 were men and 11 were women. Again, it is difficult to compare the gender breakdown of teachers, as accurate educational statistics were not kept. For example, the total listing of teachers for 1899-1900 was 494; however, the appended table of teachers lists approximately 245 men and 363 women. Women are easily identifiable as they are referred to as either “Miss” or “Mrs.” While more women were working as teachers, pay inequality based on gender continued to be the norm. In the nineteenth century, female teachers were highly valued

101 See Table C, ARPS 1899-1900, xxxix–li.
102 ARPS 1873, 7.
but poorly paid. At the Vancouver High School in 1899-1900, four male teachers with BA degrees were employed to teach divisions 1 through 4 and were remunerated at just over $100 per month. “Miss B.M. Hunt,” who also held a BA degree, was paid just $70 per month to teach the 5th division. At many provincial schools, whether primary or secondary, male teachers taught the first divisions at approximately $20 to $40 per month more than their female counterparts, who most often ranged in salary between $40 and $70 per month.\(^{104}\)

While there was a distinct pay gap between male and female teachers, overall schoolteachers were not paid particularly well relative to the importance of their positions to schooling success. In the school report of 1873, Superintendent Jessop commented on what he saw as the “Inadequacy of Teachers’ Salaries.” He wrote, “It will be seen by Table B that the average salary of teachers is $57.75 per month or $693 per annum. Had all the teachers been duly qualified according to law, the average would have been a little higher, as six schools were taught under temporary arrangements, at $40 per month. Fifty dollars, then, may be considered the minimum. It is with these particularly I wish now to deal; as more than one-half of all the schools in the Province do not at present command more than the sum…The evils of so-called cheap, and necessarily inefficient teaching, cannot be overestimated. Although our country schools are small, yet the time of each one of the pupils is as valuable as that of a pupil in the most efficient of our city schools; and the parent or guardian of the one contributes as much to the school fund as the parent or guardian of the other.”\(^{105}\) Jessop did not resolve the issue of inadequate teacher salaries and it seems that salaries remained relatively stagnant throughout the 1872-1900 period.

\(^{104}\) See Table C, ARPS 1899-1900, xxxix–li.

\(^{105}\) ARPS 1873, 6–7.
Despite teachers not receiving a meaningful boost in pay, the state nevertheless placed increasing emphasis on training teachers to be more effective. Teachers, like parents, needed to be educated by the state. In the school report for 1887-1888 it was declared that teachers in the province, for the most part, were “laboring with good results.” Yet, it was also acknowledged that improvements were needed: “While it is necessary to determine success or failure, it is equally important that, at the same time, the worker—the teacher—should receive encouragement and assistance, have defects pointed out, and improved methods suggested. Thus much benefit may be obtained from one annual visit, and it is equally to be expected that more frequent inspection would be proportionally helpful.”\(^{106}\) It was explained that teachers needed to learn how to embody the lessons they intended to impart on their pupils: “Let our teachers be themselves obedient to the laws which govern our schools—punctual in their attendance, polite in their behaviour—and they will have a right to ask that the pupils imitate them in these matters. If such lessons are learned in youth it is impossible to estimate the value of them in later years, both to the individual and to the nation.”\(^{107}\)

In short, teachers were expected to embody their lessons and be role models for their students. In the school report of 1896–1897, it was, again, emphasized that “The healthy tone of a school as to order maintained and discipline observed is due entirely to the worth and intelligence of the teacher. The maintenance of order is quite as essential a part of schoolwork as is the imparting of instruction and, to be effective, must be accompanied with good disciplinary methods. It should be borne in mind that the true object of discipline is to lead the pupil to learn self-control and to form right habits. It is,

\(^{106}\) ARPS 1887-1888, 177.

\(^{107}\) ARPS 1892-1893, 522.
therefore, the bounded duty of the teacher to train his pupils in all those elements which contribute to the formation of a good character. He should feel his responsibility for the inculcation of the many virtues that grace childhood, such as kindness, neatness, order, industry, obedience, truthfulness, honesty, politeness, patriotism etc., and he should recognize it to be as much his duty to have his pupils as familiar with the Golden Rule as with the Multiplication Table.”

Like parents, the state tried to educate teachers in specific ways that would entrench the school system as a powerful and well-attended institution capable of moulding succeeding generations of citizens in its own image.

Lessons of Legitimacy

Once certified to teach in a British Columbia public school, teachers were employed by the state to train the province’s children. Teachers were, of course, instructed by the superintendent, inspectors, trustees, and parents to take pains to emphasize the perceived foundations of a good education: reading, writing, and arithmetic. The approved curriculum for elementary schools was quite rudimentary in the beginning, and teachers constructed lesson plans based around textbooks and exercises in writing and comprehension. Within only a few weeks of his appointment in 1872, Jessop authorized a list of prescribed textbooks approved by the Board of Education for British Columbia public schools. By 1874, he reported that teachers in all the schools were using these textbooks. The prescribed textbooks, particularly the Canadian Series of School Books popularly known as The Red Series, reflected the religious, moral, political,
economic, social, and cultural ideas of nineteenth-century settler society. Indeed, historian Harro Van Brummelen argues that the majority of the texts authorized for British Columbia textbooks stressed to students the dignity of labour and the importance of religious devotion and overcoming hardships through sheer determination. According to their textbooks, children could “construct an ideal world for themselves. As long as they worked hard, obeyed the moral law, contributed to family life, were diligent in their studies and shunned the evils of alcohol and tobacco their lives were to be happy even if they were not wealthy.” Soon, however, it was realized that a basic elementary education was not enough to train children to take up their roles in an increasingly industrialized society.

As a result, the state created high schools and expanded the provincial curriculum. Some of the early common schools during the colonial period experimented with offering higher levels of education in subjects such as bookkeeping, algebra, and philosophy; however, it was not until 1874 that Jessop recommended that two high schools be established, one in Victoria and one in New Westminster. Such schools offered advanced education to promising pupils but also frequently served as “Training Institutes” for teachers, particularly female students, in the absence of a proper teacher’s college, or Normal School. Victoria High School opened its doors in August 1876 and the New

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110 The *Canadian Series of School Books* was a set of revised Irish National Readers with Canadian content that Egerton Ryerson introduced to Ontario schools in 1846 to counteract the various American readers in use at the time. The series consisted of different “readers” based in varying levels of literacy.


112 In the school report of 1896-1897, the Principal of the New Westminster High School explained, “The cleverest girls of New Westminster have from time to time been selected and placed as teachers in the common schools of this city. These young ladies while pupils of the High School, were carefully trained in the art and science of teaching; and so they came to work as well qualified as if they had been for six months or a year in a Normal School. Indeed, I am inclined to believe it is owing not a little to their faithfulness, prudence, and ability that the people here have so much confidence in their teachers, and think the schools of the Royal City are the best in the Province.” ARPS 1896-1897, 274.
Westminster High School welcomed its first cohort in the fall of 1886. As British Columbia’s population grew, demands for new high schools led to the creation of a school in Nanaimo in 1886 and Vancouver in 1890.\textsuperscript{113} In 1899, the Vancouver High School affiliated with McGill University in Montréal to offer limited means of post-secondary education; however, it was not until the early twentieth century that British Columbia established its own provincial university.

In addition to the creation of secondary education, a demand for manual training was clearly articulated by the early 1890s in British Columbia. Most children growing up in the late 1880s and 1890s were expected to take up their roles as wageworkers in the province’s resource and growing manufacturing sector, and it was deemed important to supplement children’s basic academic education with more specific industrial training. Moral lessons needed to be augmented with physical training. To orient students, mostly boys, for the demands of an industrializing society, more modern methods were needed.

One of the major influences shaping this kind of educational reform was the Macdonald-Robertson Movement. Starting in the 1880s, James Wilson Robertson had worked his way up in the federal civil service as a dairy and agricultural expert in the Department of Agriculture. He advocated more practical education be pursued in Ontario. In 1897, Robertson met William Christopher Macdonald, a Montréal tobacco tycoon who desired similar educational change. While the two differed sharply in many respects, they shared a mutual interest in school reform as a tool of social development. In particular, both men believed in the need for greater manual training in Canadian schools, which they thought would facilitate further colonial-capitalist nation-building. Robertson’s vision was aided by Macdonald’s sizable wealth, and together their efforts sparked a cross-country

\textsuperscript{113} Johnson, \textit{A History of Public Education in British Columbia}, 57-60.
movement for practical industrial training in schools. The basic plan was to purchase industrial machinery and provide the requisite salaries for professionals to teach children manual skills, mostly wood and metalwork, in select city schools. Overall, the aim of the Robertson-Macdonald experiment was to prove to provinces the distinct benefits of manual training in hopes that they would carry on the work indefinitely.

By the 1890s, Robertson and Macdonald’s ideas had spread as far as British Columbia. In an industrializing society, manual training, it was thought, could support the transition for many settler children from life on the land to a life of working for wages in shops and factories. Students needed to learn to labour. Upon hearing that the Superintendent would be in favour of such training in schools, Inspector Burns wrote in a report, “We note with pleasure, Honourable Sir, that….you also strongly favour the maintenance of Technical Schools, or Schools of Manual Training. That these schools would prove to be of incalculable benefit to those taking advantage of the opportunities afforded therein, there can be no doubt.” In November 1900, Professor Robertson visited British Columbia to make the necessary arrangements with the Education Department to introduce Manual Training in Vancouver and Victoria for a trial period of three years. The aim was to illustrate the usefulness of such training in orienting children to the demands of manual labour at an early age. If children were expected to grow up and contribute to the capitalist economy, it was reasoned that schools should play a role

114 Historian Neil Sutherland argues that Robertson and Macdonald did not invent the ideas of the new education, but rather they incorporated them as part of their educational movement and, in the process, introduced aspects of the new education to many Canadians for the first time. Indeed, Sutherland suggests that “Over the first decade of the twentieth century they gave Canadians practical demonstrations of such elements of the ‘new’ education as manual training, school gardening, nature study, domestic science, consolidated schools, and better methods of training teachers.” Sutherland, Children in English-Canadian Society: Framing the Twentieth Century Consensus (Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press 2000), 183.

115 ARPS 1893-1894, 306.
in preparing them for their future careers as workers. By 1900, the state agreed to support the development of industrial training as part of the school curriculum, which would be greatly expanded in the early twentieth century.

Manual training was not the only new school subject added to help support the emerging capitalist settler society. Canadian history was also introduced to shape national identity and pride by rationalizing colonial social formation as natural and inevitable. Given that Canada was a relatively new political entity, the study of history for most of the 1872-1900 period was essentially learning about English History. Consequently, the authorized textbooks had little to say about Canada, save for brief mentions of the Dominion’s membership in the British Empire. Even William Francis Collier’s authorized textbook *History of the British Empire* reserved little space for meaningful discussion of Canada’s imperial role. Canada was relegated to a brief account in a section on the “Colonies and Dependencies,” with just a short description of the different provinces of the Dominion of Canada. British Columbia, though, did merit mention: “British Columbia—Between the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific. Until 1858, it was a part of the Hudson Bay Territory. Then the discovery of gold attracted crowds of miners, and the country was organized as a British province. It was admitted into the Dominion in 1871. Capital, *New Westminster*. British Columbia includes Vancouver Island, the capital of which is *Victoria.*”\(^{116}\)

By the late 1880s, however, there was growing interest in Canadian history. Canadian history was officially added to the prescribed courses in 1887, specifically for high schools. History education was envisioned as a tool of colonial subject formation. It

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was explained in the school report of 1894-1895 that “the immediate object of the study, so far as the school is concerned, is to give the pupil some acquaintance with the history of his own country; so that he may sympathize with its traditions and its fame, appreciate its laws and institutions, and love its soil and inhabitants. According to this view, history, particularly that of one’s own country, furnishes the best training in patriotism. Encouragement should be given to anything that will aid in making prominent this aspect of a subject that has long been commended as part of the education of a good citizen.”

Despite history’s perceived usefulness, there was not a suitable textbook on Canadian History deemed worthy of authorizing for use in British Columbia schools. Other provinces shared this assessment. In 1892, at a meeting of the Dominion Education Association in Montreal, a scheme was formulated to create a new Canadian history textbook by way of national competition. W.H.P. Clement’s textbook, *The History of the Dominion of Canada*, which accentuated national unity, was eventually selected as winner. Fittingly, an authorized textbook which was part of the effort to promote and expand education as a colonizing force championed Canada’s colonial history as one of discovery, adventure, and unity building.

Indigenous peoples are given short shrift in Clement’s national narrative. In a section entitled, “The Indian Tribes of Canada,” he comments on the general “Character and Habits” of Indigenous peoples: “Upon the war-path he was cruel, tomahawking, scalping and torturing with fiendish ingenuity. A stoic fortitude when himself tortured was about his only heroic quality. In his own village among his own clansmen he spent

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117 ARPS 1894-1895, 212.
his time in gambling, story-telling, or taking part in some rude feast.” Furthermore, Clement explained that, on the whole, Canada has pursued a benevolent policy of colonization: “our relations with the aboriginal tribes have been, almost without exception, very friendly.” Overall, Clement’s history, like other history lessons, offers students a whitewashed account of the past that attempts to justify colonization and state-building as a natural and peaceful process that students must take up and continue for the good of the country.

The objectives of teaching, though, were not simply restricted to the acquisition of manual and mental skills and knowledge as laid out in lesson plans and textbooks. British Columbia also had what is known as a hidden curriculum. It was explained in the 1886-1887 school report that moral education was crucial; indeed, it was proclaimed that in provincial schools “the highest morality shall be inculcated.” It was, therefore, “incumbent on teachers to endeavour to implant moral principals in the hearts of their pupils as to carefully guard their physical welfare and intellectual development. He who does not strive to infuse into the minds of his pupils some germs of goodness, and a love for truth, honesty, and the other virtues, is a poor teacher indeed.” Often unwritten and unofficial, such lessons fostered children’s respect for authority and the status quo. In the 1892–1893 school report it was explained that: “school is merely a place of preparation, and that its chief advantage to the pupils is not so much in the lessons themselves, however valuable they may be, as in the habits of study and attention thereby formed; of cleanliness and order there learned; of obedience, punctuality and forethought there

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119 Collier, History of the British Empire, 9 and 95.
121 ARPS 1886-1887, 196.
required; and of temperance and morality there implanted into their very nature.”

Indeed, it was emphasized that “Every teacher should recognize the fact that the essentials to progress are good order and complete discipline.” Inspector Burns commented on the danger of “too great laxity in the discipline maintained. As it is evident that no good work can be done in any school without order and prompt obedience, it behoves each teacher to spare no pains to maintain these primary conditions of success. It is the duty of the teacher to train the pupils in these as well as to give them instruction; in fact, without these conditions, instruction cannot be properly given. The maintenance of order does not at all require harshness or severity, but requires the teacher to exercise a constant watchfulness over every detail, however insignificant; to have the work pre-arranged, and, especially with younger pupils, to have such a constant supervision of their work as will leave no time unoccupied, and consequently little leisure or opportunity to give trouble. In every instance where the teacher finds the least disorder, it would be well to try whether this fault cannot be remedied by some change in the programme before proceeding to any severe measures; but whatever may be the means adopted, let it never be forgotten in the school-room that ‘Discipline must be maintained.’”

The forming of good character around notions of respect for authority was an essential characteristic of the kinds of subjects the state saw as necessary to building a secure settler society.

While examples of student resistance to the socialization of schooling are rare, there are glimpses of non-compliance. Historian F. Henry Johnson claims that students at the Granville school in the 1870s and 1880s were “unruly” and made the teaching

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122 ARPS 1892-1893, 523.
123 ARPS 1886-1887, 195.
124 ARPS 1893-1894, 186.
assignment there a difficult one. Conditions worsened at the school to the point where the children were believed to have “hog-tied one teacher and then thrown him into the bush.”\(^{125}\) Other glimpses of student opposition are offered in the records kept concerning corporal punishment. For students not conforming in the classroom, repression was often the result. The kinds of punishment varied in form and frequency by school and teacher; however, it seems likely that some form of physical punishment—be it the strap or spanking—was used to police students in many of British Columbia’s classrooms. In the school report for 1894-1895, Superintendent Pope reported on the issue: “The number of cases of corporal punishment reported for the past school-year does not show any perceptible decrease. The number of cases reported for all the schools was 2, 446. These figures do not speak well for the teachers of those schools in which the rod would appear to be the chief means employed to obtain necessary discipline. It is very proper to state, however, that more than half of the cases of corporal punishment reported are credited to less than twenty schools; one Graded Rural School reporting 108 cases, and one Common School 91 cases.” Harsh punishment, then, was doled out unequally, with some unlucky students disproportionately paying the price. Pope continued, “It is to be feared that the use of the power of moral suasion in obtaining good government in the schools is neglected, in great part, by a few of our teachers. Physical force is certainly not the only nor the best means at the command of the teacher for securing good discipline. The teacher who uses moral suasion effectively in the government of his school will accomplish the best results, not only in the moral training of the pupils but in their intellectual advancement.”\(^{126}\) While the state preferred moral instruction as the chief

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\(^{126}\) ARPS 1894-1895, 201.
method of discipline, British Columbia’s children were certainly not spared the rod for creating their cultures and practices of resistance to the constraints of a rapidly expanding system of state-controlled public schooling.

**Conclusion**

By 1900, British Columbia’s new system of public schooling was accepted as an essential aspect of provincial development. After only a few years of witnessing the gradual expansion of the school system, *The Daily British Colonist* commended the state’s initial educational efforts. On 27 August 1878, an editorial captured the celebratory sentiment:

> Where before there were but half a dozen schools scattered over a wide expanse of territory, with teachers as fitful as the attendance where neither order, system, or regularity was observed; where the buildings were…dilapidated; where teachers and scholars came and went when and where they liked with a sovereign contempt for the timepiece; and where the education imparted was generally of a crude, backwoods character; we find order and system introduced with as fine schools and as excellent advantages for imparting instruction as are possessed by any Province in the Dominion.\(^{127}\)

Such triumphant assessments continued throughout the rest of the 1872-1900 period and are reflected in the annual school reports. In the 1899-1990 report, Inspector Netherby wrote, “The condition of the schools has never been more satisfactory than now. On the part of the teachers, with few exceptions, there is, and has been, a spirit of zeal and devotion to the interests of the pupils that is very gratifying, while skill in teaching is coming with experience and large acquaintance with the peculiarities of the minds to be

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\(^{127}\) *The Daily British Colonist*, 27 August 1878, 2.
instructed.” Moreover, he explained that “The pupils study diligently, are generally amenable to discipline, and are daily developing the better traits of character.”

In only thirty years, schooling in British Columbia shifted from a sporadic system of fee-based common schools with just over 500 students and a handful of schools and teachers, to a rapidly expanding system of public schools accommodating over 20,000 students and employing approximately 600 teachers. The expansion of British Columbia’s public schooling was controlled by a highly centralized educational bureaucracy and heavily directed by the Superintendent of Education and aided by a host of state agents including inspectors, trustees, and, in varying measures, parents and teachers. In the face of parental and even student resistance to mass schooling, the state deployed different strategies of surveillance and statistics to combat truancy and increase student attendance and school compliance generally. The overall goal of British Columbia’s state-controlled system of public schooling, then, was to school the people and teach them to consent and take their place—according to class, gender, and race—in ways that supported British Columbia’s emerging capitalist settler society.

128 ARPS 1899-1900, 201.
CHAPTER 5: “ESTABLISHED FOR THEIR BENEFIT”: NEW SCHEMES FOR SCHOOLING INDIGENOUS CHILDREN, 1871-1900

On 29 November 1882, “riotous proceedings” broke out in the Metlakatla mission on the Northwest Coast, and a dispute over control of the local school for Ts’msyan (Tsimshian) children served as the spark.¹ For twenty years, William Duncan, as one of the most respected missionaries on the west coast, had been left alone to rule in Metlakatla. His experiment of relocating Ts’msyan followers to a secluded settlement to provide them with uninterrupted training was backed by the Church Missionary Society and partially paid for by the colonial government of Vancouver Island. Duncan’s Metlakatla was held up as a model mission throughout much of the British Empire. His school, in particular, was revered, and when British Columbia joined confederation in 1871, the Dominion government gave him money to continue his educational work. However, by the early 1880s Duncan fell out of favour with his influential allies due to his unwillingness to embrace new religious and state policies.² Within only a few short years, Duncan had split from the Anglican Church, the CMS expelled him, and the federal government branded him as a renegade. Trouble was brewing in Metlakatla.

To make matters worse, when the diocese of British Columbia was split into three in 1879, the newly appointed Anglican Bishop of Caledonia, William Ridley, chose

¹ *Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs* [hereafter referred to as *Annual Report*] 1883, 105.
² Duncan, for example, bristled at the federal government’s insistence that he fill out and forward detailed school rolls to qualify for a small grant. For more on Duncan’s disputes with church and state see, for example, Peter Murray, “A Growing Feud,” in *The Devil and Mr. Duncan* (Victoria: Sono Nis Press, 1985), 110–123.
Metlakatla as his base in the North Pacific, and he quickly made efforts to displace Duncan. One of the bishop’s initial targets was the local school. Ridley argued that due to the missionary’s fall from grace, and because he had accepted federal money to run the school, Duncan no longer had proper authority over the building. Duncan was forced to vacate the school. Ridley, of course, was trying to usurp the influence of the important institution to siphon off Duncan’s followers. And it worked. Two of Duncan’s teachers quit and joined the bishop. This proved too much for Duncan and those Ts’msyan loyal to him. In response, they posted a public notice threatening the bishop that “unless you promise at once to remove your school house….we shall undertake to take it down.”3 The stage was set for a showdown.

When the bishop refused to back down, Duncan and his followers began dismantling buildings. In response, Ridley read the Riot Act, but he was ignored and the demolitions continued. The schoolhouse was slated as the final target for destruction. In an effort to save the building, Ridley armed himself with a rifle and, accompanied by CMS agent William Collison, occupied the school. Duncan interpreted this tactic as a trick to scare, and perhaps even a plot to kill, himself and his followers. Nevertheless, Duncan and a group of Ts’msyan confronted the bishop and Collison. As the two parties met on the school grounds, tempers flared and threats of violence—including murder—were exchanged. Cooler heads, though, prevailed and the school was eventually spared.

However, the provincial government was concerned enough about the situation that it called in an American gunboat, the Oliver Wolcott, to patrol the area and to deter further conflict.

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3 Quoted in F/7/ MS 56 a, BCA, An Account of the Riotous Destruction at Metlakatla: Petition 1882.
While the troubles in Metlakatla coalesced in a dramatic struggle over the local school, the conflict’s causes were more complicated. Since the early 1870s, the Ts’msyan, and missionaries like Duncan, had grown increasingly upset with the policies and administration of Indian Affairs by both the new provincial and dominion governments, which placed increasing limitations on local autonomy and control over the land. Combined with Duncan’s disputes with the Anglican Church, the CMS, and the federal government, these frustrations manifested in a battle for the school. The Metlakatla school served as a symbol of local autonomy, and Duncan’s loss of control over it signalled—both to him and to the Ts’msyan—the beginning of a new era of greater state intervention. Seeing the writing on the wall, Duncan chose to flee north with a small group of followers to start a rival Metlakatla in Alaska. Ridley dug in and continued the original Metlakatla settlement with support from the federal government. And just a few years later, a number of buildings, including the school, were retrofitted to become British Columbia’s first federally-funded “residential” school for Indigenous children.

The events in Metlakatla were symptomatic of the tensions in the final three decades of the nineteenth century in Canada generally, a period that witnessed a great transformation in Indian Affairs and the rise of what is now known as Canada’s Indian Residential School system. In the wake of Confederation, and as colonial anxiety about the threat of Indigenous resistance and violence increased in the 1870s and 1880s, particularly as it related to the North-West Territories and British Columbia, the federal

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4 For more on Duncan’s relocation to Alaska see Murray, “Move to Alaska” in The Devil and Mr. Duncan, 187–199.
5 The Department of Indian Affairs did not use the term “residential schools” until the 1920s. In this chapter, then, I discuss the creation of a system of boarding and industrial schools, which was the terminology of the nineteenth century.
government gradually established a new administrative apparatus to manage Indian Affairs across the Dominion. As part of this process, the state created new assimilationist policies, including new schemes for schooling Indigenous children. In particular, in the 1880s the Dominion government collaborated with missionaries to run a number of new boarding and industrial schools. In British Columbia, the federal government extended funding to established missionaries to offer first day and then boarding and industrial schooling for Indigenous children. Unlike mission day schools, however, which continued to have poor regular attendance throughout the period under review, the new boarding and industrial schools were established some distance away from reserves in an effort to sever Indigenous children’s connection to their parents. The state’s idea was that by breaking the parental bond and securing regular attendance, Indigenous children could be more effectively stripped of their cultural background and given industrial training to be transformed into “useful” and “productive” members of the emerging capitalist settler society.

While church and state officials claimed that schools for Indigenous children were “established for their own benefit,”6 this chapter argues otherwise. In focusing on how federal schooling policy played out in the province of British Columbia, this chapter shows that state schooling in the late nineteenth century continued to serve as a strategy of colonial containment, but it was also refashioned, with the introduction of industrial training, to be a transformative tool to assist capitalist social formation. Yet, although by the beginning of the twentieth century the state announced the new scheme to be a great success, some Indigenous peoples in British Columbia—parents, guardians, and even students—found creative ways to protest residential schooling from the start. The

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6 Annual Report 1873, 4.
chapter’s conclusion offers glimpses of Indigenous resistance to the schools’ poor conditions which point to the system’s inherent problems and demonstrate that residential schooling was not simply a project that went awry in the twentieth century. Good intentions were not corrupted. The Indian Residential School system was genocidal.\(^7\) Disease, death, and dispossession fuelled capitalism’s accumulative appetite, in Canada as elsewhere.

**Indian Affairs and Mission Schooling**

British Columbia’s joining Canadian confederation in 1871 initially made little difference to the management of “Indian Affairs” on the west coast.\(^8\) According to the Terms of Union, specifically clause thirteen, the trusteeship and management of Indigenous peoples became a federal responsibility; Indigenous peoples lived within provincial borders but within federal jurisdiction. However, in the early 1870s the federal government lacked the power, influence, and staff to adequately take control of Indian Affairs in the new Pacific province. Thus, the status quo from the late colonial period, endured for purely practical reasons.\(^9\) There were over 30,000 Indigenous peoples scattered across the province’s vast geography, more than double the Indigenous population of any other province or territory in the Dominion. And over four thousand kilometres separated the Dominion’s capital in Ottawa, Ontario and the provincial capital.

\(^7\) For more on the use of the term genocide, see Andrew Woolford, *The Benevolent Experiment: Indigenous Boarding Schools, Genocide, and Redress in Canada and the United States* (Manitoba: University of Manitoba Press, 2015).


\(^9\) Robin Fisher argues that the 1870s and 1880s “simply saw the continuation and consolidation of policies designed by settlers to meet their own needs, while Indian needs continued to be ignored by government.” See Robin Fisher, *Contact and Conflict: Indian-European Relations in British Columbia, 1774-1890*, second edition (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 1992), 175.
located in Victoria on Vancouver Island. Moreover, clear lines of transportation and communication between the two capitals were not immediately established and proved to be slow even after the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1886. British Columbia was truly the west beyond the west. In sum, the early Indian Branch in Ottawa was ill equipped to handle the increased responsibility of managing Indian Affairs on such a large scale. Since the mid-1860s, the Indian Branch in the Canadas had managed Indigenous peoples – including providing limited financial assistance for schools – to encourage “self-reliance and mental development.”\textsuperscript{10} Therefore, an early ad hoc solution was proposed: simply extend existing Indian policy to the newly acquired territories such as British Columbia. In the Indian Branch’s report for 1871, Privy Council Clerk William H. Lee summarized the plan, “Before long the general system of management, tested by the experience of the two Canadas, must be, in whole or in part, extended to those Provinces.”\textsuperscript{11}

The Branch quickly realized, however, that such a simplistic solution would be inadequate. In 1872, Minister of the Interior Joseph Howe pointed out that in dealing with the new Pacific province in particular, “it has become already apparent that Indian affairs cannot be managed by the application of old machinery which has been found to work so well in the Canadas.”\textsuperscript{12} The state needed new administrative machinery – staff, laws, policies and procedures. As a result, in 1873 the federal government established an Indian Branch that fell under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Interior. Growing in importance, the Branch was upgraded, becoming the Department of Indian Affairs in

\textsuperscript{10} Annual Report 1870.  
\textsuperscript{11} Annual Report 1871, 3.  
\textsuperscript{12} Annual Report, 1872, 2.
1880. The title of Superintendent General of Indian Affairs was given to the incumbent Minister of the Interior but in practice decision-making responsibilities fell to the Laurence Vankoughnet who served as Deputy Superintendent General for much of the period under review, between 1874 and 1893; Vankoughnet centralized much of the Department’s authoritative power into his own hands. Nevertheless, new inside and outside staff positions were created. On the inside, a number of civil servants, including a chief clerk, an accountant, and various clerical labourers worked in Ottawa. The government also established a new outside contingent of “in the field” employees. In terms of managing Indian Affairs in the west, Howe suggested the formation of regional boards at Victoria and Winnipeg. These boards, under the purview of Lieutenant Governors for the respective provinces would consist of a few paid staff and be led by a provincial Superintendent of Indian Affairs. The provincial superintendents, who acted as the primary contacts on Indigenous issues in their respective areas, would also travel among and liaise with Indigenous peoples and forward quarterly reports to the Deputy Superintendent General in Ottawa.

The new Indian Affairs machinery, as it related to British Columbia, emerged slowly and somewhat haphazardly. In 1872, the federal government appointed politician and physician Israel Wood Powell to the position of Superintendent of Indian Affairs for British Columbia, and a year later, a Board of Indian Commissioners was established under his direction. A friend of Prime Minister John A. Macdonald, Powell was also

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13 In this chapter, I use “Indian Branch” to talk about the management of early “Indian Affairs” up to 1880 and the “Department of Indian Affairs” after that point.
14 For a closer look at some of the individuals associated with this new machinery see E. Brian Titley’s examination of Edgar Dewdney. Dewdney filled a number of prominent “inside” and “outside” roles in Indian Affairs during the late nineteenth century, including minister of the interior, Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia, and Indian commissioner of the North-West Territories. See E. Brian Titley, *The Frontier World of Edgar Dewdney* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1999).
made lieutenant colonel of the militia because the federal government believed that military authority in dealings with Indigenous peoples would be necessary. Powell took his duties seriously and often wore a military uniform to work. The new machinery had militaristic flair. However, given the vast territory and the still-inadequate travel routes in the new province, the British Columbia Superintendency was divided into two in 1875. Powell headed the Victoria Superintendency, which served Vancouver Island and the Northwest Coast, and James Lenihan was charged with the Fraser Superintendency which served the Lower Mainland and interior of the province. In 1880, the new Department of Indian Affairs abolished the twin superintendency structure and Powell resumed as general Superintendent. In 1881, to assist Powell in his work, the Department created six Indian Agencies – Cowichan, Fraser River, Kamloops, Kwawkewlth, Okanagan, and West Coast –staffed by separate Indian Agents. These agents had a range of duties, including enforcing the government’s Indian policies, reporting to the local superintendent, and inspecting schools. In 1889, after 17 years of service, A.W. Vowell replaced Powell as general Superintendent; Vowell carried on the job of managing Indian Affairs in the province until an administrative shakeup occurred in 1910. Thus, by the turn of the century the new machinery for managing Indian Affairs in British Columbia was taking shape.

The federal Indian Branch maintained that the key to the successful management of Indian Affairs in British Columbia was to “begin right,” and education emerged as a strategic priority. State officials stressed the need to impress upon Indigenous peoples that “their affairs are to be administered in such a manner that whatever rights and privileges are possessed by people of other origins, will be secured to them; and that on
their part, by conforming to the laws enacted for their benefit, they will enable the
Government the better to protect their interests.”\textsuperscript{15} In fact, article thirteen of the Terms of
Union stipulated that the Dominion government would continue an Indian policy in
British Columbia “as liberal as that hitherto pursued by the British Columbia
government.”\textsuperscript{16} As such, the federal government wanted to pacify Indigenous peoples
with promises of protection. Much had been made of Douglas’ attempts in the 1850s and
1860s to cultivate good will and friendly relations between Indigenous peoples and
settlers, and Powell preferred to follow such a strategy.\textsuperscript{17} However, the provincial
government saw things differently, and the superintendent soon butted heads with local
provincial officials, notably Lieutenant Governor Joseph Trutch, who abandoned
Douglas’ “tactful” colonization and pursued more aggressive tactics, including
unilaterally “adjusting” or cutting off already established reserves to open up Indigenous
lands to white settlement.\textsuperscript{18} The new provincial regime preferred to follow Trutch’s
precedent rather than that of Douglas. The local government, it seemed, was content on
using coercion – including using gunboats to shell coastal communities – to consolidate
its power.\textsuperscript{19} The federal government did not yet have the resources in the 1870s to assert
a monopoly on violence across the Dominion and thus preferred to cultivate consent,
especially in British Columbia where the provincial government’s brazen actions so
obviously threatened stability. Accordingly, Powell and the Indian Branch advocated the

\textsuperscript{15} Annual Report 1871, 37.
\textsuperscript{16} The terms of union are in F.W. Howay and E.O.S. Shoelefield, \textit{British Columbia from the Earliest Times
to the Present}, Volume 2 (Vancouver: S.J. Clarke, 1914), 697.
\textsuperscript{17} See Fisher, \textit{Contact and Conflict}, 146–157.
\textsuperscript{18} For more on Trutch’s bullying policies see, for example, Fisher, \textit{Contact and Conflict}, 161–166. See also
Paul Tennant, \textit{Aboriginal Peoples and Politics: The Indian Land Question in British Columbia, 1849-1989}
\textsuperscript{19} On the role of gunboats in the post-confederation period see Gough, \textit{Gunboat Frontier}, 161–171.
expediency of “softer” methods such as supporting schools for Indigenous children as a means of trying to establish good will and friendly relations.

For help with schooling in the remote Pacific province, the federal government turned to Christian missionaries. Since the 1850s, creating mission schools with some form of state support had been used to secure strategic footholds among Indigenous populations in hopes of establishing amicable relations. The Indian Branch sought to extend this practice and thus missionaries continued to be settler colonialism’s shock troops in the Pacific Northwest. As such, early Indian Branch reports credit missionaries as “pioneers” in the important work of instructing Indigenous peoples “in the rudiments of education, and in reclaiming them from heathenism.”

Soon, established missionary enclaves such as Metlakatla on the Northwest Coast and St. Mary’s Mission on the banks of the Fraser River were joined by new settlements. Denominational disputes continued as spheres of spiritual influence were debated. Anglicans carved out the Northwest Coast and Catholics dominated the Lower Mainland but soon the Methodists joined the fray. In 1874, a group of Ts’msyan people who converted to Methodism invited Thomas and Emma Crosby to Port Simpson to preach and teach. Building on Duncan’s model, they opened a residential facility for girls and then eventually another home for boys. Methodists were also active along the Fraser Valley in Stó:lō territory near Chilliwack where they eventually created the Coqualeetza Industrial Institute. Overall, missionaries continued to be an active colonizing presence in the Pacific province throughout the late nineteenth century.

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20 Annual Report 1871, 38.
21 See Miller, Shingwauk’s Vision, 93 and Jane Hare and Jean Barman, Good Intentions Gone Awry: Emma Crosby and the Methodist Mission on the Northwest Coast (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2006).
And in the 1870s, missionary prospects in British Columbia improved significantly. Given the large number of Indigenous people in the province, the Branch asserted that the area offered God’s armies “a wide field for energetic action, for zealous work on an extended scale; and for rendering these Indians, who, in point of numbers are formidable, eventually attached and valuable subjects of the Crown.”22 In 1872, the Branch argued that “there will be good hope for the future, if the desire manifested to promote the welfare of these people, who but recently connected with the Dominion of Canada, be adequately seconded and opportunity afforded, under a well devised management, for training the Indians of that Province in such manner that their intelligence may be turned to more profitable account – that greater encouragement shall be extended to the Societies who have been in a generous spirit labouring for their good – and that laws adapted to improve their condition be enacted. With these aids their welfare may be promoted.”23 Zealous perseverance was about to pay dividends. After being cut off from free aid by the colonial government in the late 1860s, the federal government’s willingness to fund state schooling for Indigenous children meant that missionaries were back in business in British Columbia.

While the Dominion government held missionaries in high esteem, the initial prospects for missionary schooling in the Pacific province did not look especially promising. The first official educational statistics for British Columbia were included in the annual report for 1874 and did not show a drastic difference from the late 1860s. Only eight schools were listed as being in operation at Victoria, Nanaimo, Comox, and Cowichan on Vancouver Island and at St. Mary’s Mission, Lytton, Metlakatla, and Fort

22 Annual Report 1871, 38.
Simpson on the mainland.\textsuperscript{24} Ten teachers were recorded, 7 men and 3 women, and they all appeared to be white. Most of the mission schools suffered from high rates of irregular attendance, and in total, the schools only had 472 students with 185 boys and 140 girls in attendance. These statistics were incomplete but the overall picture was discouraging. Nevertheless, early Indian Branch officials such as William Spragge continued to be optimistic, arguing that missionaries of the “leading religious denominations”—Methodist, Catholic, and Anglican—were offering “praiseworthy and successful efforts” that would make “for the lasting good of the Indians of British Columbia.”\textsuperscript{25}

Increased financial support from the federal government in the early 1870s helped to modestly expand the missionary day school system. In 1872, Spragge argued, “the influence of education when suitable arrangements are perfected, will, it is hoped, produce an improved social, moral, and religious tone among a race so intelligent as the Superintendent represents them to be, and it is anticipated that these Indians will soon learn to value efforts purposed to be made to promote their welfare.”\textsuperscript{26} In 1874, the Branch stated, “Many of the missionaries are most enthusiastic in their endeavors to ameliorate the condition of the natives, and are highly deserving of substantial encouragement in their good work.” Moreover, “no doubt the various Mission Societies already established in the Province will take measures to increase the number of schools, and take advantage of the material assistance afforded by the Government in granting a

\textsuperscript{24} These eight schools are likely listed because they received some measure of federal support. A year earlier, in 1872, a report mentions a host of other mission schools in operation. The Church of England was said to be operating schools at Comox, Nanaimo, Kinkolith, Metlakatla, Yale, and Lytton; Catholics were said to be running schools at St. Mary’s, Williams Lake, Okanagan, Stuart Lake, Fort Rupert, Cowichan, and Victoria; and Methodists were also listed as running schools at Nanaimo, Victoria, New Westminster, and Chilliwack. Thus, the number of missionary schools was likely more than the 8 officially listed in 1874, perhaps as high as approximately 17.

\textsuperscript{25} Annual Report 1871, 5.

\textsuperscript{26} Annual Report 1872, 11.
sum of money to every school which can show a certain average attendance of Indian pupils.” Though some schools continued to be funded privately by missionary societies, such as the Methodist mission school at Nanaimo, the majority of schools started accepting a $300 federal grant in the early 1870s. Yet, to qualify for the grant a school needed to demonstrate an average attendance of 30 pupils, which was difficult to obtain for a number of reasons. More money for missionaries thus did not immediately lead to greater schooling success.

Irregular attendance thwarted most teachers’ best attempts to attain the necessary number of Indigenous students to qualify for the federal grant. Attendance was the weakness of mission schooling. By 1874, the Branch realized that “on account of the migratory character of the Indian, great difficulty has been found in retaining an average attendance of thirty.” Superintendent Powell suggested that if the average attendance could be dropped from 30 to 15, “a greater number of schools would soon be commenced, and of course much larger benefits secured in promoting education among the natives.” However, without an immediate change to the funding formula many mission schools simply closed their doors. As a result, by 1877 the total number of Indigenous school pupils actually dropped to 402 from the 472 first reported in 1874. It was clear that the current funding structure was not working. To remedy the situation, the Branch passed a new policy in 1877 changing the average attendance grant requirement to a simple per-capita grant. Deputy Superintendent General Vankoughnet explained to Superintendent General David Mills: “It is to be hoped that all, or at least some, of those schools will be re-opened when the regulation becomes known, which was instituted

27 Annual Report 1874, 66.
28 Metlakatla and St. Mary’s were exceptions; they received $500 and $350 respectively.
29 Annual Report 1874, 66.
under your directions; whereby an allowance is made for each pupil in regular attendance during the quarter, up to a fixed maximum number, instead of requiring, as was formerly the case, that a certain number should be in attendance, to entitle the school to the benefit of the Government grant – which number, was at certain seasons of the year quite unattainable.” Under this new arrangement, the federal government paid missions $12 per annum for each Indigenous pupil in daily attendance up to a total of not more than $300 per school. Thus, as part of the expansion of the new management machinery for Indian Affairs, the federal government committed to increasing funding to missionaries to run schools for Indigenous children. The state bet its money on the missionaries.

**Early Obstacles**

Despite the state’s new administrative machinery and improved financial support for early mission schools, there were two significant obstacles to educational success: irregular attendance due to parental resistance to schooling and, more generally, the continuing threat of Indigenous resistance to the colonial project. In terms of irregular attendance, the state pegged Indigenous parents as the problem. Many parents remained indifferent to white schooling and refused to send their children to school regularly, if at all. According to the state, the key problem with mission schools, particularly day institutions, was that at the end of the school day Indigenous children returned to their Indigenous parents who harboured negative or ambivalent feelings toward the ways of whites. In other words, mission day schools did not “possess the power of isolating for a time the young Indian from the irregular and nomadic pursuits incident to wild life in the canoe and wigwam.” Moreover, the Branch claimed, “the very old people look with

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30 Annual Report 1877, 7.
contempt upon it [the school] and take no interest in having their children attend regularly, hence in all our Mission Schools the number of pupils on the roll must be very large to make even a moderate average attendance for the quarter.” “Under such circumstances,” the Branch reasoned, “children themselves tire of a routine so opposed to their wild nature and savage inclinations, and soon fail to attend at all. Indeed it could scarcely be otherwise, when, under the most favorable circumstances, some twenty hours out of the twenty-four are spent amid the directly opposed associations of the rancheria.”

Therefore, the state viewed parental indifference to the ways of whites—including education—as the chief source of irregular attendance at the mission day schools.

Given the state’s initial lack of a para-military power to effectively coerce Indigenous peoples, particularly in the West, the federal government devised assimilationist policies that tried to undermine Indigenous lifeways and thus weaken parental resistance and induce greater school attendance. The federal government played the long game. In the 1850s and 1860s, the Indian Branch wanted Indigenous peoples in Ontario and Québec to be independent and self-sustaining communities; however, by the 1870s, a noticeable shift in strategy occurred and the Branch now thought it best to assimilate Indigenous peoples into the new nation. It would be best, so the state reasoned, if Indigenous peoples were trained to contribute to the emerging capitalist settler society instead of merely subsisting separately. As Indigenous peoples assimilated into the new society they would, ideally, give up their ancestral economies as well as

31 Annual Report 1877, 49.
their claims to land to better integrate themselves into the capitalist labour market.

Assimilation, then, was advantageous for two reasons. Assimilation could facilitate the dispossession of Indigenous peoples from their lands and open the lands up for settlement and resource development, and it could also potentially transform the Indigenous population into a pool of wage workers to create new wealth across the Dominion. At the very least, Indigenous peoples would not be an impediment to capitalist development. Assimilation thus served as a handmaiden of capitalist accumulation by dispossession in the late nineteenth century.

In designing its new assimilationist policies, the state turned to various advisers in the field for guidance. In British Columbia, the federal government sought out the ear of William Duncan of Metlakatla. In fact, in the years before his falling out with the Macdonald government in the 1880s, the government turned to Duncan as a trusted confidant on matters of colonization. In May 1875, Duncan prepared a report addressed to the Minister of the Interior in Ottawa on strategies to more effectively manage Indian Affairs across the Dominion. His report, which was similar to the one he made to Governor Douglas in the 1860s, focused on his experiences running the well-known Metlakatla mission. The lay minister also travelled to Ottawa to consult with government officials about his recommendations. Duncan argued, “A clear, practical, and satisfactory, Indian policy is now undoubtedly called for, and is of vital importance to the prosperity of the Province. The problem of Indian affairs, too, is confessedly difficult and solemn, hence I feel in duty bound to tender my humble aid to the Government toward its right

In fact, Duncan is consistently praised for his efforts at Metlakatla in the early Indian Branch deports of the 1870s.
In laying out his plan, Duncan suggested that the government settle Indigenous peoples by dialect and establish stations, similar to Metlakatla, run by Indian Agents where a “Government School might be established in each, and good openings would thus be made for Religious Societies to step in with their aid, and no doubt a Minister would soon be provided for each station.” He concluded, “The three gentlemen – the Agent, the Minister, and the Schoolmaster – thus severally employed, and aiding and encouraging each other, might reasonably be expected to bring about such a state of things as would warrant the town, at no very distant date, being incorporated, and have its own Native Magistrates, and thus cease to belong to the Indian Department or need an Indian policy.” In essence, Duncan was articulating a new kind of assimilationist policy that would inform, at least in part, the Indian Act that was passed the next year. Though initially silent on schooling, the *Indian Act, 1876* became the legal foundation for the state’s organized assault on Indigenous lifeways.

While the state thought that parental ambivalence to the ways of whites could be broken down over time through assimilation, outright parental resistance to the colonial project posed another, more troubling obstacle. In British Columbia, some Indigenous groups were deeply suspicious about Canadian confederation. Relationships, even if tenuous ones, had been established with the British Crown during the colonial period and many Indigenous peoples worried that the new settler governments would break earlier

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34 Appendix C. Copy of part of a letter on Indian Affairs addressed to the Minister of the Interior, Ottawa, by Mr. Duncan, *Annual Report 1875*, ix.
35 Appendix C. Copy of part of a letter on Indian Affairs addressed to the Minister of the Interior, Ottawa, by Mr. Duncan, *Annual Report 1875*, ix. The desire to eliminate “Indians” through assimilation emerges quite clearly in Duncan’s report.
36 According to Robin Fisher, Indigenous peoples were “totally unrepresented” in the negotiations that led to British Columbia’s joining of Confederation. In fact, a motion to include protection for Indigenous peoples in the Terms of Union was defeated twenty to one and another motion to extend Indian policy to the new province was withdrawn. See Fisher, *Contact and Conflict*, 175–177.
promises and that precedent, particularly around land title established by Douglas, would be quickly jettisoned. In hindsight, these concerns were well-founded. The overlapping nature of federal and provincial jurisdictions relating to Indigenous peoples created great confusion as well as considerable tension. In line with the Royal Proclamation of 1763, Ottawa preferred a process of negotiating treaties with Indigenous peoples to surrender title to the land, a strategy it continued to pursue on the prairies in the 1870s and 1880s. However, the government of British Columbia, resisting outside interference, abandoned legal precedent and set its own land policy. And it was stingy. The province refused to acknowledge Indigenous land title and instead restricted Indigenous peoples to small reserves in an effort to open the new province to settlement and economic development. As a result, a stalemate between dominion and province quickly emerged and the issue proved to be a political quagmire that decidedly disadvantaged Indigenous peoples. In the Indian Branch report for 1874 it was said that, “The position of the Indian land question in British Columbia has from the first organization of the Department been felt to be a great obstacle in the way of the satisfactory administration of Indian affairs in that Province.” Moreover, the Branch claimed: “The Indians of British Columbia complain that the quality of land which the Local Government proposed to assign them as reserves is utterly inadequate to their necessities.” In regards to education, settling the land issue was deemed important because the Branch believed that, “until the Indians are satisfactorily located on lands, and they are judiciously collected into communities,

37 For comprehensive treatments of Indigenous land policies in British Columbia see Tennant, Aboriginal Peoples and Politics and Cole Harris, Making Native Space: Colonialism, Resistance, and Reserves in British Columbia (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2002).
38 See Miller, Compact, Contract, Covenant.
39 See Harris, Making Native Space.
40 Annual Report 1874, 9.
schools for their instruction and other ameliorative arrangements cannot properly be
proceeded with.” In fact, officials often heard complaints from Indigenous parents in
the post-confederation period, including, “What we want from the Government is our
land, and not schools or education.” Schooling success was therefore thought to be
linked to a satisfactory solution to the land question.

As Indigenous groups became increasingly frustrated at the duelling jurisdictional
debates over their lands, the Indian Branch started to worry about the growing threat of
Indigenous violence. Indigenous peoples’ refusal to accede to certain assimilationist
policies was annoying to state officials, but Indigenous violence threatened the entire
colonial enterprise. As attempts to rectify land disputes were actively hindered by the
local government, including stalling the creation of a land commission to investigate the
matter, the provincial Indian Affairs superintendents were inundated with new complaints
by Indigenous peoples. With conflicts like the Tsilhqot’in War of 1864 fresh in mind,
the Branch remarked that due to the ongoing land dispute “there is a universal and
growing feeling of dissatisfaction among the Indian population of the Province, and a
corresponding uneasiness and alarm among the white settlers.” In 1875, the Branch
wrote: “To the Indian the land question far transcends in importance all others, and its
satisfactory adjustment in British Columbia will be the first step towards allaying the
wide spread growing discontent now existing among the native tribes of the Province.”
Moreover, the Branch argued, “the present state of the Indian land question in our

41 Annual Report 1873, 5.
42 Annual Report 1889, 119.
43 For more on provincial-dominion disagreements over land policy, see Harris, Making Native Space, 189–
203.
44 Annual Report 1874, 9.
45 Annual Report 1875, xli.
territory west of the Rocky Mountains is most unsatisfactory, and that it is the occasion not only of great discontent among the Aboriginal Tribes, but also of serious alarm to the White settlers. Missionaries, too, worried that hostilities could threaten their establishments.

As the dominion and provincial governments continued to squabble, some Indigenous people took action. In 1875, newly appointed Fraser Superintendent James Lenihan reported: “In one or two places in the interior of the Province, the Indians have also taken [it] upon themselves to adjust this matter, and have entered upon the lands of the white settler, erected houses thereon, and cultivated as much of it as they pleased asserting that until the land question has been finally settled it was their duty to make ample provisions for themselves and their families. This state of things is much to be regretted, and should be prevented as soon as possible, as it cannot but produce disorder and disaffection.” As a result, colonial anxiety spiked during this period. The great fear, of course, was that Indigenous peoples’ “deep-seated and intense feelings of discontent” could, at any moment, erupt into a costly and deadly “Indian war.” In 1877, rumours circulated throughout the province that the Secwepemc and Syilx peoples met with their Nez Percé neighbours to the south to potentially form a military alliance. While the meeting was never confirmed, a few years later, in 1879, a meeting did take place in Lytton and was attended by various Indigenous peoples from the southern interior to

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46 Annual Report 1875, xli.
47 Cole Harris cites Father Pandosy of the Okanagan mission who felt that the province had become “a smoking volcano, and that his mission could become ‘la bouche même du cratère.” Harris, Making Native Space, footnote 34 on page 352.
48 Annual Report 1875, 54. Lenihan also reported that “Many of the Indians have spoken to me in high terms of praise of the manner in which they were dealt with by Sir James Douglas when he was Governor of the Province.”
49 Fisher, Contact and Conflict, 191.
discuss their grievances.\textsuperscript{50} Settlers feared such combinations because they were still, in many locales, outnumbered by Indigenous peoples. The vulnerability of settlers was exacerbated by how scattered across the vast province they were. Powell argued that the only reason war had yet to break out was “not because there has been no injustice to the Indians, but because the Indians have not been sufficiently united.”\textsuperscript{51}

In an effort to abate the escalating tensions between the Indigenous peoples and the provincial government over land, even if temporarily, the federal government sent out Governor General Lord Dufferin to tour British Columbia. Dufferin was a vocal critic of British Columbia’s mishandling of the land question and had even informed the Colonial Office of his displeasure. He had hoped that London would intervene or at least could apply some pressure on its former delinquent colony, but to no avail.\textsuperscript{52} Thus, the government sent Dufferin to the Pacific province in 1876 to build positive provincial-dominion relations and to try to placate Indigenous peoples with promises of protection. One of the hubs of growing Indigenous dissatisfaction that Dufferin visited was Duncan’s Metlakatla. During his visit, Dufferin gave a speech to inform the Ty’msian that, as the Queen’s official representative, he had come with good intentions and that the new Dominion government took the general welfare of Indigenous peoples seriously. He assured those gathered to hear his speech that “the white men have not come amongst you as conquerors, but as friends.” Colonization must have seemed a strange friendship to the Ty’msian. Nevertheless, Dufferin surveyed Duncan’s school and was impressed

\textsuperscript{50} Fisher, \textit{Contact and Conflict}, 178.
\textsuperscript{51} \textit{Annual Report} 1875, xliii. For more on Indigenous resistance, see Harris, \textit{Making Native Space}, 203–206, Titley, \textit{A Narrow Vision}, 135–161; Keith Thor Carlson, \textit{The Power of Place, the Problem of Time: Aboriginal Identity and Historical Consciousness in the Cauldron of Colonialism} (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 2–38.
\textsuperscript{52} See Harris, \textit{Making Native Space}, 81.
with its results. He remarked: “I have had very great pleasure in inspecting your school, and I am quite certain that there are many among the younger portion of those I am now addressing who have already begun to feel how much they are indebted to that institution for the expansion of their mental faculties, for the knowledge of what is passing in the outer world, as well as for the insight it affords them into the laws of nature and into the arts of civilized life; and we have the further satisfaction of remembering that as year after year flows by, and your population increased, all those beneficial influences will acquire additional strength and momentum.” Dufferin witnessed the power of colonial schooling. Before leaving for Ottawa, then, Dufferin summarized his findings on the subject of the future of Indigenous peoples in the province and spoke in favour of expanding educational opportunities. He stated, “What you want are not resources, but human beings to develop them and consume them. Raise your 30,000 Indians to the level Mr. Duncan has taught us can be brought, and consider what an enormous amount of vital power you will have added to your present strength.” Dufferin thus called on officials to harness the potential of schooling to transform Indigenous peoples from disgruntled and dangerous elements into productive members of settler society. While perhaps dreaming, Dufferin’s recommendation soon gained respectability in the late nineteenth century. However, significant changes to educational policy were still required to effectively overcome the existing obstacles to schooling for Indigenous peoples.

The Need for a New Schooling Scheme

By the late 1870s, the Dominion government wanted to create a new scheme for schooling Indigenous children that could more efficiently integrate Indigenous children into the emerging capitalist settler society. Mission day schools were adequate stopgaps, but serious educational reform was needed to properly outfit Indigenous children for the new demands of industrialization in the late nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{54} As such, state officials proposed that schools be used not just for religious and primary education but also for industrial training. Echoing Dufferin’s earlier sentiments, officials explained that Indigenous children should be trained to contribute to the wealth of the country and assist the nation-building project more generally. Though calls to develop more practical schooling methods for Indigenous pupils increased in frequency in the late 1870s and early 1880s, they were by no means new. In fact, schools of an industrial character were already in existence in the Dominion, such as Duncan’s Metlakatla school in British Columbia and four industrial schools in Ontario – Mount Elgin, Mohawk Institute, Shingwauk, and Wikwemikong.\textsuperscript{55} These schools served as models for what was possible in terms of a schooling scheme that merged common schooling with industrial training for Indigenous children. Indeed, in 1873 the Branch stated that “the Pupils from these and some other schools, exclusively for Indians, are qualifying the young people of both sexes for useful avocations of life; and the extension of such establishments to other Provinces of the Dominion could not but prove an important boon to the different Bands


\textsuperscript{55} See Milloy, “\textit{A National Crime}”, 52.
for whose benefit they may be brought into existence.” 56 Again, the emphasis was on transforming Indigenous children to become useful members of an emerging capitalist settler society.

Economic recalibration was far from an easy task. In 1874, the Branch reflected on the so-called problematic state of “the Indian” which required fixing: “He is active on the war-path or in the chase; but when danger is over, revenge satisfied, or his immediate wants appeased, he relapses into his accustomed indolence. It may be said that this inertia is the chief legacy which he bequeaths to his children. The great difficulty with the Indian is that he cannot all at once rid himself of this inheritance. Even under the most favourable circumstances time must be given him to understand the motives and acquire the habits of the white man, who labors to accumulate wealth in order that he may have the means of support in sickness or old age, or of giving his offspring a start in life.”

Thus, it was seen as “highly important that the Indian youth, where practicable, should be afforded an industrial school training. They require not merely the elements of an English education, but also to be taught and trained in some useful industrial pursuit.” 57 Indigenous children, in short, needed to learn to labour too.

Heeding the calls for educational reform concerning Indigenous children, Prime Minister John A. MacDonald awarded Nicholas Flood Davin, a Conservative backbencher, a one-person commission to investigate the industrial boarding schools for Indigenous children in operation in the United States. Davin’s job was to report on the feasibility of creating such schools for Canada. As part of his short investigation, Davin met with senior American officials Carl Schurtz, the Secretary of the Interior, and E.A.

56 Annual Report 1873, 5.
57 Annual Report 1874, 5–6.
Hayt, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, to discuss the practicality of Industrial
boarding schools in the Canadian context. He also travelled to a school at the White Earth
Agency in Minnesota to inspect its operations. He concluded his tour by consulting with
schooling experts and church officials in Winnipeg, where Catholic missionaries in
particular lobbied Davin hard in an attempt to guide his recommendations to increase
federal funding for missionary schooling.\textsuperscript{58} In any event, the Industrial boarding schools
in the US made an impression on Davin who eagerly wrote up his report.

On 14 March 1879, Davin released his findings as the \textit{Report on Industrial
Schools for Indians and Half-Breeds}, now commonly known as the \textit{Davin Report}. Many
of the report’s recommendations, as mentioned above, had been previously proposed by
figures such as Duncan and Powell; and thus, the report is often miscredited as the
genesis of the residential school system. The \textit{Davin Report} might be better understood as the
catalyst that spurred the Macdonald government to follow through on creating the
scheme of schooling that is now known as the Indian Residential School system. Davin’s
report was issued at the right time; it coalesced with plans to settle the west as part of
Macdonald’s larger National Policy.\textsuperscript{59} In the 1870s, because of the federal government’s
promises to provide schooling for Indigenous peoples on the prairies as part of the
numbered treaties, missionary bodies like the CMS started to withdraw aid. As a result,
Davin felt the federal government had a responsibility to pick up the slack.\textsuperscript{60} Davin thus
believed that the state had a “sacred duty” to provide schooling for Indigenous children.

\textsuperscript{58} See Milloy, \textit{“A National Crime”}, 54–55.
\textsuperscript{59} For more on the National Policy see Janine Brodie, \textit{The Political Economy of Canadian Regionalism}
\textsuperscript{60} For more on the promises of the numbered treaties signed between 1870 and 1877 see, for example, J.R.
Miller, \textit{Compact, Contract, Covenant: Aboriginal Treaty-Making in Canada} (Toronto: University of
Toronto Press, 2009) and Robert J. Talbot, \textit{Negotiating the Numbered Treaties: An Intellectual and
Moreover, by the late 1870s the Indigenous peoples who had negotiated the numbered treaties began agitating to ensure that the promises of schooling were fulfilled.\textsuperscript{61} Combined with the government’s growing emphasis on assimilationist policies such as the Indian Act, the time had come, Davin argued, to implement a “far-seeing and vigorous educational policy.” And that policy would be based on the model of US manual labour schools for Indigenous children.\textsuperscript{62} Indeed, Davin reported that in the US, “the industrial school is the principal feature of the policy known as that of ‘aggressive civilization.’” It should be similar in Canada, Davin reasoned. He pointed out that unlike the inadequate mission day schools, boarding and industrial schools in the US were established to separate pupils from their parents and inculcate them “in industry and the arts of civilization.” Parents, in short, were the problem. Davin argued, “The experience of the United States is the same as our own as far as the adult Indian is concerned. Little can be done with him. He can be taught to do a little at farming, and at stock-raising, and to dress in a more civilized manner, but that is all. The child, again, who goes to a day school learns little, and what little he learns is soon forgotten, while his tastes are fashioned at home, and his inherited aversion to toil is no way combated.”\textsuperscript{63} Separating children from parents in boarding institutions was the key to increased schooling success.

In terms of logistics, Davin reported that there were two ways of conducting an industrial boarding school system. The first was for the government to take control of schools and run them fully through the Indian Branch. This, however, would put a lot of

\textsuperscript{61} Miller, \textit{Shingwauk’s Vision}, 100.
\textsuperscript{62} Indian Affairs, RG 10, Volume 6001, File 1-1-1, part 1, School Files, BCA B-1856, 11. For more in Indian Boarding schools in the United States see, for example, David Wallace Adams, \textit{Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding-School Experience, 1875-1928} (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1995); \textit{Boarding School Blues: Revisiting American Indian Educational Experiences}, Clifford E. Trafzer, Jean A. Keller, and Lorene Sisquoc (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006).
\textsuperscript{63} Indian Affairs, RG 10, Volume 6001, File 1-1-1, part 1, School Files, BCA B-1856, 1–2.
strain on the new administrative machinery, not to mention increase schooling expenditure exponentially. The other way was to form contracts with established missionary bodies to carry on schools with some means of state funding. Davin noted that the US Commissioner of Indian Affairs was not in favour of the contract route because “the children at schools under contract do not, as a rule, get sufficient quantity of food.” This should have been a red flag; however, Davin went on to propose that Canada nonetheless follow the model of state-church partnerships to offer schools “of the cheapest kind.”\textsuperscript{64} State schooling for Indigenous children would be done on the cheap. Having missionaries run the schools would also have the benefit of providing children with some moral training as well as attracting suitable teachers at significantly lower pay rates.\textsuperscript{65} Davin thus recommended, “Wherever the missionaries have schools, those schools should be utilized by the Government, if possible; that is to say, a contract should be made with the religious body controlling the school to board and educate and train industrially certain number of pupils. This should be done without interfering with the small assistance at present given to the day mission schools.”\textsuperscript{66} In essence, schooling for Indigenous children in Canada would be guided by the state but contracted out to missionaries. Mission day schools would continue to act as stopgaps, especially in remote locations, but new boarding and industrial schools were to be established as the primary means of schooling Indigenous children across the Dominion.

Overall, Davin’s idea was to create new institutions, based on the US manual labour schools, to recalibrate Indigenous children for roles as labourers and producers in

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item \textsuperscript{64} Indian Affairs, RG 10, Volume 6001, File 1-1-1, part 1, School Files, BCA B-1856, 2.
\item \textsuperscript{65} Miller, \textit{Shingwauk’s Vision}, 102.
\item \textsuperscript{66} Indian Affairs, RG 10, Volume 6001, File 1-1-1, part 1, School Files, BCA B-1856, 13.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
the emerging capitalist economy.\[^{67}\] In brief, Davin stated, “At the industrial school, in addition to the elements of an English education the boys are instructed in cattle-raising and agriculture; the girls in sewing; breadmaking, and other employments suitable for a farmer’s wife.”\[^{68}\] In bringing about such a transformation, Davin advocated for the government’s immediate implementation of an industrial boarding school policy. “There is now barely time,” Davin argued, “to inaugurate a system of education by means of which the native population of the North-West shall be gradually prepared to meet the necessities of the not distant future; to welcome and facilitate, it may be hoped, the settlement of the country; and to render its government easy and not expensive.” Davin also explained that due to “warlike” Indigenous peoples on the Prairies, “a large statesman like policy, with bearings on immediate and remote issues, cannot be entered on to earnestly or too soon.” But Davin also preached for patience. He suggested, “No race of men can be suddenly turned from one set of pursuits to another set of a wholly different nature without great attendant distress…. [We must look] patiently for fruit, not after five or ten years, but after a generation or two.”\[^{69}\] Schooling success, he reasoned, would be gradual.

The Macdonald government received the *Davin Report* positively and it prompted parliament to grant $44,000 to establish new Industrial schools.\[^{70}\] In 1880, the Indian Branch was upgraded to its own Department of Indian Affairs, and among its new priorities was to establish a number of trial industrial boarding schools. In 1883, the first three schools were opened in the North-West Territories near Qu’Appelle (Anglican),

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\[^{67}\] Indian Affairs, RG 10, Volume 6001, File 1-1-1, part 1, School Files, BCA B-1856, 12.
\[^{68}\] Indian Affairs, RG 10, Volume 6001, File 1-1-1, part 1, School Files, BCA B-1856, 2.
\[^{69}\] Indian Affairs, RG 10, Volume 6001, File 1-1-1, part 1, School Files, BCA B-1856, 10.
\[^{70}\] Miller, *Shingwauk’s Vision*, 103.
Battleford (Catholic), and High River (Catholic). The Department argued, “Industrial schools, at which the children not only are educated, instructed in industries, fed and clothed, but in which they are also severed during the school term from all connection from home life, are obviously preferable, as in them the obstructions to education, complained of in the case of day schools do not exist.” Originally, as Davin had recommended, status “Indian” as well as métis children were accepted, though by the 1890s Ottawa restricted attendance to the former categorization. The results were mixed. There was considerable opposition to the school at Battleford, with parents unhappy with being separated from their children and some of the pupils disobeying orders and even running away. However, the Indian Branch was undeterred. The annual report for 1883 reported, “The Indians show a reluctance to have their children separated from them, but doubtless, time will overcome this obstacle, and by commencing with orphans and children who have no natural protectors, a beginning can be made, and we must count upon the judicious treatment of these children by the principals and teachers of the institutions eventually to do away with the objections of the Indian parents to their children being placed under their charge.” As Davin suggested, schooling success would take time.

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71 These were not the first schools in the area. Mission schools had existed since the 1820s. As well, at the time of the first “residential” schools, the Oblates were already responsible for boarding schools in the North-West Territories in St Boniface, Île-à-la-Crosse, Lac le Biche, Lake Athabasca, and Fort Providence.
72 Annual Report 1884, xiii.
73 Miller, Shingwauk’s Vision, 103–104.
74 Annual Report 1883, xi.
Schooling in the Shadow of Violence

Despite cautiously optimistic assessments of the new schools and the progress of Indian Affairs generally, trouble was brewing on the Prairies. South of the border violent colonial conflicts between Indigenous peoples and settlers raged throughout what is now known as the United States, and Canadian officials feared that hostilities could easily spread north.\(^7\) In June 1876, in Big Horn County in Montana, Lakota, Dakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho peoples combined forces to fight the 7\(^{th}\) Cavalry Regiment of the United States Army led by General George Custer. In the end, Indigenous warriors killed Custer and routed the Cavalry at the Battle of Little Big Horn or the Battle of Greasy Grass as it is known to the Lakota. A number of notable figures, including Crazy Horse, Chief Gall, Buffalo Calf Road Woman, and Sitting Bull, led the Indigenous warriors to victory. News of the Indigenous success sent shockwaves throughout the US and even reached Canada and England. Canadian officials started to fear that the victory could embolden dissatisfied Indigenous peoples north of the boarder. These fears were exacerbated as “hostile” Indigenous groups from the south, led by Sitting Bull, travelled north seeking refuge in Canada in what is today Saskatchewan. Sitting Bull argued that the Sioux’s traditional hunting grounds spanned both sides of the border, or the medicine line as it was known to Indigenous peoples.\(^7\) The Macdonald government, however, refused to provide land, food, or financial assistance as it feared Sitting Bull’s very presence could stir up feelings of discontent among Indigenous peoples on the frontier. Without food, the Sioux were essentially starved out of Canada, and they reluctantly


\(^7\) E. Thornton to Earl of Dufferin, 20 March 1878, TNA, CO 42/753. See Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens*, 227.
returned to the US. Nevertheless, the federal government kept close tabs on the Sioux, particularly Sitting Bull, especially as it was rumoured that he had met with Louis Riel sometime in 1880.

Canadian fears that violence could break out on the Prairies were well founded because in the 1880s Indigenous peoples throughout the North-West Territories were growing more frustrated with the Dominion government. With the decline of the buffalo and subsistence economies, many groups resisted new settlement policies, including the industrial schools. Indeed, schooling in Canada continued to develop in the shadow of violence. Many parents came to resent the Battleford institution as a symbol of settler power, and when war broke out in 1885, Principal Reverend Thomas Clarke noted that some of the boys became “restless” and excited at the rumours of battle. As the conflict drew closer to Battleford, the school was abandoned and it was occupied by Indigenous and Canadian troops at different times. The Department explained these events thusly: “The condition of Indian matters in the several Provinces of the Dominion has been generally satisfactory during the past year. And if the same cannot be said with regard to the North-West Territories as a whole, it is due to circumstances which this Department had no control, but which were the result of specious inducements held out to the Indians of the North-West Territories by the leader of the half-breed insurgents and his lieutenants, and to which several of the Indian bands on the North Saskatchewan lent too ready an ear, which resulted in some of them forgetting the allegiance they owed their

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78 Leif Newry Fitzroy Crozier to the Deputy Minister of the Interior, 22 February 1880, TNA, CO 42/760. Crozier’s report implies that Riel sought to intervene on the behalf of the Sioux to resolve the growing tensions and secure an amicable settlement. Nevertheless, such a meeting was viewed with much suspicion.
Sovereign, and becoming involved in the rebellious movement.” The Department made it clear that, in its view, “The Indians who revolted had no reason for doing so.” The Department certainly saw the conflict through rose-coloured glasses and wrote, “It is encouraging to learn, from the report of the Indian commissioner for these portions of the Dominion, that notwithstanding, the excitement incident to the rebellion, educational progress among the Indian children was not seriously retarded in the North-West Territories, as shown by seven new schools having been opened during the year, and the increase generally in the number of children attending the schools.”

The Department, though, did acknowledge that resentment and tensions still existed. “It is much to be regretted,” the Deputy Superintendent General argued, “that the industrial institution established at Battleford was pillaged by the half-breeds and Indians, and the building greatly damaged. So soon as the rebellion was quelled and the troops had been withdrawn from Battleford, this institution was re-opened, the Indian children being glad to return to it.” Yet, the Department failed to mention that in an effort to deter future violent resistance, some of the boys from the Battleford Industrial school were forced to witness the hanging of 8 warriors who had participated in the war of 1885. This was done as a show of force to instil in the children a fear of white justice.

There was a close relationship between violence and schooling on the Prairies. Although British Columbia’s first official industrial school did not open until the late 1880s, demands for a new scheme for schooling Indigenous children in the

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80 Annual Report 1885, ix–xiii.
81 Annual Report 1885, xiii.
Dominion’s westernmost province were also linked to fears of Indigenous violence. Mission day schools were starting to cause serious problems. In 1885, the federal government learned of a troubling incident in connection with the mission day school at Kyakaht in the West Coast Agency. Harry Guillod, the Indian agent in the area, explained: “the Rev. Father Nicolaye has had trouble with the Indians. He, as a punishment, shut up two pupils for non-attendance at school, and some sixty of the tribe made forcible entry into his house, and three of them held him while others released the boys….It is very uphill work trying to get the children to attend school, as the parents are indifferent, and are away with them at other stations for months during the year.”83 Far from being agnostic about schooling, Indigenous parents at Kyakaht actively organized to show their displeasure with the teacher’s kidnapping. Events such as this only added further fuel to the demands by state officials, now including Indian agents, for new industrial boarding schools in the province that could effectively separate children from parents.

Metlakatla was favoured as the most desired location for British Columbia’s first industrial school because it had much of the necessary infrastructure, but also because it was the epicentre of growing Indigenous dissatisfaction on the Northwest Coast. Schooling as a strategy of containment continued. While the conflict at Metlakatla that opened this chapter ended in 1882, tensions in the community and surrounding areas remained. Indigenous peoples throughout the region were angry at the lack of meaningful movement by the state – either provincial or federal – to prevent further encroachment on Indigenous lands. Some groups, as the Ts’msyan had done at Metlakatla, made threats of

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83 Annual Report 1884, 100.
violence. The Cowichan Indian agent W.H. Lomas confirmed the growing threat: “Rumours of the Metlakatla land troubles and of the North-West rebellion have been talked over at all their little feasts, and not often with credit to the white man.” Lomas argued that the Provincial government’s actions were tantamount to playing with fire and, as a result, means should be immediately adopted to dissuade further dissent and prevent an uprising.

In this context of fear and anxiety, state officials in the late 1880s discussed the possibility of expanding the new schooling scheme beyond the Rockies. It was argued that “the most essential lever for the elevation of the race would be the adoption of a vigorous policy of imparting to the young a thorough practical knowledge of mechanical arts and of agriculture, as well as of other employments, including a systematic method of ordering and managing their domestic affairs – in short, a complete training in industries and in domestic economy.” The benefit of such a scheme was that it “dissociates the Indian child from the deleterious home influences to which he would be otherwise subjected. It reclaims him from the uncivilized state in which he has been brought up. It brings him into contact from day to day with all that tends to effect a change in his views and habits of life. By precept and example he is taught to endeavour to excel in what will be most useful to him.” Schooling, it was envisioned, could not only contain Indigenous peoples and check their power but also potentially transform them into useful and productive members of settler society.

84 Annual Report 1882, 164.
85 Annual Report 1885, 81.
86 Annual Report 1888, x.
87 Annual Report 1889, xi.
Expanding the New Schooling Scheme

By 1880, educational growth for Indigenous children in British Columbia was still small. There were just 7 schools with federal funding in operation with a total population of 544 students, 322 boys and 232 girls. As the mission day schools continued to struggle with irregular attendance, the provincial superintendent as well as local Indian agents in British Columbia began to press for the creation of new industrial boarding schools in the province similar to those established in the Northwest Territories. Powell wrote, “The question of imparting common school education to Indians, is not one unattended with difficulties, and the various systems adopted often appear to end in failure. According to my own experience, I am of opinion that no Indian school can be successful which is not connected with some industrial system, and more or less isolated from the directly opposing tendencies of camp life.” He argued, “As soon as agents are appointed in the populous Indian localities, the establishment also by the Government, or with Government aid, of two or three industrial boarding schools will be far more economical, so far as permanent and beneficial effect is concerned, than a multitude of the customary day-schools.” The idea behind this was, as Powell explained, “The listless and nomadic ways which the young native has inherited, and naturally loves, will thus have a marked interruption, not likely to be resumed, whilst the early impressions of the child will most probably be lost in the greater and more lucrative attractions of his later associations.”

In 1884, the Department announced that it intended to open industrial schools in British Columbia. At the time, in addition to the mission day schools, unofficial boarding

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89 Annual Report 1880, 121.
schools were already established at different locations around the province, including at Metlakatla, Port Simpson, Yale, Chilliwack, and St. Mary’s. However, in 1888, with Duncan out of the picture and Ridley in charge, the old Metlakatla school was retrofitted, along with other buildings, to become the province’s first officially recognized “Industrial” residential school. Metlakatla was reborn in the age of greater church-state cooperation. John R. Scott, who had worked in schools for Indigenous children in Australia, was selected as Principal of the Anglican run school. But when Scott reported for duty in November 1888, he found his immediate situation unsatisfactory; he discovered inadequate furniture to accommodate any pupils. It was not until the next spring that Scott was in a position to admit students to the school. After securing proper lodgings, Scott toured neighbouring communities throughout the North Pacific in an effort to try and convince Indigenous parents to send their children to the new school. As such, he travelled to Fort Simpson and Kincolith and also visited a number of fishing camps along the Nass River which CMS agents had been visiting since the 1860s. Of his journey he recalled, “At these places I called at nearly all the huts and houses, and wherever I saw any children I explained to their parents the objects of the school and the provision made by the Government for educating Indian boys. Generally they seemed pleased with what I had to say.” Nevertheless, Scott encountered some resistance and only a few parents agreed to send their children. Unfazed, he took in four boys and two more followed shortly thereafter. On 13 May 1889, Scott officially opened the Metlakatla school with six pupils. It was a humble beginning. Despite these early obstacles, Scott was optimistic. He wrote, “The boys I find obedient without corporal or, I may say, any punishment. They are very backward in their

90 Annual Report 1889, 119.
education. About 40 per cent. have scarcely finished with their alphabet, and the more advanced, although their ages range from 10 to 15 years, had to begin reading monosyllables in the first reader. The principal hindrance to progress arises from so very few of the children understanding, I may say, any English, and from an unwillingness on the part of the few to make use of the little they know. That, however, will no doubt, in the course of a little time, be in a great measure overcome.”\textsuperscript{91} Scott continued the school and soon more children joined. By 1900, in just over 10 years of operation, the Metlakatla school swelled to hold 59 children, 30 boys and 29 girls with an average attendance of about 50 students. Once again, Metlakatla set the schooling standard in British Columbia.

State officials immediately deemed the Metlakatla experiment enough of a success to begin preparations for new schools throughout the province. Given the widely known troubles with day schooling, a proposal to establish more industrial schools in strategic locations was propounded by Powell as “the more desirable and advantageous course.”\textsuperscript{92} Considerable debate, though, ensued about the number and most suitable sites for such schools, with Powell and the newly created Indian agents frequently weighing in on the subject. In the end, three new industrial schools were established in British Columbia in 1890: Kuper Island off the east coast of Vancouver Island, Kamloops in the interior, and Kootenay in the south eastern portion of the mainland were selected as the next trial schools in the province. All three schools were run by Catholic missionaries and allocated per-capita grants of $130 per annum per pupil based on the annual attendance.

\textsuperscript{91} Annual Report 1889, 119.
\textsuperscript{92} Annual Report 1884, 121.
All three places were also known as locations of significant Indigenous opposition to whites.

Kamloops, Kuper Island, and Kootenay were selected as sites for schools as an extension of the state’s strategy of containment. In the late 1870s, Kamloops was identified as a hotbed of dissatisfaction over the provincial government’s land policy. When two reserve commissioners reached Kamloops to investigate Secwepemc (Shuswap) complaints, they quickly sent a telegram to Ottawa informing the Indian Branch: “Indian situation very grave from Kamloops to American border—general dissatisfaction—outbreak possible.”93 Similarly, Kuper Island, which was located in the Cowichan Indian Agency, also developed a reputation for Indigenous resistance in the mid-1880s. Most notably, Indigenous peoples were upset over the state’s attack on the potlatch which, after 1884, was outlawed.94 In the late 1880s, the Kootenay region was also identified as a “problem” area. In 1887, provincial reserve commissioner Peter O’Reilly, Trutch’s brother-in-law, laid out reserves in the area in an unsatisfactory way and Ktunaxa (Kootenay) peoples, particularly Chief Isadore, were deeply dissatisfied. Isadore’s followers expressed their discontent when one of their members, Kapula, was arrested on shaky evidence of killing two white miners. In response, Isadore used force to free Kapula from jail. A detachment of the newly formed NWMP under the command of Sam Steele was sent out from Lethbridge immediately as a show of force to deter further conflict.95 In reflecting on the situation, Powell claimed, “It must be remembered that the Kootenays live on the border and have associated more or less with the Indians of the

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93 Sproat and Anderson to minister of the interior, as quoted in Fisher, Contact and Conflict, 192.
95 For more on the Kootenay conflict, see Fisher, Contact and Conflict, 203–204.
North-West Territory, with whom treaties have been made and who receive annuities, as well as with those on the American side of Tobacco Plains for whom large reserves have been established at Flat Bow Lake and who, besides annuities are supplied with schools, farm instruction, saw and grist mills &c.” He concluded, “Naturally they cannot understand the reason why they are treated otherwise, and I have no doubt they are more or less discontented with their lot in being consigned to the care of the Federal Government with a very different policy.” Thus, Powell reasoned, “There should be some general appropriations in their favour.”96 As tensions in the region eased and the NWMP was redeployed elsewhere, the barracks that had been erected for the men was updated “for industrial school purposes in the interests of the Indian children.”97 The fact that Indigenous children were to be educated in an old NWMP barracks established to check the power of their parents confirms, again, that state schooling for Indigenous children emerged in the shadow of colonial conflict. Indeed, the Principal of the Kootenay school, Nicolas Coccola, acknowledged in his first report that at the time of the school’s opening the Ktunaxa were “on the eve of breaking out into war with the whites.”98 Overall, the 1890s witnessed an increase in the creation of state schools for Indigenous children in British Columbia, many of them being erected in so-called “problem” areas.

The new federal school system was tiered and the importance and funding available for new schools depended on their ranking. At the bottom of the schooling hierarchy were the mission day schools. Given their high rates of irregular attendance and inability to effectively separate and isolate children from their parents, days schools were viewed as temporary stop-gaps; and as a result, paltry funding was made available by the

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96 Annual Report 1887, 133.
97 Annual Report 1889, x.
federal government only to cover the costs of teacher salaries, usually not more than a few hundred dollars. Nevertheless, by 1890, there were 10 day schools in operation at Alert Bay, Bella Bella, Clayoquot, Cowichan, Hazelton, Kinctolith, Masset, Lakalsap, Nanaimo, and Port Essington. By 1900, ten years later, the number of day schools jumped to 28 in all parts of the province. Of these schools, 16 were listed as being run by the Church of England, 9 Methodist, 4 Catholic, and 4 Presbyterian. Boarding schools were a cut above the day schools and had the added advantage of being able to lodge children at some distance from their parents for much of the year. Boarding schools were allowed a per-capita grant for each student up to a certain number, usually in the range of $60 to $80. In 1890, boarding schools were in operation at Coqualeetza, Port Simpson (Girls’ School), St. Mary’s, and Yale. By 1900, there were a total of seven boarding schools, with new institutions being established or recognized by the Department at Alberni, Alert Bay (Girls’ Home), and Squamish. The highest ranking, though, was reserved for the fleet of industrial schools, which received per-capita grants of usually $130.99 By 1900, new schools at Alert Bay, Coqualeetza (which was upgraded from a boarding to an industrial school) and Williams Lake joined Metlakatla, Kuper Island, Kamloops, and Kootenay as the 7 industrial schools of British Columbia.100 In fact, by 1900 British Columbia’s 7 industrial intuitions were the most of any province or territory in the Dominion; Manitoba had 4, Ontario 5, and Northwest Territories 6. While métis and even, in rare cases, white children attended these schools, by the turn of the twentieth century.

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99 For more on school funding see Milloy, “A National Crime”. By the 1890s, the federal government was concerned at the rising expenditure needed to run the industrial schools. As such, in 1892 it introduced an Order-in-Council that implemented “a forced system of economy.” After this date, boarding and industrial schools were operated on per-capita grants that were below the then-current level of expenditure. Churches were expected to absorb additional costs. This, as Milloy has argued, “would mean immediate savings and force churches to practise more ‘economical management.’”

century day, boarding, and industrial schools were increasingly being restricted to status “Indians.”101 Within twenty years, the total number of Indigenous children attending such schools had doubled, reaching a total of 1,568 by 1900.102

Mission Residential School,’ circa 1880s. BCA, D-08840. The original St. Mary’s school was built on the banks of the Fraser River in 1861. In 1882, officials relocated the school further up the hill to accommodate the building of the CPR. The building shown in the photograph above is the new school.


Learning to Labour

As the state extended its educational reach, it placed increasing emphasis on industrial training. Generally, boarding and industrial schools operated on a half-day system in which students spent part of the day receiving religious and elementary instruction, as well as time performing manual labour. Instruction was in English and the use of Indigenous languages by students was a punishable offence. However, curriculum and teaching in the early schools varied widely. Thus, in an effort to standardize instruction, the Department issued an official “Programme of Study for Indian Schools” in 1896. According to this document, students were to be taught a range of subjects and at varying levels, or “standards,” from 1 to 6. In “English,” students at the beginning level learned “Word recognition and sentence making. Simple sounds of letters of alphabet. Copying words.” At the advanced level students were to learn how to analyze sentences and parts of speech and begin oral and written composition. The Department noted, “Every effort must be made to induce pupils to speak English, and to teach them to understand it; unless they do, the whole work of the teacher is likely to be wasted.” Students were also given basic geography and history lessons. Historical instruction began at the third standard with “Stories of Indians of Canada and their civilization” and advanced to provincial and then national histories of Canada in later levels. While teachers taught students the basics of writing, reading, and arithmetic, as well as introductory history lessons, other subjects to be taught included “Ethics.” At the first level of this subject, students learned about “The practice of cleanliness, obedience, respect, order, neatness.” At the intermediate levels, pupils were instructed about the importance of “Industry” and “Thrift” as well as evils of “Pauperism.” At the most
advanced level of “Ethics,” students learned about “Patriotism,” “Enfranchisement,” and “Labour” as the “law of life” as well as the “Relations of the sexes as to labour.”

Thus, schools attempted to recalibrate children to the values essential to capitalism. One such value was that of time. “The value of time is practically exemplified,” it was argued, “in the class room, at recreation, or in any fatigue work which he may be required to perform, by the recurrence every day of the hour at which each duty has to commence and again of the time by which it should be completed. The importance to an Indian child of such instruction cannot be overestimated, as innate in him, inherited from his parents, is an utter disregard of time, and ignorance of its value.” Another value was the dignity of labour. Of the industrial schools, it was stated that “the rules requiring the boys to receive outdoor instruction in manual labour, in addition to training in the schoolroom, are observed, and fair progress is being made. Roads and other improvements are under construction, and although few of the boys have been accustomed to work, yet they are displaying a praiseworthy desire to learn, and the efficiency which it is hoped they will attain will hereafter be of benefit to themselves and a credit to the school.”

Even if expensive industrial machinery could not be immediately supplied, schools were still supported as important “levers in the social and moral education of the Indian youth of the country; and while instruction in mechanical arts is not afforded the pupils at these institutions, they are nevertheless taught by other, though less expensive means, the value of time (a most important factor in the instruction of Indians), and that there should be an object for the employment of every moment; even, therefore, the routine of rising, dressing and washing themselves daily….are all of

104 Annual Report 1889, xi.  
105 Annual Report 1890, 125.
great importance in the training and education, with a view to future usefulness of children who would, as a rule, never have received the benefit of the same at their homes.” The Department argued that this form of schooling was “superior” to the day schools in Indigenous peoples into productive, contributing members of a capitalist settler society.106


106 Annual Report 1891, xiii.
As such, learning to labour was a particular emphasis of the new school system. While much of the focus in the North-West Territories was instructing children in the arts of agriculture, schools in British Columbia incorporated industrial training. This, in large part, was because many Indigenous peoples were already working in many industries throughout the province. In 1889, the Department observed that “Indians are to be found in this Province, engaged in every branch of labour, in mining, agriculture, cattle herding, catching and canning fish, working as hands on steamboats, at railroad work, seal
hunting, trapping furs, manufacturing oil, working at mills, picking hops &c., &c.”

Using education to transform Indigenous peoples into producers of wealth was what Dufferin had advocated during his tour in 1876. Now, almost twenty years later, the Department argued, “It would be highly desirable, if it were practicable, to obtain entire possession of all Indian children after they attain to the age of seven or eight years, and keep them at schools of the industrial type until they have had a thorough course of instruction, not only in the ordinary subjects taught at public schools, but in some useful and profitable trade, or in agriculture, as the aptitude of the pupil might indicate he was best fitted for. Were such a course adopted the solution of that problem, designated ‘the Indian question’ would probably be effected sooner than it is likely to be under the present system.” In 1891, Edgar Dewdney, as Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, stated that the goal of the new schooling scheme was to convert Indigenous peoples, starting with youth, “into useful members of society and contributors to, instead


108 Annual Report 1890, xii.
of merely consumers of, the wealth of the country.” In short, Indigenous peoples would ideally leave school to become useful and productive members of the emerging capitalist settler society. The reality, of course, was that many were disconnected from the land only to survive on the margins of a wage economy.

The great transformation of Indigenous lifeways in schools was profoundly gendered. Originally, industrial boarding schools were proposed only for boys and emphasis was placed on agricultural and industrial training and an orientation to basic manual labour. In 1891, at Metlakatla, Scott claimed that “thirteen boys received some instruction in carpentry – the trade likely to be of the greatest service to them on leaving – and the most of these exhibit an aptitude for the work.” At Kootenay, Principal Coccola explained that the “boys have been taught sawing and splitting firewood, clearing land, gardening, and housework in their own apartments.” The next year, Coccola added: “The boys under the supervision of the foreman have cleared and cultivated several acres of the school ground. They have been gardening and planting fruit trees. Some have commenced to learn the carpenter trade; they have built a good chicken-house and put a high fence around the yard.” At Kuper Island in 1893 Principal G. Donckeke stated, “Five boys take lessons in shoemaking, and Mr. Renax, their instructor, is well pleased with the aptitude of his apprentices; two of his pupils are now able to turn out a new shoe, all but the cutting of the leather. The carpenter, Mr. O. Gustafson, has four apprentices. These are not yet very far advanced in their trade, still they have been of great help in the

109 Annual Report 1891, x.
111 For more on residential schooling and gender see Miller, Shingwauk’s Vision: A History of Native Residential Schools (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 217–250.
112 Annual Report 1891, 170 and 136.
113 Annual Report 1892, 262.
erection of a new laundry, 20 by 30 feet, two new sheds for lumber and wood, a house for hydraulic ram, picket fences, and the repairing of the buildings; they have also been useful in painting the newly erected buildings and fences.”\textsuperscript{114} In Alberni in 1897 the Principal said, “the boys understand a good deal about gardening and woodcutting, but the trades are not open to them in this small place. They have shown aptitude in all sorts of woodwork in which they have had an opportunity of showing what they can do.”\textsuperscript{115} Costs of industrial equipment kept training rather rudimentary and mostly accustomed boys to the drudgery and discipline of manual labour.

Manual training was also gradually extended to Indigenous girls as they were admitted to the schools. Preparation work for girls similarly blurred the lines between training and chores and mostly centred on domestic labour.\textsuperscript{116} At Kamloops, it was stated that the Sisters of St Ann, who helped run the Catholic school, “are imparting useful lessons to the girls, not only in the schoolroom but in the several branches of housekeeping work. Already the older girls give important assistance in cooking, washing, mending, etc., for the inmates of the school.”\textsuperscript{117} Like the “training” for boys, girls were groomed to perform the unpaid labour necessary to keep the school running. At Kootenay in 1891, Principal Coccola explained that the 15 girls present at the institution “have been taught housework, cooking, baking, washing, ironing, sewing, mending clothes, dairy work and gardening. Five of the largest girls have become able to bake good bread, also to cook ordinary victuals. Their progress in sewing is no less worthy of mention. Three of them, apart from the cutting out, can make their clothes

\textsuperscript{114} Annual Report 1893, 133.
\textsuperscript{115} Annual Report 1897, 280.
\textsuperscript{116} Milloy argues that due to the lack of adequate government funding, getting students to perform manual labour was often used simply to keep the schools running. Milloy, “A National Crime”, 63.
\textsuperscript{117} Annual Report 1890, 125.
well, whilst the others are trying to improve in that branch of education.” At the Kuper Island school in 1892 Principal Donckele stated, “The female pupils have during the few months they have been at school been very proficient in general house and kitchen work; they also afford good assistance in sewing, mending, knitting and washing.” Clothing production, in particular, was a focus of institutions housing girls. Donckele explained, “During the course of the last year the following articles were made at the institution, exclusive of mending the children’s clothes: Fifty jumpers, three suits, forty-eight sheets, thirty-one pillow cases, fifty-one aprons, forty-seven dresses, twenty-four chemises, twelve collars, one pair trousers, thirteen skirts, ten napkins, twenty-four night dresses, twelve rollers, six dish towels, twenty-five night shirts and nine pairs stockings. The making of these articles is estimated at one hundred and fifty dollars.”

119 Annual Report 1892, 261.
“Doing Fancy Work at Williams Lake Industrial School, BC.” Annual Report 1899-1900, 400.

“Teachers and Girls of the Williams Lake Industrial School, BC.” AR 1899-1900, 416.
Girls were outfitted for the demands of domestic labour, either at home or in the employ of others. In 1892, Coccola said, “The girls have been exercised in all domestic work; their efforts and their progress meet our expectation. They have especially improved in cleanliness, order and economy.”

In 1893 at Kuper Island, Donckeke explained that the “Girls’ Department,” which was managed by three sisters of St. Ann, was highly effective. He remarked, “Although the girls are very young, still the reverend sisters are greatly pleased with the aptitude and good will displayed by their pupils, who are all very, well behaved, clever, active and industrious. In turn, two by two, they take their places in the kitchen, and thus acquire a very useful knowledge of cooking, baking and general housework.”

At the All Hallows Boarding School at Yale, known widely for its preparation of students for employment in the field of domestic service, Sister Superior Amy wrote, “The pupils are all carefully trained for domestic service, so that they are able to earn their own living respectably, or in the event of marriage, to keep their husbands’ homes comfortable.”

Principals often noted that “as a rule the girls are more industrious than the boys;” however, some glimpses of resistance to this gendered training are evident in reports. For example, Mrs. J. Redner of the Port Simpson Girls’ Home noted in 1897 that “one or two large girls who came in could not stand the steady work and discipline, so we discharged them.”

Nonetheless, boys and girls, in short, were educated to take up and perform particular gender roles that supported the emergence of a patriarchal capitalist settler society.

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120 Annual Report 1892, 262.
121 Annual Report 1893, 133–134.
122 Annual Report 1898, 341. For more on the All Hallows school at Yale and domestic education see Barman, “Separate and Unequal.”
123 Annual Report 1897, 295.
Within only a few short years, state and school officials asserted that the new schooling scheme was achieving the desired effect. In 1893, Principal A.M Carion at Kamloops explained, “The greatest difficulty we experience with the pupils is to overcome their natural repugnance to work of any kind; but I have no doubt that they will gradually be made to look upon work as a necessary and healthy occupation. They have made some progress in this respect, and considering that they have been under training but a short time, the result is gratifying.”\textsuperscript{124} In 1894, Principal Coccola at Kootenay stated “although brought up with their people in idleness and in perfect ignorance of all sorts of work, the active life of this industrial school is soon cheerfully embraced by the new comers. The larger ones, of their own choice, are rarely inactive. The different teachers cultivate that commendable disposition not only in trying to render them proficient in whatever work they engage, but in using every means possible to make them love their work and appreciate a useful life. They show a real desire to become qualified for some trade or employment, as they commence to understand that the roaming habits of their people will have soon to be done away with on account of the game becoming more and more scarce…”\textsuperscript{125} Indeed, as to the benefits, it was argued: “It has justly been said by one greatly interested in Indian industrial training that no system of Indian training is right that does not endeavour to develop all the abilities, remove prejudice against labour, and give courage to, compete with the rest of the world. The Indian problem exists owning to the fact that the Indian is untrained to take his place in the world. Once teach him to do this, and the solution is had.”\textsuperscript{126} Only a few short years later, in 1897, Coccola argued that the school’s efforts to “instill into the children a love of labour” had “been crowned with

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\textsuperscript{124} Annual Report 1893, 131.  \\
\textsuperscript{125} Annual Report 1894, 169.  \\
\textsuperscript{126} Annual Report 1895, xxii.  
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success.” The Department thus concluded, “If the schools be regarded as the chief factors of the great transformation that is being wrought, it would seem a natural and logical sequence to establish as many as the country’s finances will admit of.” Within only thirty years, the Dominion government had erected a new schooling system that not only sought to contain the threat of Indigenous violence, but one that also tried to transform Indigenous children and teach them to accept roles in the evolving capitalist settler society.

Disease and Death

The Department was quick to proclaim the new schooling scheme a success, but there were signs that the system was flawed from the start. Most of these indicators were ignored or simply overlooked by state officials. Although the documentary record is obviously skewed in favour of the Department, constant remarks about inadequate conditions, poor food, rampant illness, and reports of deaths are noticeable in almost all school reports. Sickness pervaded state schools from the beginning. Waves of disease and death had always accompanied Europeans, and the new schools, particularly boarding and industrial institutions, were beset by episodes of devastating illness. In 1891, Scott explained that at Metlakahtla, “the epidemic influenza known as ‘la grippe’ visited the Indian village here, and shortly afterwards extended to this institution.” Similarly, “la grippe” affected 13 children at the Kuper Island school in the same year.

127 Annual Report 1897, 290.
128 Annual Report 1895, xxiii.
129 For more on sickness and residential schooling in British Columbia see Mary-Ellen Kelm, Colonizing Bodies: Aboriginal Health and Healing in British Columbia, 1900-50 (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1998), 57–80.
130 Annual Report 1891, 170.
The disease ravaged the Kootenay School the next year as many children were dismissed and allowed to return home for care. Given that schools took in children from a variety of communities, the practice of sending sick children home to their communities had the effect of exacerbating the spread of the disease throughout the province.

Influenza was not the only infectious disease to visit schools. Children suffered from consumption or pneumonia, whooping cough, chicken pox, and other ailments. In 1893, Donckele explained, “Five [children] were allowed to go home upon the advice of the doctor, because the state of their health was such that the confinement of the school did not agree with them. Three others were affected with that very common complaint, scrofula, were permitted to remain home for a time.” Also in 1893, Scott claimed that the Metlakatla school “is exposed to all epidemics which visit any of the surrounding villages. In November later, two-thirds of the pupils had an attack of the mumps, and one was seriously ill with pneumonia. On that account school was closed for ten days. The general health of the pupils, however, was otherwise good, and there was not any death within the year.”131 In comparison, the annual reports of British Columbia’s public schools rarely mentioned officials having to deal with the difficulties of disease, as most parents were able to care for their sick children at home.

While many reports talk proudly of rehabilitating sickly students, they also recorded deaths. As mentioned above, some students died at school and were recorded while others surely went unrecorded, especially as schools were still trying to convince parents that it was safe to send their children to school.132 Many other sick students,

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131 Annual Report 1893, 133 and 129.
132 Miller argues that some schools surely accepted sickly students to secure more lucrative grants for their institutions, a practice that exacerbated the health conditions of many schools. Miller, Shingwauk’s Vision, 132.
however, were simply sent home for parents to treat. In still other cases, parents learned of their child’s condition and organized to take them home for healing. It is difficult, then, to establish how school officials kept track of student deaths once children were sent home or were taken from schools by their parents.

Nevertheless, the records on school deaths that do exist are deeply troubling. In 1891, Coccola claimed, “The ‘grippe’ has severely affected several pupils, although the best care has been taken by the Sisters to avoid all fatal results; still one boy became a victim of it.” Other schools were hit much harder. In 1892, the Kootenay school offered a grim update on some of the schools’ pupils:

Gabriel, 9 mos'. attendance. Left for home being sick.
Mary Tharé, 9 mos'. attendance. Died after few months that she was at home.
Nancy, 11 mos'. attendance. Died of “la grippe.”
Anastasie, 2 mos'. attendance. Died of “la grippe.”
Eliza, 13 mos'. attendance. Left sick with “la grippe.”
John, 13 mos'. attendance. Left sick with “la grippe.”
Michel, 4 mos'. attendance. Left sick with “la grippe.”
Adolphe, 13 mos'. attendance. Died at school.
Elizabeth, 4 mos'. attendance. Left sick.
Mary Andrew, 14 mos'. attendance. Died of the consequences of “la grippe.”
Fabien, 16 mos'. attendance. Left sick.
Ellen, 4 mos'. attendance. Being scrofulous was sent back to her parents.
Sophie, 19 mos'. attendance. Being weak after having had “la grippe” it was thought best to give her vacation.
Antoine, 17 mos'. attendance. Being weak after having had “la grippe” it was thought best to give him vacation.
Amelia, 18 mos'. attendance. Being weak after having had “la grippe” it was thought best to give her vacation.

Coccola thus offered an ugly picture of sickness and death associated with the Kootenay school. In 1899, at the Port Simpson Girls’ Home, the recorded enrolment was 40 and 6 pupils, or 12 percent of the study body, died – “three from tubercular meningitis, and

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133 Annual Report 1891, 136.
three from pulmonary tuberculosis.”\textsuperscript{134} The next year 3 pupils died at the same school, “one of consumption, one of tubercular meningitis, and one of kidney disease.”\textsuperscript{135} Overall, between 1890 and 1900, 60 deaths were recorded and reported by boarding and industrial school officials in British Columbia to the Department of Indian Affairs; there were also many more vague references to student illness that likely resulted in deaths that were not reported. While mortality rates in general were especially high during this period in British Columbia, and particularly so amongst the Indigenous population, the death rates in boarding and industrial schools were especially troubling.\textsuperscript{136} In The City Below the Hill, Herbert Brown Ames considered a “Crude Death Rate” (CDR) of 34 per 1000 people as “excessive” in his study of the slums in fin de siècle Montréal. The most recent research on deaths in residential schools suggests that the CDR in Canada’s Indian Residential Schools, which only accommodated children, steadily increased between 1890 and 1914, approaching almost 30 at its highest point. John Douglas Belshaw suggests that British Columbia’s turn-of-the century death rates averaged around 20 per

\textsuperscript{134} Annual Report 1899, 388.
\textsuperscript{135} Annual Report 1900, 416.
\textsuperscript{136} Historian John Douglas Belshaw argues that numerous factors shaped mortality rates in British Columbia, including climate, population density, and access to drinking water, and he suggests that it is important to emphasize that mortality differed from town to town and city to city and, by nature, was episodic. Nevertheless, Belshaw argues that British Columbia had a high mortality rate in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Moreover, Indigenous peoples, who were increasingly hemmed in on reserves and cut off from their subsistence economies by settler encroachment, had a higher than average infant mortality rate. John Douglas Belshaw, “The Mourning After: Mortality,” in Becoming British Columbia: A Population History (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2009), 162–185. For more on Indigenous health and colonization see, Mary-Ellen Kelm, Colonizing Bodies: Aboriginal Health and Healing in British Columbia, 1900–50 (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1998). According to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, there were a total of 3,201 reported deaths prior to 1940. Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future: Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (Ottawa: Library and Archives Canada, 2015), 94–95.
The conditions of schools were considered bad enough that Dr. Peter Henderson Bryce, after being hired by the Department of Indian Affairs to investigate the conditions of Indian Residential Schools in the early 1900s, including the Kootenay school, remarked upon the “scandalous procession of Indian children to school and on to the cemetery.”

It is important to note how principals chose to discuss documented deaths. Most officials offered positive assessment of pupils’ general health but regretfully acknowledged the death of one or more of the children, usually blaming children and parents for deaths. In 1895, Donckele complained, “I am sorry that I have to record the death of our senior pupil, Simon. On the 12th of May he had an attack of pleurisy and his parents insisted upon treating him at home, where he died on 18th of May. It is greatly to be regretted that as soon as a pupil gets sick his parents withdraw him from the school and expose him to die from the want of proper nursing.” In the same year, the Principal of the Alert Bay school, A.W. Corker, similarly reported, “The general health of the boys has been good, with one exception. One of the small boys was ill, his parents insisted on his removal to his home, and, I regret to say, he died two weeks after from acute croupous pneumonia.”

At the Coqualeetza Industrial School, E. Robson noted, “Through a kind Providence we have had but little serious illness among the pupils, only one – always delicate – having died at 10 years of age.” In 1900, Joseph Hall, who

137 Brown Ames, *The City Below the Hill: A Sociological Study of a Portion of the City of Montréal, Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1972), 86. See Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future*, 94. In almost 50% of cases, the cause of death was not recorded; of the causes reported Tuberculosis claimed the most lives.

138 Quoted in Kelm, *Colonizing Bodies*, 64. She claims that at the Kootenay school, Bryce found that “34 percent of pupils admitted since 1892 were dead by 1909.”

139 Annual Report 1895, 152.

140 Annual Report 1895, 151.

141 Annual Report 1895, 155.
replaced Robeson at Coqualeetza, explained: “Three of the children have died through the development of inherited tendencies undetected and presumably undetectable at the time of their admission to the institute.”

Death rates in federal schools across the country were sufficiently high that they caught the attention of the Department of Indian Affairs in 1896. The Department, though, explained troubling mortality rates as a consequence of innate “racialized” health characteristics: “That dreadful disease, scrofula, so prevalent in the Indian, makes him greatly predisposed to pulmonary attacks, and finally carries him to an early grave. Upon this account the department has found that it must be guarded in its selection of children for the schools, and is enforcing a rule requiring new pupils to pass an examination as to health before enrolment.”

Rather than look seriously at conditions within the schools, and how they contributed to student deaths, officials aligned with church and state tried to shirk responsibility for high rates of student mortality.

**Cultures of Resistance**

As the new school system was getting started in British Columbia, parents and children used various forms of resistance to protest poor conditions and even challenge...
the very existence of the schools as embodiments of settler colonialism. Parental intervention into the schooling process was perhaps the most common form of interference. M. Hagan, the Principal of the Kamloops Industrial school, noted in 1890, just a few months after its inception, that “the natural affection of Indian parents for their children leads such of them as have children at the school to make frequent visits to it, and their camping nearby has caused a restless feeling among the children in attendance. This, it is hoped will be gradually remedied.” Instead of improving over time, parental interference increased as the school system was expanded. A few years later, in 1892, Hagan wrote, “Were it not for outside interference with the pupils by parents, relatives and acquaintances from the homes of the boys and girls, contentment would prevail and discipline could be carried out with greater ease. The location of the school buildings upon one reserve, and the highway to another, causes too many visitors, which leads to trouble and makes it particularly difficult for the principal.”

144 For more on resistance and residential schooling see Celia Haig-Brown, Resistance and Renewal: Surviving the Indian Residential School (Vancouver: Tillacum Library, 1988); Miller, “‘You Ain’t My Boss’: Resistance,” in Shingwauk’s Vision, 343–374. Miller argues, “It is hardly surprising that the excesses that occurred in many residential schools provoked protest and resistance, from both parents and students. In due course, the same grievances would lead to collective recriminations and pressure for change that were transmitted through Indian political organizations. During the first six decades of the modern residential school system, however, opportunities to combine voices of protest were usually limited to the family or the band in the case of adults, and to the level of a dormitory among the student body. Though limited in scope for a long time, the forms that Native resistance took were surprisingly numerous. Among parents and family friends the reactions ranged from complaints, to withholding of cooperation, to violent retribution, to defiance of the underlying assimilative thrust of Indian Affairs policy. Within the ranks of the students themselves, there was a similarly large number of ways in which children and young adults could make their objections known. They could and did complain loudly to their families; they could disturb the schools’ routine with behaviour that ranged from a lack of cooperation to outright disruption. When pushed too far to be satisfied by these modest responses, they had available more serious sanctions, such as desertion and destruction. Residential school children and parents protested and resisted in many ways.” (343–344). For more on Indigenous resistance and resurgence, see Michi Saagig Nishnaabeg (Mississauga Anishinaabe) scholar Leanne Simpson’s Dancing on Our Turtle’s Back: Stories of Nishabeg Re-Creation, Resurgence and a New Emergence (Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring Publishing, 2011).

145 Annual Report 1890, 125.

146 Annual Report 1892, 260.
Parents also refused to send their children back to school after designated holidays. Principal of the Kamloops school, A.M. Carton, stated in 1894: “Difficulty was experienced in complying with the wise instructions of the department concerning holidays; the pupils and the Indians were simply told that no holidays would be granted, and no complaints were heard on the subject….It is decidedly a great advantage to keep the children under constant supervision during the whole year.”

Parents also organized to withdraw their children at other times of the year. John R. Scott of the Metlakatla school explained in 1892 that “some [children] were withdrawn because they were needed at home, others through anxiety of the part of parents. That anxiety arose from their sons being far away from home during the prevalence here, about a year ago, of the influenza epidemic.”

The Departmental reports were often contradictory and reflected a range of positions held by parents. Some parents, the Department claimed, were enthusiastic about schooling while others continued to be suspicious of the government’s intentions.

Still other parents had a more radical reasoning for their resistance. Scott reported that some of the parents in the vicinity of Metlakatla he encountered reportedly told him bluntly: “we have come to an agreement among ourselves not to send any of our children to the school.” When Scott pressed for a reason for the decision, the parents told him, “we mean to keep our children at home if the government will not give us back our country, of which we have been despoiled by whites.”

While Scott reported that some change in parental opinion was occurring, he stated the simple fact that “Indians are very much attached to their children. There are seemingly very few cases of child desertion

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147 Annual Report 1894, 168.
148 Annual Report 1892, 259.
149 Annual Report 1895, xxi.
150 Annual Report 1895, 162.
among them.”\footnote{Annual Report 1895, 162.} In 1899, the department concluded that “while but little remains to be removed of that prejudice and superstition which provoke actual resistance to instruction, the strong disinclination on the part of the parents to the separation involved in letting them go to industrial schools, at a distance from the reserves, and remain sufficiently long to derive any real benefit, remains more or less widespread.”\footnote{Annual Report 1899, xxxi.} Parental interference and outright resistance, then, continued to be a key obstacle to the new schooling scheme.

As a countermeasure, the department flirted with the idea of instituting compulsory education enforceable by law. Some measure of compulsion had been introduced in the public school system of the province, which helped to secure greater average attendance in the 1880s and 1890s. However, the management of Indian Affairs was a more delicate issue and caution was the order of the day. Nevertheless, Vowell issued a circular to Donckele at Kuper Island informing him that: “Frequent complaints having been received by the Department from various sources of the small and irregular attendance of children at Industrial Schools, the Department considers it advisable that some means shall be adopted to compel the parents and guardians of children of school age to send the children to school; and with this end in view, I have to request that you will call upon the Chiefs in Council to frame Rules and Regulations, under sub-section g of section 76 of the Indian Act, or sub-section g of section 10 of the Indian Advancement Act (if that act has been applied to Indians under your charge) respecting the attendance at school of children between the ages of six and fifteen years.”\footnote{Circular. A.W. Vowell to Donckele, 7 January 1891, MS-1276, BCA A01971, Kuper Island Indian Industrial School 1889–1938, Vol 26—Vol 43, Vol 5, Correspondence Inward, 13 June 1890–1895 April 1893.} It is unclear what happened in this matter; however, compulsory attendance for residential schools did not
come into effect until the Indian Act was amended in 1920, making it mandatory for every child between the ages of seven and fifteen to attend school.\textsuperscript{154} The Department rightly worried that compulsory schooling, if instituted too early, could spark dangerous conflict and potentially risk the colonial project and engender bitter relations. In the meantime, it was the job of the Indian agent to encourage parents to send their eligible school age children to school. Ironically, the lack of a compulsory schooling policy for British Columbia in the nineteenth century gave parents some measure of control to continue to resist the new schooling scheme and the growing power of the state, which continued into the twentieth century.

Resistance, however, was not limited to parents. Children, too, found ways to resist state schooling. Students registered their resistance in various ways, ranging from speaking their own language and disobeying orders, to running away and even trying to burn down their schools. Shortly after the Kuper Island school was opened, Donckele explained, “Considerable dissatisfaction concerning the school seemed to exist amongst the pupils as well as amongst the Indians in general. It is difficult to say whether their uneasiness was grounded on any real cause, but due allowance must, of course, be made for the many difficulties incidental to the organization of an institution of this kind amongst the various tribes of Indians unaccustomed to school life and discipline.”\textsuperscript{155}

While Donckele’s reports to the Department of Indian Affairs painted a rosy picture of the school’s progress, other documentary evidence reveals quite a different story. A “Conduct Book” from the early years of the Kuper Island school shows that many students lived in a culture of fear. Students were frequently punished for “talking Indian,”

\textsuperscript{154} For more on the politics of compulsory schooling for Indigenous peoples see Milloy, “A National Crime”, 69–72.
\textsuperscript{155} Annual Report 1891, 135.
“disobedience,” “coming late,” “fighting,” and “wrestling.” And for such transgressions a variety of punishments were applied, including confinement and “work at recess.” Manual labour, then, was both preferred pedagogy and punishment. In 1892 alone, Harry, “inmate” No. 5, received a total of 28 punishments for “misdemeanour,” “laziness,” “playing forbidden games,” “talking in bed,” “breaking bounds,” and “fighting.” These infractions were assessed according to a system of points, most being worth 1 while fighting was worth 2. All of these misconducts were punished with “work at noon.” Other common punishments for infractions included “kneeling down at recess” and “bread and water for supper.” It is, of course, difficult to determine if such behaviour was simply part of the social order or examples of what James C. Scott calls a “hidden transcript” whereby the oppressed devise strategies to critique their oppressors and carve out their own cultures of resistance.156 Surely, it was a combination of both.157 Regardless, student resistance, whether conscious or unconscious, was documented by state and school officials as simply bad behaviour.

Other institutions similarly deployed discipline for infractions, which students resented. At the Kamloops school, constant supervision was required: “to make our teaching effective, a continuous supervision is exercised over them from morning to night. No infraction of the rules or morality and good manners is left without due correction, and thus, generally, the pupils are made to form good habits. We keep constantly before their mind the object which the Government has in view in carrying on

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157 Miller’s chapter on resistance and residential schooling in Shingwauk’s Vision supports such a claim. Similar to Scott, Miller argues that children, like their parents, used the limited means of resistance available to them to register their voices of concern and critique. Given the great power imbalance of the schools, everything from breaking the strict rules on the segregation of the sexes and speaking an Indigenous language to absenteeism and arson can be evaluated as contributing, consciously or not, to a schools’ culture of resistance.
the industrial-schools, which is to civilize the Indians, to make them good, useful and law-abiding members of society." 158 At the Port Simonson Girls’ Industrial Home, J. Redner stated, “Discipline is firm but kind. The pupils are trained as much as possible to govern themselves. The punishments used are private reproof, corporal punishment in rare instances and solitary confinement in extreme cases.” 159 The next year, Redner also added “whipping” to the punitive methods used at the school in “extreme cases.” 160 Some students were even expelled for their transgressions. In 1892, in Metlakatala, Scott reported that “one who had so little respect for the eight commandment [i.e. you shall not steal] that – although he had many good qualities and gave promise of becoming a skillful workman – had to be discharged.” 161 At the Coqualeetza Industrial School, E. Robson claimed, “The moral conduct of the pupils gave us some difficulty early in the year” which resulted in the “expulsion of several seniors.” 162 As historian John Milloy has noted about the schools, “discipline was curriculum and punishment was pedagogy.” 163 Nevertheless, students resisted the schooling project with the limited means at their disposal, and being expelled for misconduct was one way of escaping the school’s clutches.

Students could also escape their schools by running away. Run-away attempts were particularly rampant at the Kamloops school, where students were in closer proximity to their parents. In 1891, Principal Hagan noted the first incident of run-aways: “Two of the Shuswap boys, Martial and Daniel, brothers, ran away and after a time were

158 Annual Report 1896, 382.
159 Annual Report 1896, 390.
160 Annual Report 1896, 159
161 Annual Report 1892, 258.
162 Annual Report 1895, 155.
163 Milloy, “A National Crime”, 44.
brought back by parents; same boys left again and no effort was made to have them return….June 18, Louis and Francis ran away, having acted as jockies at races they became excited as Dominion Day races approached. They are still absent from the school. The former is nephew to Chief Louis, who said he would send after the boy.”164 The next year it was reported that during the winter, a female student ran away and she got frostbite on her feet.165 In outlining the reasons for children running away, the Principal noted that there was an “ill-feeling towards manual labour” and the requirement that the boys receive outdoor instruction in manual labour was “disagreeable” to both students and parents and “created a kind of uneasiness.” Similarly, at the Williams Lake school to the west, Principal J.M.J Lejacq confessed that the school’s beginning was “a little stormy.” He explained: “the children used to run where they liked, and do what they pleased, found it hard at first to be corralled in by the routine of the house.”166 Similarly, the Indian Agent for the Cowichan agency remarked at the opening of the Kuper Island school that “at first, as before reported the boys could not stand confinement and several ray away.”167 In 1894, A.M. Carton remarked that desertion continued to plague the Kamloops school: “One boy deserted and I refused to take him back. Two girls, being of weakly constitution, were discharged. They were immediately replaced by more desirable pupils.”168 Principals continued to blame students for desertion rather than reflecting on the conditions of the school. In 1897, Donckele stated: “one boy, No. 63, who seemed to suffer from a mania of truancy, would constantly coax other boys to run away with him,

164 Annual Report 1891, 134.
165 Annual Report 1892, 259
166 Annual Report 1892, 264.
168 Annual Report 1894, 166.
and this for a time created some uneasiness in the minds of the other boys. However, as soon as the department had discharged this boy, everything went on smoothly. “\textsuperscript{169}

While some students tried to escape early industrial schools on foot, others turned to more incendiary methods. On multiple occasions, students tried to burn down their schools in the 1890s, a practice that continued into the 1900s. In late 1895, Donckele reported that a number of boys tried to destroy the Kuper Island school. At 1:35 in the afternoon on Friday, 15 November 1895 it was reported that “fire is discovered in the boys’ building and successfully extinguished in half an hour. Cause unknown. The damage is light.”\textsuperscript{170} At roughly the same time the next day, Saturday, 16 November 1895, another fire was discovered, this time in the basement of the boys’ building. It is unclear how officials detected the fire or who was ultimately held responsible for the arson attempts. However, shortly after it was reported: “The conduct of some of the boys was reprehensible, 3 of them attempted to set fire to the boys building.”\textsuperscript{171} The students, on order of the Superintendent, were expelled immediately. Officials, of course, did not convey these incidents in the annual report to the Department, but they were recorded in other forms of documentary evidence such as the schools’ conduct book and daily journal. In 1889, John R. Scott similarly noted that a firebug had hit Metlakatla. Scott, though, officially reported that the fire was due to “the carelessness of one of the

\textsuperscript{169} Annual Report 1897, 292.
\textsuperscript{171} MS-1276, BCA A01971 Kuper Island Indian Industrial School 1889-1938…Conduct Book, Kuper Island Industrial School, 1895.
While I found no evidence in the British Columbia context, Miller argues that in other schools even disgruntled mission staff set schools ablaze.¹⁷³

Due to the one-sided nature of the existing documentary record from this period, glimpses of violence, mistreatment, and student resistance are rare. One source provides a somewhat different perspective: a detailed and damning letter written about Crosby’s Port Simpson Boys’ and Girls’ Homes by Mrs. Shaw to the Executive of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society. This 1898 letter paints a disturbing picture of what schooling on the Northwest Coast was like and is punctuated by accounts of punishment as well as student resistance. Shaw travelled to Port Simpson to spend five weeks at Crosby’s institution working as a matron. Her time at the school, however, was less than ideal. Her letter chronicles a culture of abuse, violence, and repression of the worst kind. Shaw wrote: “The minutest detail of every boy’s life was supervised by somebody, and his thinking faculties were fairly superintended out of him….What do you think of locking dormitory doors upon boys most of whom are on the verge of young manhood; this is the unwavering rule at the Home, and if during the night one of them wanted to go out, he had to knock on the wall, and, if he succeeded in waking the Matron she had to get up and let him out, await his return and relock him in again. If he did not succeed in awaking her, but I need not explain further.”¹⁷⁴ Shaw argued that the children were deliberately kept in “a culture of fear,” which she blasted as being both “wrong and unnatural.” She confessed: “I can truthfully say that I never was in any place where I saw no little manifestation of love and sympathy as in that Mission Home at Port Simpson.

¹⁷² Annual Report 1899, 405.
¹⁷³ Miller, Shingwauk’s Vision, 368–369.
¹⁷⁴ BCA, Mss. 2644, British Columbia Conference, Reports, Clippings and Letters, Indian Affairs, 1881–1899. Extracts from a Letter Regarding the Indian Homes at Port Simpson, BC.
‘Never trust an Indian’ was a quotation I heard very frequently and truly it seemed the rule in that Institution. None of the boys were treated and right well they know this lack of faith in them. One of the big boys put the matter in a nut shell when he said ‘We never receive anything here but a threat or a command.’” She also remarked at the poor health and sanitation of the school, noting prevalent cases of skin disease and an “insufficient diet.” On the subject of food, Shaw confessed, “I was compelled to set meat before the boys that my brothers would not set before their dogs….It was nearly rotten that the smell of it when cooking was so bad that I really could not stay in the kitchen, and the boys, hungry as I am sure they were, said that they could not eat it, this, when there was abundance of good wholesome food in the house, seemed to me inexcusable.”

Shaw did not restrict her condemnation to the Boys’ school. The Girls’ school did not fare much better, which she felt was “conducted on pretty much the same principles.” One incident, in particular, Shaw was compelled to pass along: “there was a girl [Nellie Tennis] in the Home that caused a great deal of trouble. It happened that her father wished to take her away from the Home before she had stayed the requisite length of time and eventually the case went to law.” Nellie was taken back to the home but shortly thereafter snuck out to a nearby village without permission to spend the night with a girlfriend. School officials went to collect her and shortly after midnight, Shaw was “awakened by awful screams from downstairs.” She recalled, “As soon as I had recovered from my fright I awoke to the fact that Nellie Tennis, a full grown young woman, engaged to be married, was receiving a severe thrashing at the hands of the man who was the spiritual and temporal over-sight of the Boys’ Home….My blood nearly froze in my veins as the shrieks of the unfortunate woman rang through the house, and to
my dying day I shall never forget the agony in her voice as she pleaded, ‘O Mr. Richards, pray for me.’” Nor would Shaw forget Mr. Richards’ response, “Pray for you? I am tired of praying for you.” After the beating, Nellie was thrown into a “little stuffy pantry off the kitchen without air or light.” According to Shaw, Nellie was left in that place for days with nothing but an old mat and a blanket, which was particularly egregious because at the time she “was suffering from a large running sore on one of her hips.”
Overall, Shaw claimed that the list of horrors she encountered during her brief matronship, including the culture of fear, the smell of rotten food, the piercing screams of students, all “burned into my heart” and “upset all my preconceived ideas of Missionary work.” Shaw tried to blow the whistle on Crosby’s institutions; however, her letter was mostly ignored. This was the dark side of the Dominion’s new schooling scheme. In the eyes of church and state, the ends justified the means. Indigenous children generally became collateral damage during Canada’s great transformation.

Conclusion

Despite the documented horrors of the new school system as well as mounting parental and student resistance, the state nevertheless continued to expand its scheme for schooling Indigenous children across the Dominion into the twentieth century. By 1900, there were 297 schools in operation in all parts of the country: 226 day schools, 39 boarding schools, and 22 industrial schools with a total of 9,634 children, 5,121 boys and 4,513 girls. In British Columbia, specifically, the educational growth was significant. In the early 1870s, there were approximately 8 schools in operation with a total of 472 students. Less than thirty years later, in 1900, that number trebled to a total of 1,568 Indigenous children, 840 boys and 728 girls, who attended 42 schools—28 day, 7 boarding, and 7 industrial schools—in all parts of the province. The day schools continued to suffer from high rates of truancy and irregular attendance but the new boarding and industrial schools achieved almost perfect average attendance. Separating child from parent proved to be the key ingredient for the new system of state schooling.

175 Mrs. Shaw to Mrs. T.G. Williams, 19 April 1899, BCA, MSS, 2644, British Columbia Conference, Reports, Clippings and Letters, Indian Affairs, 1881-1899. Extracts from a Letter Regarding the Indian Homes at Port Simpson, B.C.
In the new boarding and industrial schools, Indigenous children received religious and primary education as well as new industrial training to reorient them to the emerging industrial capitalist settler society.

By the turn of the century, state officials proclaimed the new scheme a success. In 1895, provincial superintendent of Indian Affairs A.W. Vowell suggested that the new schooling system was creating “the most favourable results.” He stated, “the feeling of uncertainty on the part of the parents and guardians of the pupils as to the benefits likely to accrue to their offspring or wards from such a course of training has almost entirely disappeared.” Vowell continued, “When first started in this superintendency these institutions were looked upon with suspicion and doubt by the untutored Indian whose primitive ideas opposed, as a general thing, to the ways of the whites, feared some covert design on the part of the government to alienate their children, of whom they are very fond of, from them, and the revered custom of their forefathers, etc., etc.; they then could not realize the benefits of education, but now, experience having shown them that the children are kindly treated, and that the lessons taught to them are of a nature to benefit them through life, they are most anxious for their admittance.” The schools, after all, were generally thought to have been established for the benefit of Indigenous peoples. Vowell even suggested that in some of the province’s stores he visited, “I have seen Indian boys who have been educated at the industrial schools, acting as clerks and bookkeepers most successfully.”¹⁷⁶ The project of transforming Indigenous children into “productive” citizens was, it seemed, succeeding.

¹⁷⁶ Annual Report 1895, 183.
As a proof of the effectiveness of the great transformation underway the Department chose to open its 1896 report by presenting two photographs of one student, Thomas Moore, before and after he was admitted to the Regina Indian Industrial School in the Northwest Territories. These, in essence, were promotional photos for the new schooling scheme. The first image shows Moore with braided hair while clutching a pistol, symbolizing the threat of Indigenous violence. The second image shows Moore “after tuition,” minus the gun and wearing clothes that one might expect a white boy of his age to be wearing. Indeed, the state hoped that students like Moore, and the boys that
Vowell witnessed working in British Columbia stores, would not only adopt the ways of whites—language, dress, morals—but also integrate themselves accordingly into the emerging capitalist settler economy. In the late nineteenth century, education thus played an essential role in both colonial containment and capitalist social formation. State schooling helped legitimize the process of accumulation by dispossession to such a great degree that the Department of Indian Affairs concluded that “there is a consensus of opinion that the permanent elevation of the race depends upon the education of the young, the cost may be regarded as not only inevitable but, when viewed with relation to the future interests of the country, as an excellent investment.”\(^{177}\) The genocidal residential school project, however, was only getting started.

\(^{177}\) Annual Report 1894, xxi.
CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

On 11 June 2008, after years of lobbying by Indigenous and non-Indigenous activists, including former students, Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper apologized to survivors of Indian Residential Schools on behalf of the Government of Canada and all Canadians. “We are sorry,” he proclaimed. In his apology, Harper explained that starting in the 1880s, and lasting until 1996, over 150,000 Indigenous children were separated from their parents and placed in 132 federally-funded and Christian missionary-run Indian Residential Schools across the country. The Prime Minister apologized for the poor treatment of Indigenous children in the schools, and he detailed the devastating physical, sexual, and emotional abuse that students endured long into the twentieth century. He even recognized that many children died while attending the schools throughout the system’s entire existence. Harper also acknowledged the harmful intergenerational consequences of residential schooling that continue to reverberate throughout Indigenous communities into the twenty-first century. Overall, the Prime Minister explained that the aim of his official apology, one symbolically supported by all members of the House of Commons and witnessed by a number of prominent Indigenous leaders, was to close a “sad chapter” in Canada’s history and to start a new one aimed at reconciling Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

Harper’s apology to residential schools survivors was a significant and long overdue acknowledgement of wrongdoing on the part of the Government of Canada; however, upon closer analysis it can be seen as a continuation of the strategy of colonial containment.\textsuperscript{179} Harper acknowledged a part of Canada’s sordid colonial past but did so in a way that was politically useful in the present. Harper apologized for how residential schools were run, focusing on the horrific experiences of survivors, but misrepresented, whether consciously or unconsciously, the historical roots of the school system in order to close off, or contain, critical inquiry into why the residential schools system was established in the first place. In this way, the apology implicitly guarded the colonial and capitalist foundations of the Canadian nation-state. To distract criticism away from the system’s roots in colonial dispossession and capitalist accumulation, which remain important pillars of Canadian nation-building in the twenty-first century, Harper suggested that the Indian Residential School system was based simply on old-fashioned ethnocentric and racist assumptions that “aboriginal cultures and spiritual beliefs were inferior and unequal” and that Indigenous peoples should be assimilated into the dominant culture.\textsuperscript{180}

Such harmful beliefs were undoubtedly influential and still need to be challenged today, yet a key limitation of the “racist” rationale is that it attributes the creation of the schools abstractly to the realm of ideas. It offers little explanation for the more material

\textsuperscript{179} Fredric Jameson, The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act (Ithica, New York: Cornell University Press, 1981), 53. While “containment” is most often understood in the context of Cold War US military strategy created to thwart the further spread of communism in Europe and globally, Jameson suggests that containment might also be understood ideologically. Nicola Vulpe applies this thinking to the Canadian context in “Counting Feet: Norman Bethune and the Narrative of History,” Revista Espanola de Estudios Canadienses 2 (November 1995): 195–222. On how ideological containment is used in contexts of settler colonialism, see also Glen Sean Coulthard, Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), 127.

\textsuperscript{180} Stephen Harper (11 June 2008), House of Commons, Edited Hansard 142 (110), 39\textsuperscript{th} Parliament, 2\textsuperscript{nd} session, 1515.
reasons why settlers invented such ideas and used state institutions, like schooling, to facilitate colonial-capitalist social formation, as James Edward FitzGerald originally advocated in 1847. More to the point, Harper’s blaming of the schools’ creation on historically hegemonic racist ideals is offered up as a kind of sacrificial lamb to keep hidden and immune from critique the socio-economic roots of the schools in Canada’s colonial and capitalist conquest. Harper’s narrative of containment is politically useful because it steers peoples’ efforts for redress and action in more respectable and less radical directions. It is relatively easy for people to make apologies for abuse and to commit themselves to challenging racist thinking in the spirit of reconciliation, especially when the wrongs addressed are seemingly buried safely in the distant past. But acknowledging that the creation of residential schools, and public schools too for that matter, assisted the state’s dispossession of Indigenous peoples’ lands to help establish a capitalist settler society could highlight continuities that reach into our present, risking more radical ruptures. What is worse is that the logic of Harper’s narrative of containment is becoming dominant. Even the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Committee of Canada reiterates Harper’s reasoning by connecting the history of residential schools to settler colonialism but failing to link both to the emergence of capitalism in Canada. Capitalism is not mentioned once in the entire report, and of course, capitalism remains very much in existence.\(^\text{181}\)

In outlining the close relationship between colonialism, capitalism, and the rise of different forms of state schooling as it played out in British Columbia, this dissertation “unsettles” commonsensical understandings of Canada’s education history and challenges

a number of historiographical and theoretical positions. Historically, studies of public
schools and residential schools exist in isolation. Research on public schooling has shown
how schools, as agents of acculturation, are used by the state to teach settler children to
fit into capitalist society and the nation in various ways. Similarly, analyses of residential
schools have examined the multitude of ways in which state-funded and missionary-run
schools, as agents of assimilation, were used by the state to teach Indigenous peoples to
fit into settler society. However, very few studies have looked at the linkages between
these different forms of state schooling and shown how together they played an integral
role in the cultural and economic reconfiguration basic to the creation of Canada as a
capitalist settler society. Instead, schooling for the colonizer and the colonized continue
to be seen as separate projects. While the preceding chapters trace separately the
trajectories of common and public schooling for settler children and of mission and
residential schooling for Indigenous children, when these histories are considered
together, as different yet related forms of state schooling, we can see how they ultimately
contributed to the same process: the creation of capitalist settler society.

The relationship between colonialism and capitalism must be understood as
dialectical: colonial dispossession fed capitalist accumulation, but capitalist expansion
constantly requires renewed colonial dispossession. Different forms of schooling were
utilized by the state as means to facilitate this dialectical relationship, conditioning
children, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, to accept the legitimacy of the state and
training them to take up their unequal roles in capitalist settler society. And, of course,
state schooling was—and continues to be—constantly in flux; the chapters of this
dissertation demonstrate that state schooling is consistently being remade and refashioned
to accommodate to changing material circumstances. Indeed, this dissertation has traced the contours of educational change while highlighting the continuity of accumulation by dispossession in nineteenth-century British Columbia.

Company and common schooling played an integral role in establishing the colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia and bolstering British control in the Pacific Northwest. Schooling, in fact, was one of the key demands of early colonists and the state saw the establishment of educational institutions as a way of inducing greater colonization in the area. Colonists, however, were reluctant to pay for schools and felt that the state should shoulder schooling costs. Throughout the colonial period, the governments of Vancouver Island and British Columbia acknowledged some financial responsibility for colonial schooling but refused to absorb all expenses. As settlement increased in the 1860s, so too did demands for new state funded for schools. As a result, parents and the state struck a compromise: the state paid for common schools but it also dictated the terms. In this way, the state effectively used schooling as an agent of social development to encourage new immigrants to settle in the area to help bolster British control of Indigenous territories, while also retaining authority over curriculum and content to ensure that children grew up loyal to crown and colony. Many students attending early company and common schools were “white,” but Indigenous students also enrolled in common schools. British Columbia’s early classrooms, then, were heterogeneous spaces that can be understood as contact zones.

The emergence of missionary schooling for Indigenous children in the colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia enhanced this project and was, in turn, supported by the state. Specifically, state-supported missionary schooling was part of a strategy of
containment to protect the colonial project. At first, Governor Douglas wanted to avoid missionaries over-extending themselves into Indigenous territory for fear that they could spark hostilities that would risk the stability of the small and fragile settler enclaves. However, after the Indian war in Washington Territory and rumours that northern Indigenous groups were plotting with groups in the US to attack southern settlements, Douglas and other governors like Seymour saw the wisdom of supporting mission schools as a way of trying to cultivate friendly relations and check Indigenous peoples’ power. Yet, by the late 1860s, the colony was experiencing financial difficulties and so officials cut missionaries off from funding.

After confederation with the Dominion of Canada in 1871, the new provincial regime sought to utilize public schooling as an agent of social formation and created a centralized system of education throughout the province. As part of the compromise struck in the 1860s and early 1870s, the provincial government agreed to pay for schooling but continued to set the terms of education. As such, public education sought to train children to accept their roles as settler-citizens. Educational materials legitimized the process of colonization as natural and inevitable and rationalized the creation of a new society as an extension of the great British Empire. While early schooling focused on these lessons of legitimacy as well as basic English education, by the late 1880s and 1890s new emphasis was placed on manual training that could orient students to the age of industrialization and train them for their eventual roles as wageworkers. Indigenous children also found their way into British Columbia’s early public schools. In some areas, admitting Indigenous children made the difference as to whether a school could be established and thus many settler parents enthusiastically lobbied for their inclusion.
Indigenous children, then, were also trained in the logic of colonialism and capitalism in British Columbia’s public schools in the late nineteenth century.

If some Indigenous students attended British Columbia’s early public schools, increasing numbers of Indigenous children were funnelled into mission day schools or, starting in the 1890s, state-funded and missionary-run boarding and industrial schools established expressly for Indigenous children. After British Columbia joined confederation in 1871, the Indian Branch and then the Department of Indian Affairs constructed a new scheme for schooling Indigenous children that sought to sever their connections to parents and reorient them to the evolving capitalist settler society. The focus of the new residential schools was on recalibrating Indigenous children to become “useful” and “productive” members of a capitalist settler society by implementing new curriculum and training in trades and domestic labour. Like public schooling, new state schooling for Indigenous peoples was created to facilitate a great transformation, to establish a new society and economy that would fundamentally benefit settlers. State officials saw the system as a great success, but Indigenous parents and students resisted new schemes of colonial schooling in various ways, highlighting the many problems associated with residential schooling as an agent of colonization.

Overall, a sustained study of the rise of state schooling, for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous children, shows how various forms of schooling, not just Indian Residential Schools, played an important role in capitalist settler social formation in British Columbia. This study “unsettles” commonsensical understandings of Canada’s educational history and forces us to re-evaluate the role of state schooling in colonial dispossession and capitalist accumulation today.
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