LESSONS IN MID-NINETEENTH-CENTURY NEW BRUNSWICK TEACHER CAREERISM

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Abstract

Early 19th-century teachers, often maligned in popular opinion, were largely misunderstood. The low status of teaching, fuelled by poor pay and even poorer working conditions, reinforced the negative image of teachers. Convinced that only the inept and unqualified would remain in teaching, contemporaries expected longterm careers to be the exception rather than the rule. This study of 19th-century New Brunswick teachers calls both contemporary and scholarly perceptions of teachers into question by examining the experience of teachers in the 1840s, with a particular focus on career teachers. The scholarship on teachers has either provided an occupational profile through systematic analysis of aggregate data, or has presented individual biographies of teachers at work. This study layers a qualitative approach over a quantitative evidentiary base to profile every teacher in the 1842 workforce. In that year, all teaching licences in the province were cancelled and those seeking to take advantage of the government subsidy offered to teachers were required to apply for or renew their licences. The ensuing petitions for licence yielded a list of 686 teachers, 538 men and 148 women. The 1842 renewal is used as a pivot point, from which position it was possible to examine teaching tenure, following individual career trajectories both backwards and forwards in time. Individual teachers were traced not only through the record of their teaching petitions, but also through teaching licences, payment schedules, inspection returns, censuses, Court of General Sessions records, Lieutenant-Governors’ records, school trustees’ records, newspaper reports, and Society for the Propagation of the Gospel records, among other sources. Contrary to expectations, this research reveals that nearly two-thirds, or 61.6%, would teach school for more than a decade, and one-quarter of those already had teaching
careers of 10 years or more by 1842. Teachers’ petitions not only permit a reconstruction of the teaching workforce, and a means of charting their careers, but also give teachers a voice. Through their petitions, teachers expressed their ambitions and frustrations, teaching their own lessons about career experiences.
Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to the memory of Robert LaVorgna and Andrea Mattei, who taught me so much.
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To my friends and family, I thank you all for resisting the urge to ask the dreaded question: “How is it going?” I must thank my fellow Fifth Floor warriors, Barry MacKenzie, Svetlana Nedeljkov, and Wayne Solomon for sharing this experience.

Andy Mattei deserves credit for unknowingly motivating me at just the right time and place.
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County Map of New Brunswick, 1845
Introduction

“Steady attention and zeal in his vocation”

That your Petitioner is a native of New Brunswick, and a member of the Roman Catholic Church; that he has lived from his birth in a back settlement of New Brunswick; that being assured by many persons competent to form an opinion, that he possessed a faculty for the acquisition of learning; especially for Arithmetic & Mathematics; and moreover, being confirmed in the idea thus fostered, by his subsequent rapid advancement in these departments of study, he determined to prepare himself for the office of a Parish Schoolmaster, as a pursuit more congenial to his natural predilections, and more calculated to lead to such attainments as he aimed at than the pursuits of Agriculture in which he has previously engaged. That upon the strength of such suggestions, and ideas, he has after much patient, and indefatigable study, and expence so far prepared himself as to be declared competent to fill the office of a teacher.

Francis Gallagher was granted a renewal of his teaching licence in September 1842, not on the strength of the above impassioned petition, but because he had followed proper procedure. Gallagher had learned a valuable lesson about the primacy of provincial policy given the difficulties processing his first petition, and he assiduously followed the “rules” for his second. After having become trapped in the uncompromising tangle of a burgeoning educational bureaucracy, Gallagher used his 1842 renewal petition to teach some lessons of his own about teaching ambition. The purely mechanical licensing procedure, grounded in statements related to moral and religious conduct, neither recognized nor required assurances of personal aspirations or motivations, but Gallagher seems to suggest that the office of teaching should be so predicated. From Gallagher’s vantage point, teaching required a firm academic footing, preparation, and natural talent.

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1 Anthony B. Tayte, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, Provincial Archives of New Brunswick (hereafter PANB). This quotation was contained in one of Tayte’s certificates.
2 Francis Gallagher, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB. Original spelling, punctuation, and capitalization have been maintained in all petition transcriptions.
He had invested considerable time, energy, and money in the pursuit of teaching, and it had undoubtedly frustrated him when his licence was originally denied on the basis of a single missing testimonial. Gallagher took the opportunity in his 1842 petition to prove his worth as a teacher and to make it clear that he had career aspirations, but it is doubtful that his statement of intent made an impact on the governing body.

Conventional wisdom of the day, heavily influenced by the low status of teaching, would dictate that Gallagher’s early and enduring commitment to the profession should have been a rare commodity. Because careers in teaching were beyond the bounds of normal expectations, those who were so committed escaped the attention of politicians, reformers, and the public. Popular stereotypes, which informed public opinion, blinded even the most observant to the true character of the early 19th-century teaching workforce. These persistent negative images stemmed from misguided notions that only the inept and infirm, who could secure no other respectable employment, would be drawn to an occupation notorious for its poor pay and deplorable working conditions. Those among the able-minded and able-bodied who did take up the thankless task of tuition were expected to move onward and upward quickly, considering teaching a temporary occupation to be abandoned in favour of other pursuits, when the opportunity arose. The occupation offered few rewards, in either the pecuniary or professional sense, and because no special training was yet required, teachers were perceived as uneducated, unprofessional, and untouched by career aspirations. Contemporary observers would have discounted Gallagher’s experience as atypical, but they would have been wrong. Gallagher was part of a larger New Brunswick teaching workforce, 686 members strong in 1842, which was staffed by a considerable number of experienced teachers. Nearly
two-thirds of Gallagher’s colleagues would make a career of teaching, remaining in the occupation at least 10 years or more. Careers were the rule rather than the exception at this time, and commitment was manifest not only in longevity but in explicit expressions of dedication. This study of career strips away misconceptions to expose the actual character and composition of the mid-19th-century New Brunswick teaching workforce.

New Brunswick provides an ideal setting to study teacher careerism given the abundance of source material and the fact that teachers were not so numerous as to make it necessary to resort to sampling. Individual profiles were compiled for each and every one of the 686 teachers identified in this study, including Francis Gallagher. The eldest son of Irish-born parents, Michael and Giles Gallagher, Francis evidently shouldered disagreeable and distasteful duties on the family farm in his native Studholm Parish, Kings County, before turning to a profession more suited to his natural talents and inclinations. Gallagher entered the New Brunswick teaching workforce at a time when a reformist imperative demanded greater efficiency in the education system, resulting in the adoption of a more standard licensing procedure. Under the “old” licensing system, character references alone had qualified prospective teachers to be entrusted with the instruction of youth. The emergent educational bureaucracy required that teaching qualifications be tested. Once County Boards of Education were established in 1837, teachers could no longer rely on character references alone to guarantee them a licence. Nevertheless, moral and religious recommendations remained a condition of admission, and any teacher who had not secured such documentation would be denied Board examination and refused a licence to teach. This is precisely what had happened to Francis Gallagher when he originally petitioned for licence in 1841.
There was no Catholic clergyman resident in Studholm Parish, Kings County, where Gallagher taught and, desirous of obtaining a licence, he decided to petition without the vital religious certificate. Instead, he included a reference from veteran teacher William Bell, who vouched for Gallagher’s literary attainments. Clearly sensitive to the reformist mood in the province, which was leaning in the direction of teacher training, Gallagher had paid Bell for “a course of instruction”. William Bell highly recommended young Gallagher, who was no more than 17 years of age while under his tutelage. Bell testified that Gallagher’s “peculiar talent and perseverance in acquiring Mathematical Learning are rarely surpassed”, and further stated that his “moral conduct and exemplary behaviour were truly praiseworthy.”3 With nearly a decade of teaching experience in the province,4 William Bell was clearly in a good position to judge Gallagher’s skill and academic proficiency. Bell’s background is entirely obscure, but he was in charge of a relatively large school, attended by more than 100 pupils, when he petitioned for licence 1833. At the time, he taught in Black River Settlement, Saint John County, but by 1839 he had moved to Kings County, where he taught in both Kingston and Hampton Parishes.5 There is no record of a relationship existing between Bell and Gallagher before they entered into their instructional arrangement. Yet, two years later, Bell took Gallagher under his wing, and provided the novice teacher with training and tuition.

Bell’s glowing recommendation of his academic achievements appears to have gained Gallagher an audience with the Kings County Board of Education, even though he did

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3 Francis Gallagher, Teachers’ Petitions, 1841, RS 655, PANB.
4 William Bell, Regular Licences, 1816-1842, RS 115, PANB. Bell’s licence was dated 22 June 1833.
5 Parish School Returns, Kings County, 1839-1841, RS 657, PANB.
not meet the minimum requirements for Board examination. Gallagher passed the examination in December 1841, and, when he was denied a licence, Board member Elias Scovil wrote a letter on his behalf. Scovil testified that, although he did not remember which certificates Gallagher had presented at the examination, he had noted that the requirement for a religious certificate excluded candidates from remote areas of the province where clergymen were not often known to reside. Undeterred by the rejection and perhaps encouraged by Scovil’s support, Gallagher travelled to Fredericton, and, with all his recommendations in hand, approached the Catholic Bishop, William Dollard, for assistance. Dollard was quick to comply with Gallagher’s request for a religious character reference. In his certificate, he indicated that, after reading the recommendations, he was convinced that Gallagher was “of good moral character, and qualified to take charge of a parish School.” Gallagher undoubtedly proceeded directly to the Provincial Secretary’s office where he presented the crucial religious testimonial. His application was promptly processed and his licence issued on 16 March 1842, the same day that Dollard wrote his recommendation.6

Francis Gallagher’s experience clearly demonstrates that there were problems with the “new” licensing system, but officials were convinced that requiring all teachers to follow precisely the same procedure could remedy the defects of the “old” system. Since licences were routinely renewed upon request, anyone licensed before 1837 had escaped having their teaching qualifications tested. The government’s decision to cancel all teaching licences in 1842 suggests that legislators realized that a significant portion of the teaching workforce had been licensed before 1837, and, rather than recognizing the

6 Parish School Returns, Kings County, 1839-1841, RS 657, PANB.
potential advantages to be found in a workforce that included teachers of considerable experience, instead intended to weed out those licensed under the old system, deeming them to be inefficient and defective. To renew their licences, teachers who had been hired on the basis of the character reference would be forced to prove their competency by standing for Board examination. By 1842, 55.5 percent of teachers had become licensed under the “new” system, introduced in 1837, while the remainder were relics of the defunct recommendation system. All teachers were required to renew their licences in 1842 to remain eligible for the provincial allowance, but those who had been Board examined did not have to submit to another test of their qualifications. The ink barely dry on his original licence, Gallagher petitioned as required for renewal in 1842, but, given the 1841 debacle, he was even more mindful of following the proper procedure. For his renewal application, he secured an additional religious certificate, this one from Edward Wyman, an Elder with the Christian Conference sect, who conducted devotional services in his home parish at Studholm. Presenting a full petition package brimming with all the necessary documentation, Gallagher was rewarded by the prompt renewal of his licence in September 1842.

The reform impulse in education during this period was not, of course, unique to New Brunswick. New England and other provinces in British North America saw parallel movements during the same period.7 And although the standard source on the New Brunswick movement remains Katherine MacNaughton’s *The Theory and Practice of Education in New Brunswick*, since it appeared in 1947, there has been a significant body

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of research published on the establishment and evolution of the common schools in both Canada and the United States, including debates on the purpose of these schools. But the focus of this research has generally been on policy makers, administrators, educational reformers and, less often, those who attended schools. Very few studies have focused on the teachers who were hired to carry out the reforms initiated in the 1840s, and those that have, with few exceptions, focused on aggregate statistical portraits of the teaching workforce and on the feminization of that workforce in a later period. In New Brunswick, MacNaughton’s study has, in recent years, been supplemented by a number of graduate theses, including one on inspectors in the post-1871 period and another on the evolution of the grammar schools in the province. To date, none have focused on teachers and their experience in the pre-Confederation period.

This study, then, fills a void in the literature by focusing on teachers in the colonial period and by throwing important light on the extraordinary gap between theory and practice by revealing the distance between perceptions of teachers during this period and their own portrayals of their experiences and circumstances. Teachers’ petitions offer the researcher an opportunity to explore individual experiences within the occupational


group, while bridging the gap between qualitative and quantitative approaches. Individual profiles permit an exploration of a teacher’s career trajectory as well as an intimate portrayal of personal motivation, ambition, or frustration, but might not reflect the experience of the typical teacher. Aggregate statistical data, meanwhile, provide an occupation profile, and can demonstrate shifts in the profile over time, but lack information on individual intentionality. The methodological approach for this study, then, uses aggregated statistical data to generate individual biographies for the entire pre-credential New Brunswick workforce.

The 1842 cancellation provides the researcher the opportunity not only to examine the tensions inherent in the New Brunswick education system, but also to reconstruct the teaching workforce. The 1840s reformist agenda insisted that trained teachers would cure what ailed the inefficient education system, and while more than half the New Brunswick teaching workforce had been Board examined by 1842, none held recognized credentials. Yet Francis Gallagher’s experience exposes the existence of an informal network which offered teachers an opportunity to negotiate arrangements to improve their pedagogical skills and academic achievements, or, more to the point, to access instructional training. The arrangement Francis Gallagher negotiated with William Bell clearly demonstrated Gallagher’s dedication to teaching while also serving as proof of his professional commitment. Teacher training has traditionally been recognized as the beginning of

professionalization, and only after its introduction could teachers be described as “professionals”. The era before the advent of formal training has, therefore, generally been identified as the “pre-professional” period; however, because Gallagher and other teachers were already acting in a professional manner, the term “pre-professional” does not adequately describe the sentiment and commitment associated with the 1842 workforce. The evidence suggests that teachers connected for mutual benefit, and these arrangements, like that between Gallagher and Bell, are indicative of the existence of an informal network among teachers. The untold number of New Brunswick teachers who participated in an unofficial association, sought informal training, demonstrated an awareness of pedagogical theories, and regarded themselves as public servants were not only professionally-minded but clearly considered themselves part of a “profession”. The term “profession” was frequently used by inspectors, trustees, and teachers to describe the occupation during this period. It is more accurate, then, to class them as “pre-credential teachers” rather than “pre-professionals”, and the 1842 workforce was staffed by 686 such pre-credential teachers, all of them affected by the licence cancellation.

The pre-credential workforce has been reconstructed primarily from petitions submitted as part of the lengthy renewal process which began in 1842, supplemented by petitions filed with the Legislature in 1842 along with the docket of payments to teachers that same year. To verify and validate that this listing of 686 teachers is complete, it has been compared with other sources. In 1842, the Provincial Secretary’s office sent

circulars to the county Boards of Education requesting information about the state of publicly supported schools. The responses, provided by local school trustees, provided the foundation for an informal school inspection. In a report submitted to the Legislature, Alfred Reade enumerated 541 teachers, comprised of 435 schoolmasters and 106 schoolmistresses. This report was not exhaustive, and, depending upon when teaching contracts terminated, an untold number of teachers would have been excluded from this hasty school inspection, while teachers not in receipt of the provincial allowance were not recognized and therefore also went uncounted. According to the 1842 schedule of payments, 463 teachers received the provincial allowance that year, which necessarily excluded teachers who either did not meet eligibility requirements or whose contracts extended into 1843. Parish School Returns, which were to have been filed annually with the County Courts of General Sessions, were far from complete. The records for 1842 are not extant for every county, let alone every parish. In Northumberland County, there were returns from 51 schools in 1842, and a total of 65 teachers were identified as part of the 1842 pre-credential workforce. York County recorded 49 teachers keeping school in the official reports for 1841, and there were 51 counted among the pre-credential teachers from 1842. These two counties, at least, suggest that the pre-credential listing closely mirrors official school returns.

Although the majority of parish school returns from 1842 have not survived, the results of the 1844-1845 School Inspection are virtually complete. The returns for Albert County have not survived, but there were only three schools inspected in that area, and 489 of the 492 school inspection returns are extant. The “badness of the times”, already evident in 1842, had forced the closure of a number of schools. James Brown recorded a
great number of vacancies in his diary during his inspection tour of Kings County in the summer of 1844. While 112 teachers were part of the 1842 pre-credential workforce in Kings County, only 72 schools were inspected in 1844. Four years later, the Provincial Secretary’s Office released a list of teachers who currently held valid licences, and they numbered 971. During the 1850-1851 school year, there were 712 teachers engaged in the occupation. Given the comparative data, and bearing in mind the seasonal fluctuations in teaching, it is safe to conclude that the 686 pre-credential teachers identified for this study accurately reflect the 1842 workforce.

The 1842 renewal is used as a pivot point, from which position it is possible to examine teaching tenure and individual career trajectories both backwards and forwards in time. Most of the 1842 workforce began teaching before that time, and their original licence dates were identified, and, in many cases, their earlier petitions were consulted to help fill in missing personal information, including age or religious persuasion. Teachers were followed forward in time, and their movements were tracked through payment schedules, the 1844-1845 Inspection Returns, Normal School records from 1848 to 1850, the 1850-1851 Legislative listing of teachers, and the 1851 nominal Census. Few teachers were traced beyond 1852, and it is possible that there were those who had careers which continued after mid-century. Because portions of the 1851 nominal Census are missing, limited use was made of the 1861 nominal Census in an attempt to make positive matches. With a database containing 686 individuals, there were actually very few cases where different teachers bore the same name. While there was only one John Smith, there were an astonishing three George Smiths. Two of the George Smiths resided in Queens County and the remaining one lived in York County. They were correctly identified and
kept separate by age, date of licence, and marital status. Matches, or individual record linkages, were always conservatively made. If there were any doubts regarding the identity of a teacher, a match could not be confirmed. The longevity of all teaching careers was thus documented, and while an attempt was made to determine the fate of teachers who disappeared from the records, very few could be authenticated. It is clear that the majority of the 1842 workforce had made a commitment to teaching, and a great many exceeded the 10 year threshold for a career. Francis Gallagher kept school in Studholm for at least eleven years, even though there were few incentives for teachers to remain that long in the profession, given its lack of prestige, lack of advancement possibilities, and lack of security. The scholarship on teaching generally avoids firm estimates regarding teaching tenure, but the consensus suggests that teachers only remained a few years at most.\(^{13}\) For the purpose of this study, a career has been defined as one which spanned a decade or more: given that teachers were rarely expected to exceed five years in the profession, that apparently exceptional tenure was doubled to arrive at a 10 year career.

Although teachers complained about the arduous task of tuition, they did not hold the profession in the same low regard as did the social critics. Chapter 1 explores the 19th-century ideology of character as the main qualification for teachers to analyze the roots of the persistently negative impression left by teachers and their chosen profession.

Teachers were expected to adhere to a high moral code, which could be proven and

supported by the accumulation of appropriate character references, yet despite their well-documented reputations, teachers were generally held in low esteem. Character was a complex concept, which included not only moral conduct but a range of social, ethical, spiritual, and intellectual attributes. Within the character ethos, teachers could at once be morally upright and intellectually deficient. Teaching competence had always been questioned, and new measures for testing these widely held assumptions appeared to confirm reformers’ worst fears. County Board examinations, introduced in 1837, caught and rejected incompetent teachers before they were granted licences to keep school, but it was the School Inspection of 1844-1845 which provided unequivocal proof that prevailing stereotypes about teachers were true. According to the joint Inspectors’ report, New Brunswick teachers were largely uneducated and unacquainted with modern teaching methods, a problem that could only be solved by introducing teachers to the art of instruction. Yet a detailed examination of the individual Inspectors’ reports demonstrates that the joint report, rather than providing an accurate assessment of the teaching workforce, supported the current political agenda to establish a Normal School. If teachers had been found to be competent and qualified, then there evidently would have been no need for teacher training. Thus, the joint report, which, unfortunately further tarnished the already negative image of teachers, suggests that the results of the inspection report were quite possibly pre-determined. Either the Inspectors could not escape a belief in stereotypes or they simply ignored the high level of teaching competence demonstrated in their own evaluations of individual teachers.

With the rise of an educational bureaucracy, licensing regulations changed, and it was widely believed that teachers hired under the “old” system were deficient and unqualified
for the office. By 1842, the “old” and “new” licensing systems were at odds, and to introduce a uniform licensing procedure, all provincial licences were cancelled. Chapter 2 traces the history of the licensing system in New Brunswick, examining in particular the introduction of the petition process. Although the Royal Instructions provided to Governor Carleton in 1784 directed that teachers must be licensed to keep school, no particular procedure for licensing was put in place. Teachers were appointed rather than licensed following a hiring practice similar to that established by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. After the first School Act was passed in 1802, teaching appointments were approved by the County Courts of General Sessions. It was only after the School Act of 1816 came into effect that teachers first began petitioning for licence. Initially, teachers were expected to re-apply for licence annually, but that practice was quickly abandoned. They were expected to petition for licence transfers if they moved, because licences were only valid for the parish and county in which they were originally issued. To teach in a different parish with the old licence would be to risk losing the provincial allowance. In that event, teachers had only to file a petition seeking the remuneration which they considered was their due. From an early period, then, teachers learned how to navigate the petitioning system, and used it to their advantage when and where possible. The early licensing procedure owed much to the appointment system which it replaced; under both systems, candidates required approval, but with licensing that approval came in the form of the written testimonials. The “old” system, as it would become known, was founded on personal recommendations. The “new” system absorbed the old, but further demanded the testing of qualifications. Since the government took no responsibility for providing training for teachers, the responsibility for any educational
defects rested squarely on the shoulders of teachers hired under the old system, those whose qualifications were undoubtedly questionable since they had never been tested. Merging the licensing systems would, legislators expected, not only require such old school teachers to stand for Board examination, but might also remove these less qualified teachers from the workforce. Uniform licensing regulations, they believed, could improve educational standards by ensuring that a better class of teacher had been hired.

The petitioning process, and the ways in which teachers employed it, might have injured their image. Teachers who did not follow proper procedures usually had to file petitions to remedy the situation. The requests for remuneration may have helped confirm prejudices regarding teacher ineptness or laziness. Their aptitudes and attitudes aside, teachers were also stereotyped from a demographic standpoint. Chapter 3 reveals the composition of the 1842 workforce, providing a profile of its members with information culled from petitions, Inspection Returns, and Census data. Teachers usually provided only their place of birth and religious affiliation in their petitions, but age and marital status were reported in the Inspection Returns. Individual biographies of all 686 pre-credential teachers were compiled by cross-referencing petitions with these other sources. In 1842, New Brunswick’s schools were staffed principally by married, mature schoolmasters of immigrant birth. Just over 20 percent of teachers were women, most of whom were young, single, and locally born. The typical image of a schoolmistress insisted that she remained single, and the majority of New Brunswick’s women teachers were single. Yet for those who did enter into matrimony, this did not necessarily signal the end of a teaching career for women. Age and gender were the two defining
characteristics of teachers at this time, but age was misrepresented. Teaching salary was indecently low, but the poor pay was justified on the grounds that the young were attracted to teaching on a temporary basis. Given that young was considered synonymous with single, it was expected that these young teachers had no families to support. The age structure of the pre-credential workforce defied the youthful stereotype. Not only were New Brunswick teachers older than generally recognized, but they were also married with children. Reformers did not seem to notice the actual age structure of the workforce, although the inspectors were certainly critical of the older teachers who were apparently stuck in their ways.

There was growing concern that unqualified teachers were either poorly or improperly instructing pupils under their charge, and that their continued employment could jeopardize student progress. Although the inspectors critiqued the state of education in New Brunswick schools, their report did not provide any insight into the working relationship between teachers and students. Since improved standards and instruction were to benefit the pupil, it is both curious and disappointing that no comment was made concerning students’ in-school environment. Chapter 4 peeks both inside and around the schoolhouse to reveal institutional routines and relationships. The School Inspection Returns from 1844-1845 provide a window into that environment, and, given that three-quarters of the schools inspected were staffed by teachers from the study group, the totality of the inspection results have been taken to represent the experiences of the larger pre-credential workforce. Teachers and students were confined to this space between six and eight hours daily, and, from all reports, the accommodations were far from commodious. Often cramped, damp, and dimly lit, schoolhouses were challenging
spaces in which to work. The walls were usually unadorned, especially as few teachers or school districts could afford to purchase maps or any other instructional apparatus. Although few schoolhouses were fortunate enough to have blackboards at this time, within a decade most schools would be so equipped. Schoolhouses were to be kept warm and clean, which required the efforts of both teachers and pupils. Tasks relating to these desirable outcomes could be and were doled out as punishment to pupils who misbehaved, and although attitudes towards corporal punishment were changing, most teachers still applied the rod. Relations between teacher and student appeared to be distant and formal, but the limited number of teachers who offered rewards in the form of small toys or presents seemed to acknowledge the importance of play. While the relationship between teachers and their students is difficult to ascertain, teachers’ commitment to the position can be seen as a reflection of their commitment to their pupils.

Teachers were not expected to remain long in teaching, and careers were beyond the comprehension of contemporary policy makers. Poor pay and deplorable working conditions should have driven even the most desperate out of the occupation. However, New Brunswick pre-credential teachers were incredibly steadfast and committed to the profession. Chapter 5 examines teaching longevity and outlines the strategies teachers employed to further their careers. Teachers had a reputation for being restless and rootless, rarely staying in one position, let alone the profession, for long. Career aspirations kept teachers rooted, and nearly two-thirds of the 1842 workforce taught for at least a decade. Although they stayed in the profession, that does not mean they remained at the same school for the duration of their careers. While mobility was associated with
the occupation, it was motivated far less by accident than by design. School closure due to local poverty or the promise of a more lucrative salary would send teachers in search of a new situation. Their mobility was, in many cases, strategic, for not only might they secure another post, but perhaps even a better paid one. Mobility also brought teachers into contact with their colleagues, and it might have been through these means that teachers’ reputations spread and, along with them, the news of networking opportunities. An untold number of teachers participated in an informal network, entering into arrangements with veteran teachers to access instructional training. Engaging in such an activity surely signified not only career aspirations but also ambition, especially when formal training was not yet a requirement. Once the Normal School was established in 1848, it was the career teacher – even those of advanced ages – who was most likely to enroll in the institution.

Logic would imply that, since teaching was the province of youth, and high teacher turnover rates ensured that the workforce was constantly re-supplied by even younger teachers, the occupation most assuredly never aged. The age structure of the pre-credential New Brunswick workforce was older than both contemporary observers and scholars assumed to be the case; moreover, aging teachers were increasing in number. Chapter 6 explores the plight of aged teachers and their prospects at the end of a career. Aged teachers were perhaps the most visible group, given their wretched appearance, contorted and distorted as they were by various infirmities, which stood in stark contrast to the expectations of a youthful workforce. The Inspectors only ever made a point of noting the physical appearance of elderly teachers, and it would seem that teachers did not grow old gracefully. It seems that the Inspectors failed to recognize not only that
older teachers comprised a significant portion of the workforce then in place, but also that their numbers were on the rise. The mature schoolmaster in 1842, who was most likely to remain in teaching for at least another decade, would by mid-century be an elderly schoolmaster in need of financial assistance. Teachers had long turned to the Legislature, using the power of the petition to seek pecuniary aid or additional financial assistance when they failed to meet eligibility requirements for the provincial allowance. While the Legislature could be counted on for its “liberality” in such cases, there was considerable resistance to honouring requests for superannuation or pensions for teachers. However, in one particular sitting of the Legislature, four aged teachers were granted a small annuity for their long public service in a poorly paid position. Too many aged teachers, though, were forced, by the denial of such help, to continue to keep school even as they were on the verge of death or destitution.

Teachers’ petitions are the foundation of this study of career, and while the majority of these documents simply followed licensing regulations, there were a number of teachers like Francis Gallagher who included grander statements of intent. Petitions not only identified the pre-credential teachers but provided insight into individual experiences. Francis Gallagher exposed the informal teaching network which was confirmed in accounts from other members of the 1842 workforce. William MacKintosh explained why teachers might have neglected to renew their petitions after the cancellation order was issued. Charlotte Holder’s experience demonstrated that, while female employment was on the rise, schoolmasters were still preferred as teachers. John G. Lorimer documented a level of teaching dedication that extended beyond the tight confines of the schoolhouse to include the publication of a children’s magazine. George
McConnell’s participation in the informal teaching network was a strategic choice made to further his own career ambitions. Although Adam Dobbin struggled to provide for his family on the meagre receipts from teaching, he nonetheless dedicated the “best part of his life” to his profession. These career teachers shaped the analysis and, without their petitions, the best lessons about 19th-century New Brunswick teacher careerism would be lost.
Chapter 1
“A moral man of good abilities”¹
Character and Credentials in the Mid-19th Century

‘…teaching in a school was almost the last calling in which anyone would engage, and it was only those who were ruined both in body and estate, who would continue in that employment. The halt, the lame, and the maimed – those who were good for nothing else – might continue to be Parish School Masters in the country, for no one else would.’²

The debate that emerged in the House of Assembly over the proposed Education Bill, first introduced in 1846, left no doubt about the prevailing attitude towards New Brunswick teachers, as the foregoing critique by Thomas Gilbert, a member representing Queens County, clearly demonstrates. Teachers were afforded little respect or regard during the first half of the 19th century, a time when an individual’s moral and religious character served as the chief qualification for teaching school. Teachers had to be declared morally fit as a prerequisite to be licensed to teach school, but because there were virtually no academic standards yet in place, New Brunswick teachers were held in low esteem. The perceived incompetency of teachers had been the “subject of sarcasm” among some of the provincial legislators in the 1840s,³ but William End, a member for Gloucester County, was a rare defender of the New Brunswick education system. He contended, perhaps unconvincingly, that the “much ridiculed system” was far better than that offered in England or Scotland.⁴ Because debates on the quality of education in the government-subsidised parish schools were not only printed in provincial newspapers but were also the subject of caustic editorials, negative attitudes towards teachers trickled

¹ William Lalor, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB. The quote was excerpted from one of Lalor’s recommendations for licence renewal.
² Thomas Gilbert, cited in George E. Feneity, Political Notes and Observations (Fredericton, 1867): 164-165.
⁴ The Head Quarters, 14 March 1846, Wednesday, “House of Assembly”, p. 3.
down to the public.\(^5\) Such negativity and critical commentary had their roots in a defective education system, one which came under greater scrutiny during the 1840s. Although this system had been established and shaped by governments, the responsibility for its shortcomings rested on the shoulders of the teachers trapped in the system. For the reformers, the remedy for educational inefficiency could be addressed by changing education laws and regulating licensing procedures, and these improvements were also intended to attract a better class of teacher.

Teachers may or may not have been more highly regarded at some point in the early history of New Brunswick, but the hardening of attitudes towards them can be traced to the decade surrounding the inspection undertaken in 1844. This inspection exposed the school system, baring its flaws and inefficiencies, while condemning those in charge of local schools: the teachers. The itch for reform had been fermenting since at least 1837 when County Boards of Education had been established. The Board examinations, which prospective teachers were, from that date, required to pass to become licensed, provided the first opportunity, on a large scale, to reveal the incompetence of teaching candidates. Private assumptions about teachers in the pre-credential period became public conclusions, and the 1844 inspection seemed to confirm the reformers’ worst fears about teachers. The idea of a Normal School to train teachers had hovered on the periphery of the political agenda since 1840,\(^6\) and the inspection returns provided the evidence


necessary to bring the establishment of such an institution to the forefront. The perceived incompetence of teachers gave weight to the argument that teacher training was imperative. Although it was true that some unqualified teachers did become licensed, this was not an accurate characterization of the majority in the teaching workforce at the time. This chapter will examine the roots of the public perception of New Brunswick teachers to show that, in their zeal for reform, officials generally ignored the true character and credentials of teachers in their employ.

The 1840s witnessed not only a change in practice but a shift in attitude. To improve the efficiency of the education system, teachers were to be introduced to the art of instruction. Given the availability of a rigorous training programme through the establishment of a Normal School, teachers would be expected to learn and adopt modern teaching methodology. The break with the tradition in New Brunswick of awarding teaching licences based on character promised to deter incompetent candidates from making application to teach school. Graduates of the Normal School were to be ranked or licensed according to a hierarchical system based on achievement, and awarded a corresponding pay scale. Teaching would require academic credentials, certainly a step forward and the benchmark for a profession. Trained teachers not only held the key to greater efficiency and educational reform, but promised to change the image of the profession, and an untold number of New Brunswick’s pre-credential teachers were

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7 The Normal School movement emerged in response to increasing numbers of students entering publicly supported schools, which were staffed by unqualified teachers. Reformers and educationists in both the United States and British North America were influenced by the Prussian example or model for teacher training. For a generalized discussion on the development of teacher training, see: Richard J. Altenbaugh and Kathleen Underwood, “The Evolution of Normal Schools,” In Places Where Teachers are Taught. John I. Goodland et al, eds. (Jossey-Bass, Inc. Publishers: San Francisco, 1990): 136-186.

8 James Love argued that professionalization was imposed upon teachers from above, but the findings for New Brunswick’s pre-credential teachers call that argument into question. See: James Love,
active agents in their own self-improvement before governmental reform established professional standards.

Since the traditional emphasis upon character was deemed responsible for admitting inefficient teachers into the school system, the shift from character to credentials represented a significant change in approach. To understand this paradigm shift, it is important first to examine the underpinnings of the ideology related to character. At its core, character embodied a multi-faceted moral discourse. Character encompassed intellectual, social, and religious dimensions, reflecting proper decorum as well as the ability to serve as role models for others. Character was seen as an essential requirement for instructing and guiding youth. Providing moral guidance could be considered one of the main instructional goals entrusted to teachers. In leading by example and imparting an accepted moral code, teachers could provide the rising generation with the appropriate social tools necessary for the creation of good, upstanding citizens.9

This gentle form of social control, or moral control, was evident in early advertisements for schools in New Brunswick. In 1817, one such advertisement promised that the teacher had a separate place for the education of girls “detached from boys”, which would “contribute much to the morals and comfort of the children, and gratification of the parents.” In 1822, James Paterson, Master of the Saint John Grammar School, offered accommodation in his own home as a boarding school for a limited number of male students. Paterson assured parents that those who should be admitted

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“will be treated with affection. The comfort of their bodies and improvement of their morals will receive particular attention.”  

Clearly character was a prerequisite for teachers enjoined to instill such a model in children under their tuition. Character involved more than a simple testimonial regarding personality and personal conduct; it was the guiding educational principle throughout the first half of the 19th century.  

Attention to moral character could be said to have shaped the relationship between teacher and student. In selecting a suitable person to educate their children, parents and school administrators sought a teacher who, by example, would provide pupils with an acceptable code of conduct. In so doing, teachers were helping to build character in their students. The emphasis upon the character of the teacher had another classroom dimension, one which would help allay any fears the trustees, inspectors, or parents might have. Licensing only teachers who had been judged as morally upright ensured that students were protected from potential moral danger, especially of a sexual nature, from unscrupulous teachers who might take advantage of an innocent.  

As Paul Mattingly argues, character also embodied a professional ideology, which for school teachers reflected the pursuit of spiritual, personal, intellectual, and professional improvement. Being in communion with one’s church was considered paramount for teachers in New Brunswick, and was one of the leading qualifications for licence. As noted in the Introduction, Francis Gallagher had his first petition for licence

10 The City Gazette, 17 October 1822, Thursday, “Board and Education”, p. 3.
12 Vick, 2.
13 Mattingly, p. xii.
denied because he failed to submit the proper religious certificate.\textsuperscript{14} Testimonials related to religious or spiritual character confirmed that teaching candidates were “fit” to instruct the province’s youth. George Allen procured a typical recommendation regarding his moral and religious character, which he submitted with his petition in 1842. The Anglican Minister for St. George Parish indicated that he had been acquainted with Allen for a number of years and that he was a “man of good moral character” who was a “fit and proper person to keep a parochial school.”\textsuperscript{15} Robert Forbes, of Springfield, Kings County, was considered by his Presbyterian Minister to be a “man of real personal piety” with “excellent moral character.”\textsuperscript{16} During the time that Rachel Jane Flewelling taught in Greenwich, Kings County and attended services of the Established Church, she was described as being of “irreproachable moral character.”\textsuperscript{17}

In providing such testimonials, clergymen were expected to indicate the religious profession to which the particular teacher belonged, and to provide assurances about moral conduct and personal deportment. However, there were a number of clergymen who included a far greater degree of approbation in some of their recommendations. Patrick O’Connell, of Dorchester, Westmorland County, an adherent of the Roman Catholic faith, was reported to be a “man of good education, and manners”. Although the Priest had not been acquainted with O’Connell for long, he was impressed with his “moral and strictly sober habits being solemnly pledged to teetotalism.”\textsuperscript{18}

\textsuperscript{14} Francis Gallagher, Teachers’ Petitions, 1841, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
\textsuperscript{15} George Allen, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
\textsuperscript{16} Robert Forbes, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB
\textsuperscript{17} Rachel Flewelling, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
\textsuperscript{18} Patrick O’Connell, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
Character was a complex concept, intertwining personal and professional potential, and recommendations from clergy members also addressed the latter aspects of character. Their testimonials often offered critical commentary on a teacher’s classroom performance and qualifications. The Wesleyan minister for Saint John considered William Tweedale’s moral character “blameless, and his life exemplary.” He went on to praise Tweedale’s teaching accomplishments. “The qualifications he possesses, added to his long and successful experience as a teacher, render his services most desirable in educating the youth of our province.” John Somerville’s certificate from his clergyman promised that he possessed “literary attainments” which were “much superior to the generality of teachers employed throughout the country.” He was also deemed to be a person of “unexceptionable” moral character. Thomas Didymus Stokoe, a “person of excellent moral and religious character”, was considered suitable to teach “in consequence of his education, his long practice as a teacher, and the happy method of managing his pupils to facilitate their progress in learning.” Religious testimonials did not generally provide so detailed a glimpse into the classroom, but clergymen were in a position to make sound assessments related to professional character as many of them also served as school trustees. In commenting upon character and suitability, clergymen usually only offered insight into the teacher’s personality and performance, rather than the student learning experience. The moral character of the teacher should naturally have an impact in the classroom and upon individual students, but this expectation was rarely expressed in clerical testimonials. Teacher Robert McCullough was clearly a good

19 Mattingly, xii.
20 William Tweedale, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
21 John Somerville, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
22 Thomas Didymus Stokoe, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
influence on his students, much to the approval of the Wesleyan minister for Saint John, when he noted that “the moral and educational character of pupils will be looked after” in this school.\(^{23}\)

The character reference had served as the primary prerequisite for licence for nearly half a century in New Brunswick, but defects in such a system were increasingly revealed following the introduction of the County Boards in 1837. After the establishment of these Boards, teachers had to be examined by the Board of Education in the county where they resided. In making application for licence, candidates still had to submit certificates testifying to their exemplary moral conduct.\(^{24}\) In 1842, Edwin Garraty, a candidate for licence from Lincoln, Sunbury County, presented his character certificates to the Board of Education before his examination. His religious testimonial was glowing. “I certify from the acquaintance I have had with Edwin Garraty for several years that he is a pious, sober and honest man …I think it expedient that he should be licensed.” When the Board examined Garraty, members found him incapable of teaching many of the subjects which were required of a schoolmaster. The Board approved his application for licence, but only because of the “strong recommendation and earnest solicitation of the Trustees of Schools.” In further explaining their decision, the Board also admitted that the school could not continue in this community without access to provincial aid, which would only be granted to a licensed teacher.\(^{25}\) Character could not compensate for incompetence, but when faced with the choice between licensing a mediocre teacher and leaving the community without any school at all, it appears that County Boards may have felt

\(^{23}\) Robert McCullough, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.

\(^{24}\) MacNaughton, 90.

\(^{25}\) Edwin Garraty, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
compelled to recommend less than desirable candidates for licence. Poorer parishes could not afford to engage the services of a fully qualified teacher, and parents and trustees were prepared to offer an inferior or flawed education rather than have their children languish in ignorance.

Teachers often followed opportunity, choosing more lucrative positions elsewhere, and their mobility reflected the competitive nature of the profession. Communities frequently lost the services of their teachers when they could not properly remunerate them. Although the inhabitants of Jordan Mountain, Queens County, were “satisfied” with John C. Wood as a schoolmaster, he left their employ because of their “inability to pay the amount he wanted for teaching.” The departure of the best qualified teachers, though, opened the door of opportunity for those less experienced. George R. Nickerson was hired to teach in Shediac, Westmorland County, as a last resort, to provide an education for the community. One of his certificates, which he submitted for a renewal of his licence, testified to the grim prospects faced by some communities: “He is living in a district where no teacher of superior attainments can be procured in consequence of the poverty of the people. He is the first person willing to open a school there.”

Given the singular importance of character and the character reference as the basis for licensing, unqualified teachers had always been admitted to the profession. Under the influence of the Normal School movement, with its emphasis on teacher training, modern teaching methods, and the introduction of an educational philosophy, the primacy of the character ideology began to crumble. Mattingly suggests that the meaning of character shifted by the middle decades of the 19th century, with a move from the earlier ideology.

26 John C. Wood, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.  
27 George R. Nickerson, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
of intellectual discipline and diligence to reflect a greater emphasis on skills training through the art of instruction.\textsuperscript{28} Although the character ideology had begun to falter, training promised to improve the character of teachers. In Nova Scotia, educationists advocated teacher training as early as 1838 as a means of combatting the complaints about the “unimproved character of teachers.”\textsuperscript{29}

Teacher training became a topic of discussion in New Brunswick about the same time as in Nova Scotia, with early advocates being Lieutenant Governors Sir John Harvey (1837-1841) and Sir William Colebrooke (1841-1848).\textsuperscript{30} In January 1838, Harvey noted in a message to the Legislature the success that monitorial societies had in establishing training schools in England, suggesting that the same model could be followed in New Brunswick.\textsuperscript{31} While Harvey met with little success, his successor, Sir William Colebrooke, nonetheless continued the crusade. The Provincial Secretary’s Office issued a series of circulars in 1841, which were intended to gather information for Colebrooke about the current state of education in the province. These circulars, which were distributed to the County Boards of Education, sought local reaction to the remuneration of teachers, the benefit of hiring more female teachers, what improvements could be made in the licensing system, the advisability of the introduction of agricultural education in schools, and the usefulness of a training or normal school. The Boards drew upon information provided by local trustees, and the gathering of these reports resulted in an informal inspection of schools in 1841. Although very few of these Board reports are

\textsuperscript{28} Mattingly, xiii.


\textsuperscript{30} MacNaughton, 92.

\textsuperscript{31} Alan Westlake Bailey, “The Professional Preparation of Teachers for the Schools of the province of New Brunswick, 1784 to 1964” (PhD Thesis, University of Toronto, 1964), 53. See also: Journal of the Legislative Assembly, 1838, RS 24, PANB.
extant, they seemed to suggest that the current system was in need of reform. From the available reports, it would appear that these County Boards were advocates of teacher training, a determination influenced by both their own examination of candidates and by trustees’ reports about teachers lacking the requisite qualifications, knowledge base, and methodological skill set.

Alfred Reade, Sir William Colebrooke’s private secretary, read the responses to the circulars distributed in 1841, and provided his own commentary on the topic in his report to the Legislature. Reade focussed on the obstacles to teacher respectability and competency, chief among them being poor remuneration and lack of training. He asserted that the poor remuneration could not help but devalue education in public estimation, while the irregular operation of schools and the unsightly appearance of schoolhouses further injured the image of the teacher. The Board reports convinced Reade that teacher training was a necessity, not only to improve academic standards but to inject the profession with greater respectability.

The informal inspection of 1841, which confirmed that there were defects in the licensing system, may have been the catalyst for the 1842 cancellation of licences. The Board reports castigated the “old” licensing system, which, by its reliance upon recommendations from clergymen and school trustees, was responsible for the employment of unqualified teachers. The Kings County Board of Education reported in 1841 that a new regulation which required prospective teachers to stand for Board examination, enacted in 1837 when County Boards were established, had deterred many

32 The Board of Education responses to the circulars are available for Charlotte, Kings, Northumberland, Queens, and Saint John Counties, representing 5 of the 11 Boards then in operation.
33 Journal of the House of Assembly, Appendix, 1842, RS 24, PANB
34 MacNaughton, 96.

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incompetent teachers from making application for licence. The report further stated that “[t]he character of the teachers generally are moral and good particularly those licenced \textit{sic} under the new system.”\textsuperscript{35} However, even the “new system” had its flaws, and unqualified teachers were still becoming licensed under it. The use of “character” here is significant, suggesting as it does that the new system guaranteed a higher standard for its teachers than for those recommended under the old system; character was becoming synonymous with education or what was known as literary attainments. The uneasy co-existence of the old and new licensing systems needed to be resolved to eliminate the incompetent, and cancelling licences was the most immediate means of achieving that end. Teachers licensed under the old system had not been Board examined, and this new measure was seen as the dividing line between proficient and deficient teachers. When all provincial teaching licenses were cancelled in 1842, this measure forced teachers licensed under the “old system” to stand for Board examination. The morally fit now also had to prove that they were academically competent to teach school. The 1841 informal inspection of schools showed the cracks in the system, and the deck was beginning to be stacked in favour of teacher training; the shift from character to credentials was starting to take shape.

In 1842, a special committee was convened to discuss educational matters. The committee concluded, based in large part on the observations made in 1841 by County Boards and trustees, that a normal school should be established in the province.\textsuperscript{36} A more thorough examination of schools was required first, and in 1844, the House of Assembly

\textsuperscript{35} Kings County, Report of the Kings County Board of Education, 1841, Parish School Returns, Records of the Executive Council, RS 8, PANB.  
voted £500 towards that end. Colebrooke hoped that the inspection might provide the necessary impetus for education reform in the province, with teacher training being one of the chief objectives, especially as the current school act would expire in 1845. James Brown, Dr. Sylvester Earle, and John Gregory were appointed in July 1844 to inspect all the Parish schools that were in receipt of the provincial allowance. They spent nearly six months visiting all the government supported schools in the province, and in February 1845, John Gregory prepared and released his Abstract of the Inspection Returns. The Abstract, which presented a joint report of the findings of all three inspectors, portrayed the state of education in the province as they saw it. Teaching performance was assessed, and not surprisingly, given prevailing attitudes, teacher incompetence ranked high among the reasons for the defective state of New Brunswick schools. Certainly the performance of William Broderick, in Northesk, Northumberland County, could serve as convincing proof that teachers were highly incompetent in the classroom. A teacher for more than a decade at the time of the inspection, Broderick was not only considered defective as an instructor but detrimental to student learning. It was reported that “a surprising degree of obtuseness of intellect was manifested” in Broderick’s school. One of Broderick’s previous employers from a neighbouring community reported that this teacher’s former students were “more deficient after being 18 months under this man’s tuition than before they entered his school.”

37 MacNaughton, 97.
38 The inspectors examined 492 schools, but there are only 489 individual returns extant.
40 William Broderick, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
classroom performance did not inspire confidence in teachers or the school system, but his was an exceptional case, and did not reflect the typical individual inspection.

The joint report provided a summary rather than a full statistical account of the inspection, commenting on the flaws in the system while making recommendations for change. After examining 492 schools, the returns for 489 of which are extant, the inspectors found “that although a considerable number of the schools are in as prosperous a condition as could reasonably be expected…a large majority of them are inefficient and do not afford the beneficial results of which they are fully capable.” 41 Had the inspectors tabulated the results of the individual returns, they might have been surprised to learn that they had given a “passing” grade to 60.3 percent of schools in the province. The inspectors had used words such as “prosperous”, “forward”, “flourishing”, “satisfactory”, or “efficient” to describe successful schools, and 295 of the 489 schools “passed” inspection based on these descriptors. Inspector James Brown asserted that Colin VanBuskirk of Botsford, Westmorland County, was a “successful Instructor” and that his school was in a “prosperous condition.” 42 David Adams taught a school in Dorchester, Westmorland County, that Inspector Brown considered “very far from being in a prosperous condition.” 43 Nearly one-third of schools “failed” the inspection, while the remaining 7.3 percent of schools either received neutral evaluations or could not be inspected. Because of Thomas Boyd’s simple approach to teaching, whereby he instructed his pupils individually, taught them to spell “easy words”, and assisted them with pronunciation, the inspector had little to praise or criticize, and Boyd had received a

41 Gregory, Abstract, 18.
42 Colin VanBuskirk, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
43 David Adams, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
neutral evaluation.\textsuperscript{44} And in the case of Michael Furlong, no examination could take place because the inspector found the school locked, the schoolmaster having closed it “in consequence of the hurry of haying.”\textsuperscript{45}

The joint report treated the teaching workforce as a whole, and did not distinguish between men and women. An examination of the individual returns shows that in 1844, three-quarters of inspected schools, or 374 of 489, were staffed by men. Just over half the schoolmasters were between the ages of 30 and 49, and were as likely to be married as they were to be single. Schoolmistresses accounted for one-quarter of teachers, and were younger than their male colleagues. Nearly half of the women were between the ages of 20 and 29, and were overwhelmingly single at 72.3 percent. Individual returns did not reveal any overt discrimination against schoolmistresses, and female headed schools passed the inspection at nearly the same rate as their male colleagues, at 57.3 percent and 61.7 percent respectively.

According to the joint report, New Brunswick teachers, regardless of gender, were judged to be deficient in their “literary attainments”.\textsuperscript{46} Based on their compilation of a list of the subjects regularly taught in schools, the inspectors found the breadth of teachers’ knowledge deeply disappointing and troubling. Virtually all schools offered instruction in Spelling, Reading, Writing, and Elementary Arithmetic, but this was rather basic education. The more advanced branches were not commonly taught, and teachers were judged as ignorant of these subjects. Just over half the Parish schools offered instruction

\textsuperscript{44} Thomas Boyd, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB. 
\textsuperscript{45} Michael Furlong, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB. 
\textsuperscript{46} Report of Education Commission in the Canadas in 1839 revealed that teachers lacked requisite literary qualifications, which prompted discussion about the need for model schools and teacher training institutions. See: Curtis, \textit{Building the Educational State}, p. 46.
in English Grammar, and only one-quarter of schools provided lessons in Geography. Book Keeping was taught in 86 schools, and 68 schools included various branches of mathematics in their curricula. The Inspectors judged that the knowledge base of New Brunswick teachers was woefully inadequate. Even if teachers possessed a fair education, it was all considered for naught if they could not correctly impart that knowledge to their students. Although Hugh Alexander Mount had education “sufficient to teach a common school”, inspector Earle recommended that he would have “to be instructed in a more efficient method before he can excel as a Teacher.”

Instruction in the art of teaching or attendance at a training school offered benefits far beyond an improved skill set. Teacher training could lend credibility to an occupation that generated little respect on its own accord, and promised to professionalize teaching. Even though teacher training was the primary recommendation made by the inspectors to cure the ills of the current condition of education in New Brunswick, curiously, they actually made relatively few explicit recommendations that individual teachers, whose schools they inspected, should attend a training school. Only 68 such recommendations were made, representing 13.9 percent of all schools inspected. When divided along gender lines, the inspectors recommended proportionately more women than men for teacher training. Nearly one-quarter of schoolmistresses were recommended for teacher training, whereas only 10.9 percent of men were; however, this did not mean that women were found more deficient than men. The recommendation for training was intended to improve services, regardless of gender. David Ferguson, though diligent and possessing

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48 Hugh Alexander Mount, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB. Hugh Alexander Mount attended the Training School in 1849 and received a third class licence. See: Hugh Mount, Training School Certificates, 1849, RS 115, PANB
the necessary literary attainments, was recommended for further training because by so doing “his services would be far more valuable to his pupils.”

Esther Camp failed the inspection because her method of instruction was “defective”, but Inspector Earle suggested that further instruction would make her “a valuable teacher.” Inspectors also noted that a number of teachers welcomed the possibility of a training institution, suggesting that they were interested in becoming credentialed. George Parker, of Ludlow, Northumberland County, appeared “anxious for the advancement of his pupils” and “would at once adopt any improved method of instruction which may be communicated.”

A recommendation for training was not necessarily a strike against the teacher, though it might have been perceived that way in the public eye at the time. That so few actual recommendations were made for improved training suggests that New Brunswick teachers were perhaps not as backward as what was represented in the joint report.

Recommendations for training served as encouragement for teachers to continue in the occupation, and the inspectors were more inclined to recommend younger rather than older teachers for further instruction. More than half, or 58.8 percent, of the teachers recommended for training were aged 20 to 29, but those over 50 rarely received such endorsements. Only three senior male teachers were recommended for a course in the art of instruction. Inspector John Gregory suggested that the 50-year-old Thomas Barber,

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49 David Ferguson, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB. Ferguson disappeared from available education documents after 1848, and there is no record of him enrolling in the Training School.

50 Esther Camp, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB. Camp became licensed 17 November 1841, and continued in the profession until 1848. See Regular Licences, 1816-1842, RS 115, PANB; The Royal Gazette, 5 January 1848, Wednesday, p. 3593-3598.

51 George Parker, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB. Parker attended the Fredericton Training School in 1848 and graduated with a first class licence. See: Training School Certificates, 1848, RS 115, PANB.
who had been teaching since 1822, might have greater success in his school “were he shewn how to teach.”

The inspectors may not have seen any benefit in recommending older teachers for training, and they made some of the most critical and sometimes curious comments about this group of teachers. James Gilchrist, aged 61, had been teaching at the same school in Prince William, York County, for 24 years, and was considered “too far advanced in life, and his want of proper education disqualifies him for teaching a reputable School.”

William Wier, of Kingston, Kings County, who was 50 years of age, was described as a “decent looking elderly man.” Inspector Earle did not believe that William Quinn, an experienced teacher in St. Mary’s, York County, supplied the correct age on his inspection form. He felt that Quinn had “the appearance of being much older than stated in his return.”

His form indicated that he was 47, but in his 1842 petition, Quinn wearily noted that after more than 40 years of teaching he had “become old, and grown grey in the parish school service.” Apparently, Quinn had mistakenly supplied his years of service where his age had been expected, suggesting, at least in this particular case, that there might be reason to discriminate against the elderly.

Yet at the same time, 60.1 percent of aged teachers received good evaluations from the inspectors. Even without offering oral instruction, William Rennick, at age 72, was considered “far beyond many teacher[s]” where he taught in Queens County.

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52 Thomas Barber, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
53 James Gilchrist, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB. Gilchrist collected the provincial allowance in 1845, and was listed among the licensed teachers in 1848, but he disappeared from all records after that date. See: Payment Schedules, 1845, RS 114, PANB, The Royal Gazette, 5 January 1848, Wednesday, p. 3593-3598.
54 William Wier, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
55 William Quinn, School Inspection Returns, RS 657, PANB.
56 William Quinn, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
57 William Rennick, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
By 1844, educational philosophy had moved in new directions initiating modern pedagogical methods unfamiliar to many New Brunswick teachers. The latest instructional approach, especially that espoused and practised by Horace Mann, engaged the student with oral rather than written instruction. The oral method encouraged questions and answers, generating a conversation between teacher and student. In his inspection return, Samuel Buhot, who taught in Campobello, was said to read “with intelligence, and questions the children in an easy pleasing manner.”\textsuperscript{58} Although teachers might be aware of the new educational and instructional trends, not all were in a position to put them into practice in their classrooms. Charles Lindsay, who had been teaching for 20 years when his school was inspected, indicated that parental concerns and expectations played a role in his classroom, which directed how he taught his students. Inspector Gregory noted that although Lindsay “approves of the intellectual system he abstains from adopting its principles because he believes that the parents who are anxious that their children should be taught to read in as short a time as possible would view the time spent in questioning as wasted in prattling.”\textsuperscript{59}

The delivery of content, by the tenets of the new pedagogical system, should be a pleasurable experience, not one forced upon the pupil by the rigours of repetition and memorization. The modern teacher was expected to embrace these principles, and those who did not were deemed defective or backward in their teaching method. Michael McNamara’s teaching method was described as “dogmatical” and he was considered “deficient in many of the qualities desirable in an instructor of youth.”\textsuperscript{60} Learning was to

\textsuperscript{58} Samuel Buhot, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.\textsuperscript{59} Charles Lindsay, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.\textsuperscript{60} Michael McNamara, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
be voluntary and enjoyable, which could not be achieved as readily when pupils were taught directly from books or forcibly by rote. John McLeod, who taught in St. George, Charlotte County, saw the benefits of improved teaching techniques. He admitted to the inspector that using the intellectual rather than the mechanical system of instruction worked best in the classroom. He argued that it was useless to try to teach pupils by “cramming them with isolated facts which are seldom at command when wanted.”\textsuperscript{61} John McLeod, who had been licensed for a decade at that time, was the embodiment of the “better class of teacher” which inspectors and reformers advocated. Having more teachers like McLeod in New Brunswick classrooms would elevate not only the profession but also the reputation of teachers.

There were a variety of factors, beyond the teacher’s control, which the inspectors determined had rendered provincial schools “inefficient” or “defective.” Stephen W. Palmer’s school at Sackville, which had been in operation for two years, had been “well attended but is now almost deserted in consequence of the hurry of potato digging.”\textsuperscript{62} William Donald kept school in Chipman, Queens County, in a “wretched hut without fireplace except a few stones piled up in one corner of the building, no floor overhead, and but one small window to admit the light, a building such as this can scarcely be called a School House.”\textsuperscript{63} Patrick Leonard, of Johnston, Queens County, complained to Inspector Earle about “labouring under great disadvantage for want of proper Book’s [sic], upon which account he is unable to form the pupils in classes.”\textsuperscript{64} All of these schools had “failed” inspection, not through teacher negligence or lack of ability, but

\textsuperscript{61} John McLeod, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
\textsuperscript{62} Stephen W. Palmer, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
\textsuperscript{63} William Donald, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
\textsuperscript{64} Patrick Leonard, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
because of disadvantages related to poor economic conditions. Low attendance among
the pupils, miserable school house accommodation, and the lack of proper textbooks all
contributed to the inefficient state of schools. These conditions made it difficult for
teachers to instruct their students properly. John Cummings’ school in Carleton, Saint
John County was inefficient on all counts, and inspector James Brown judged that “the
want of proper Books, the irregularity of attendance, and the crowded state of the School
Room are serious hindrances in his way.”65 None of these problems could have been
resolved by an increase in teaching skill and qualifications, yet citing these types of
defects and difficulties, served to exaggerate the negative results of the inspection. By
concentrating on the disadvantaged schools, the successful schools were overshadowed.
Amy G. Campbell’s school in St. Andrews was certainly in a prosperous state, as it was
not only well-supplied, but responsive to the needs of the children. Her classroom
received the following glowing recommendation: “The cleanly state of this School, the
low benches provided for the small children, the liberty of drawing on slates which they
enjoyed instead of being fruitlessly ordered to ‘study their books’ deserve remark as
superior to what is frequently observable in the Provincial Parish Schools.”66

The broad swath of educational “inefficiency”, or failures, served to exaggerate
the condition of an admittedly flawed system. The publication of the joint report no doubt
helped to discredit teachers in the court of public opinion, as readers tended to blame the
teachers in charge of the schools for these perceived failures. Ultimately, the inspection
report did indeed indict teachers for the defective condition of schools and the inefficient
state of education in the province. The joint report further suggested that teachers bore

65 John Cummings, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
66 Amy G. Campbell, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
the responsibility for and should be anxious about “raising their profession in the public estimation.”

When the results of the inspection were released, newspaper coverage championed government intervention to “put an end to the present woefully defective system.” It was inconceivable that, “in the middle of the 19th century, in a British Province”, ignorant school teachers could be paid by the government for their services. Reforming teachers, then, would serve a dual purpose: it would not only improve education, but it could also rehabilitate the public perception of teachers. Credentials, offered through a proper training programme, held the key to modern pedagogy.

Perhaps exasperated by negative public perceptions of teachers, the relationship between teachers and trustees could be contentious, and might potentially injure a teaching career as was nearly the case with John Connor. Although he had initially satisfied his employers after being hired in 1843, his behaviour began to change in ways which disturbed parents and trustees in the Westfield school district where he taught. After being asked by the parents to investigate allegations that the teacher had neglected his duty, the trustees found that Connor had an “inveterate habit of lying, eave’s-dropping [sic], insolence towards his employers as well as to the trustees and other highly considerable and scandalous conduct.” For the “general good of society”, the trustees requested that Connor’s licence for teaching be withdrawn. Evidently, the complaints lodged against Connor were not substantial enough to warrant the cancellation of his licence, and shortly thereafter he moved to another district to teach. James Brown inspected Connor’s new school in Saint John in 1844, and reported that he “taught in

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68 The Head Quarters, 3 December 1845, Wednesday, “Education”, p. 2.
69 John Connor, Teachers’ Petitions, 1843, RS 655, PANB.
classes with a good deal of care and success; much of the instruction given by way of question and answer, and by demonstration by means of a blackboard. The Teacher is a good Scholar, and the School in a prosperous state.” John Connor taught according to the new methodology, and even embraced the latest technology: the blackboard.\(^{70}\) He was just the kind of teacher that the inspectors were hoping to encourage in the profession, and perhaps a personality conflict was to blame for the tension between Connor and the Westfield school trustees. It is rather telling, though, that teaching licences were not revoked on the grounds of intellectual incompetence.\(^{71}\) There was not even a suggestion that teachers should be terminated on such grounds.\(^{72}\) To do so, of course, would have deprived children of any education at all in certain districts. The cancellation of teaching licenses was rare, and almost always on the grounds of immorality.

Nonetheless, as Connor’s case indicates, trustees could wield considerable power under the prevailing education system and, in particular, over teachers’ lives and livelihood. Trustees who neglected their duties could, as was the case for Ezekiel C. Wilson, deprive teachers of their salary. Wilson petitioned the government in 1843, seeking the provincial allowance which was denied him on account of the alleged negligence of the trustees. A teacher since 1837, Wilson had been considered ineligible for the provincial bounty in both 1838 and 1840 because the trustees had not submitted their report of his school. In addition, Wilson complained that trustees often refused to visit the schools under their jurisdiction, and their refusal to do that at the end of his 1843

\(^{70}\) John Connor, School Inspection Returns, RS 657, PANB.

\(^{71}\) Superintendents were only permitted to remove teachers for moral indiscretions rather than on the grounds of pedagogical incompetence. See: Curtis, Building the Educational State, p. 234-235.

\(^{72}\) According to the 1816 School Act, Section VII, trustees were empowered to remove teachers they deemed “negligent, insufficient or of bad morals.” There were no known cases of teachers being removed from their positions due to reports of their negligence or incompetence. A copy of the 1816 School Act was printed in The Royal Gazette, 2 April 1816, Tuesday, pp. 1-2.
term contract again denied him what was his due. He suggested that all teachers be taxed one dollar per year, the proceeds of which to be paid to trustees so that they would be forced to comply with their duties. Wilson also complained about a system where outrageous injustices and inequities existed, one which did not favour industrious teachers. “That many disorderly Teachers and of Drunken habits Have Drawn the principle part of their bounty before it came due, from the shops or stores of the Trustees, which makes the Trustees then be every [sic] correct on their own account. While sober & steady Teachers are neglected & abused.” No matter what he might have represented in his petition, Wilson was not an exemplary schoolmaster. The great number of errors contained in his petition, especially his pledge that he had “for five years teached Sunday school,” provide some indication of the level of his “literary attainments.” Not surprisingly, Wilson failed his school inspection in 1844. Not only was his school irregularly attended, but Wilson was judged as possessing a “tolerable knowledge of Reading and Arithmetic but is neither a good writer nor a very correct speller.”

Trustees also sat in judgement of what constituted the dividing line between moral and immoral behaviour, although, in this case, it would appear that they were more often generous than judgemental. Wilson drew particular attention to the lack of sobriety of teachers, but being guilty of this particular vice was not reason enough to call for a teacher’s dismissal. The Trustees for Hampton, Kings County, were well aware of George Coats’ periodic episodes of intemperance, but they trusted his assurances to them

74 Ezekiel C. Wilson, Teachers’ Petitions, 1843, RS 655, PANB.
75 Ezekiel C. Wilson, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
that he no longer had a drinking problem.\textsuperscript{76} Henry Coulter, whose school at St. Stephen, Charlotte County, had been examined in 1841, was found to be “slightly intemperate.”\textsuperscript{77} No complaints had been made against him, at least not to the trustees, and no further mention was ever made regarding his drinking. James McBride, also of St. Stephen, had been similarly led astray. It was remarked in 1841 that comments made “respecting intemperance in H. Coulter’s case are applicable here in greater force.” Because James McBride’s character was “in other respects fair,” his problems with sobriety did not injure his teaching career.\textsuperscript{78} The trustees for Greenwich, Kings County, judged George Smith to be a “man of moral and sober habits,” yet he arrived at the Board of Education for his examination in a state of inebriation. Smith responded to the charge of his drunkenness in his petition for licence renewal. He explained that as a teacher of 19 years, he had “gained the applause” of his employers, and was usually in the habit of moderate imbibing. On the occasion in question, it had been training day at Kingston, and he was guilty of “indulging a little too freely with some friends in pledging your Excellency’s most noble health and prosperous government.”\textsuperscript{79} Smith was granted a renewal of his licence without issue or prejudice, and he continued to teach for at least the next decade in the same community. Evidently, trustees forgave the occasional or even more frequent cases of intemperance, and such conduct did not appear to violate the moral code expected of teachers.

In contrast, when a charge of sexual misconduct was made against a teacher and substantiated through an investigation, the teacher’s licence was promptly revoked. To

\textsuperscript{76} George Coats, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
\textsuperscript{77} Henry Coulter, Parish School Returns, Trustees’ Report, 1841, RS 8, PANB.
\textsuperscript{78} James McBride, Parish School Returns, Trustees’ Report, 1841, RS 8, PANB.
\textsuperscript{79} George Smith, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
warn others about the moral danger that the teacher presented, news of the cancelled licence was published in *The Royal Gazette*. Though the cause for the dismissal was not reported, the public could certainly speculate the reasons to be rather serious to warrant publication in the provincial newspaper. During the 1840s, 10 teaching licences were cancelled, almost all dismissed on the grounds of sexual immorality.  

This is not to suggest that these were the only cases of impropriety and sexual deviance during that time, and it is entirely possible that other cases were handled quietly by the trustees and the community. Although there might be other, unreported cases of sexual misconduct, it is also possible that the charges which resulted in a teacher’s dismissal were falsely laid.

Two teachers who lost their licences during the 1840s protested their innocence. Louis P. Resch, who had been accused of assault against a young girl, was one who fought the charges. After an investigation and trial, Resch was acquitted. Yet his licence, which had been cancelled and its withdrawal announced in the newspaper, was not reinstated upon his acquittal. Resch petitioned the government in 1843 and 1844, but his attempts to have his licence renewed were unsuccessful.  

Resch left Colborne, Restigouche County, after the scandal and began teaching in Bathurst, Gloucester County, where he received glowing recommendations regarding his moral character. In one carefully worded testimonial, the “Parents and Guardians of children” promised that Resch was “a man of moral & sober habits well qualified for the instruction of Children in the several branches of Education usually taught in Parish Schools & that his removal would be a very great loss to his neighbourhood as there is no other school in the parish at present in which the french [sic] can have so much interest

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80 Regular Licences, 1816-1842, RS 115, PANB.
81 Louis P. Resch, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, 1843, 1844, RS 655, PANB.
he being one of their native tongue.” The parents further testified to “support any legal measures by which we could retain his servises [sic].” Resch even produced a testimonial from the Colborne school trustees, where he had been teaching at the time of the scandal. The trustees pledged that “the whole time he was licensed for the County of Restigouche he conducted himself in a highly becoming way, as a Teacher of French we believe he is highly accomplished – and we do sincerely regret for the sake of the rising generation his leaving this place.”82 Because his licence had been cancelled, Resch was not eligible for the provincial allowance, and any school he might have taught in the future would not have been recognized by the government. In all likelihood, the school he taught in 1844 was not inspected, not because of the scandal, but because the inspectors only examined government-subsidised parish schools. Resch’s petitions for renewal in 1843 and 1844 provide the only evidence that he continued to teach after the sex scandal broke, but how long he remained, or planned to remain, in teaching is a mystery.

The public perception of teachers had been shaped by their relationships with trustees, parents, inspectors, and the press. The newspapers could crystallize public opinion, and editorials related to teaching were increasingly caustic in the years surrounding the 1844-1845 Inspection. The entire system was under attack, but teachers could be held accountable for its imperfections. Before the inspection results were released, one editorial printed in *The Head Quarters* took exception to the licensing system and petitioning process. The critic complained that it was common at Board examinations for candidates to appear “before it illiterate, and wholly unqualified”, yet would pursue licensing through other means when they failed examination. The

82 Louis P. Resch, Teachers’ Petitions, 1843, RS 655, PANB.
editorialist further argued that incompetent teachers could still be granted a licence by petitioning the House of Assembly, rendering the Board of Education and Trustees of Schools ineffectual.83 In the immediate aftermath of the inspection, an editorialist, identified as “Probitas”, stated: “I am constrained to concur in a very popular opinion that it was a useless expenditure of public money”.84 The debate which emerged after the results of the inspection report were released showed a system under fire, in need of reform, and one that would be best served by a better class of teacher.

Yet, as this chapter implies, upon closer scrutiny, the evidence upon which negative perceptions about teachers were based proves elusive. Indeed, the quote from Thomas Gilbert, which opened this chapter, is a curious one, for there was nothing in the inspection report nor were there complaints in contemporary editorials to suggest that the teaching workforce was comprised primarily of the sick or infirm. In 1842, of the 686 teachers who were employed at some point during that school year, only six were known to pursue teaching because a physical disability prevented them from undertaking other occupations.85 A gunshot wound from his youth left John Palmer crippled and unable to “pursue any active employment.”86 A teacher for more than 40 years, Palmer had the approbation of the trustees, and received a satisfactory review of his school in 1844. Under his supervision, the pupils had “made great proficiency” and although he did not employ the new methods, he was judged as providing the students with a “sound

84 MacNaughton, 97.
85 The six disabled teachers were John Palmer, William Donald, George Stewart, Alexander Stevenson, James McCormick, and George Nash. All but George Nash were licensed career teachers. Nash petitioned for licence in 1842 with the assertion that having “lost his left hand lately disqualifies him from almost any other business”. He had been teaching in St. Andrews, Charlotte County for 3 months when he made his application, but there is no record that he ever became licensed. See: George Nash, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
86 John Palmer, Teachers’ Petitions, 1843, RS 655, PANB.
Elementary Education." William Donald, who taught in Queens County from 1836 until 1849, suffered an unidentified “complaint in his body”. The local clergyman insisted that because of the nature of the problem, Donald could only “maintain Himself and his Wife by teaching school”.

As the major qualification for teachers, character was an exceptionally complex 19th-century social construction. Given that character enveloped, as it related to teaching, a variety of moral, social, intellectual, and professional dimensions, it is curious that teaching commitment and permanence were not part of the professional ideology. When describing the “character” of teachers, the word “career” was never once used in petitions, inspection returns, or related government documents for the period. Yet the concept of career existed, even if that particular word was not used to describe it. The substitutes, or synonyms, at the time were “calling” and “vocation”. Inspectors, trustees, politicians, and the teachers themselves used these words to describe their longevity in the profession. The Normal School movement in New Brunswick, heralded by the quest for a better class of teacher, included discussion of teaching permanence if only in a peripheral way. Reformers argued that only by offering an increase in salary, dictated by the class of licence which could be achieved through attendance at a training school,

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87 John Palmer, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
88 William Donald, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB. This is the same teacher who worked in the “wretched hut” of a schoolhouse. See Footnote 63 in this chapter.
could greater permanence be achieved. Most teachers in New Brunswick had already made teaching their “career” by the dawn of the 1840s. Of the 686 teachers at work in 1842, nearly two-thirds, or 61.6 percent, would teach school for more than a decade; one-quarter of those already had teaching careers of 10 years or more by 1842. Had the inspectors quantified their own returns, they might have noticed a moderate degree of stability among teachers. Teachers had been required to supply the duration of their most recent teaching contract on the inspection return form. Not surprisingly, nearly half the teachers, or 45.8 percent, had been working at their present school for less than a year at the time of the inspection. In addition, 41.9 percent of teachers inspected in 1844 had been at the same school for up to four years. To remain that long in the same teaching engagement was certainly significant, especially given the poor working conditions which deterred permanence. Twenty teachers had been teaching at the same school for more than a decade, and six of those had kept school for more than two decades. Gilbert had suggested that few outside of the lame and the sick would remain in teaching, that those who did so had no other choice or option. This was simply not the case in New Brunswick during the 1840s.

In an age where character was the sole recommendation for teaching, it is almost inconceivable that teachers were so often condemned. The hiring system then in place ensured that teachers could be both abundant in character and deficient in method, the remedy for which rested with the promise of credentials. Upon the release of the Inspection results, one newspaper reported that “the true state of our Public Schools [has] been ascertained”. The accuracy of that statement is unquestionably false. The

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90 The Head Quarters, 3 December 1845, Wednesday, “Education”, p. 2.
Inspection Report of 1844-1845 should have provided an opportunity to correct the misconceptions about New Brunswick teachers, but it only confirmed contemporary assumptions. Inspectors, trustees, politicians, and the public were largely unaware of the class of teacher already at work in New Brunswick schools.
That your Petitioner was licenced to keep School in the County of York, on the tenth of August one thousand eight hundred and forty one, since which time he has continued to perform the duties of a Schoolmaster in the Parish of Dumfries up to the month of February last, when he removed to another school about seven miles below his former station, situated in the upper part of the Parish of Prince William. Your petitioner, although aware of the Proclamation dated the fourth day of July, one thousand eight hundred and forty two, and published in the Royal Gazette of the sixth of the same month, labored under the erroneous impression that it had reference to the year one thousand eight hundred and forty one, and in consequence never applied for a renewal of his Licence, nor was he aware that it was necessary to do so, until he called at the office of the Provincial Secretary this morning. Your Petitioner having applied for a transfer of his Licence in consequence of his removal and being informed that his application could not be complied with, humbly prays that Your Excellency will be pleased to direct that a new Licence may be issued to your petitioner, or that his old Licence may be transferred, and as in duty bound Your petitioner will ever pray.  

William MacKintosh, who submitted the above petition in 1847, had slipped through the cracks of an inefficient provincial education administration. Lieutenant Governor Sir William Colebrooke ordered that all teaching licences issued before 24 June 1842 be cancelled because the licence granting system was considered defective. For more than a decade, it had been the intention of the government to improve licensing procedures and to introduce greater efficiency in the school system. Stricter guidelines had been implemented as early as 1827, but clearly these early measures had not produced the desired results. By introducing new and more stringent licensing regulations for prospective teachers, officials hoped to attract a more prudent and qualified class of teacher. The state of education in the province was directly linked to the reputed

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1 Common phrase contained in virtually every Teacher’s Petition.  
2 William MacKintosh, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.  
3 Kings County Board of Education, Response to 1841 Provincial Circular, RS 8, PANB. The Board asserted that their establishment had been “instrumental in improving the character of teachers in this
substandard teaching workforce then in place, the majority of whom had been hired under a system that prized character over qualifications.

Prior to 1842, attempts to reform the system had only targeted incoming teachers, but did not affect those already licensed. The cancellation of all teaching licences in 1842 was intended to elevate provincial education standards by insisting upon a greater degree of accountability on the part of all school teachers. Those who did not comply with the enforced licence renewal process would be deprived of the provincial allowance, and the consequent interruption in salary would provide a powerful incentive for teachers to abide by the new regulations. This logic proved incorrect, because little more than half the licensed teachers observed the directive issued by the Provincial Secretary’s Office. We cannot know the reasons why more than 200 teachers held onto their expired licences and delayed applying for renewal, but the result was a process that dragged on for a decade, with the last known licence renewal application having been submitted in 1851.\(^4\)

By 1854, the government announced that it would no longer be accepting petitions from teachers, especially from those who sought pecuniary aid.\(^5\) Such pleas were to be rightfully directed to the Provincial Board of Education, which had been established in 1847. Although teachers continued to submit petitions directly to the government, the numbers dropped off dramatically in the decades after 1854. The petitioning process was no longer the primary means of becoming licensed, or of addressing teaching concerns and grievances, certainly a sign of progress and an apparent move towards a greater level of professionalization. Reformers had advocated improving an antiquated and inadequate

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\(^4\) Catherine McCurdy, Teachers’ Petitions, 1851, RS 655, PANB.

licensing system, and this chapter will explore the history and structure of the licensing and petition process, how the deficiencies in the “old” licensing system led to the 1842 renewal, and whether this undertaking ensured that only the fit teachers should survive.

The Royal Instructions issued to Sir Thomas Carleton in August 1784 outlined procedural rules for administering the new province, and provisions were made for schools, teachers, and the licensing of schoolmasters. The erection and maintenance of school houses was addressed in Section 78 of the Royal Instructions, which reflected the connection between education and religion. The establishment of schools was required “in order to the training up of youth to reading and to a necessary knowledge of the principles of Religion.” Sections 45 and 49 directed that lands were to be set aside in each town for a Church, and that the Glebe land should provide for the maintenance of both a clergyman and schoolmaster. The hiring of schoolmasters was also addressed in the Royal Instructions. Licensing guidelines were contained in Section 76, which stipulated:

And we do further direct that no Schoolmaster who shall arrive in Our said Province from this Kingdom be hence forward permitted to keep school in that our said Province without the Licence of the said Lord Bishop of London, and that no person now there, or that shall come from other parts shall be admitted to keep school in New Brunswick without your Licence first obtained.6

Education historians J.H. Fitch and Katherine MacNaughton interpreted this section rather literally, arguing that teachers were always required to hold a teaching licence in this province, that application was made directly to the Governor, and that candidates

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who met his approbation were issued a licence. Their insistence that Instructions equalled enforcement might have been predicated on the practice in the former American colonies. The Royal Instructions provided Governor Carleton, especially in relation to the licensing of teachers, were virtually identical to those issued in 1758 to Governor Thomas Boone of New Jersey. Similar instructions had been issued to the Royal Governors of New Hampshire and Virginia. It would appear that the licensing regulations were strictly enforced in most of the American colonies, with the exception of Pennsylvania, where proof of moral and religious character, rather than an actual licence, secured teaching appointments.

In New Brunswick, MacNaughton had speculated that the licensing regulations were not always strictly enforced during the early settlement phase, especially in remote areas of the province. Given the paucity of teachers, and the great need for instructors, MacNaughton further suggests that few applications for licence during this early period were denied. It is curious, though, that neither Fitch nor MacNaughton describe the precise process by which prospective teachers made application to the Governor. The application process should have left a paper trail from which it would be possible to enumerate and identify New Brunswick’s earliest teachers. There is no list of licensed teachers, nor is there a record of petitions or requests for teaching licences, submitted to the Governor or any arm of the Provincial Government before 1816. According to MacNaughton, the majority of these pioneering teachers, who held what she called the

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“Governor’s license”, are unknown.⁹ Even though the Royal Instructions intended teachers to be licensed, clearly there was a great divide between theory and practice. The settlement process was an arduous one, especially during the protracted period of provincial infancy. Resources were extremely limited in this unforgiving land, and the rules of procedure, no matter how well intentioned, took a back seat to survival, subsistence, and mere existence.

Licences would not be issued to New Brunswick teachers until 1816, when the petition process was inaugurated. Until that time, teachers had only two options open to them. In the first place, teachers could open their own private venture schools, depending entirely upon parental contributions raised through local subscription. Private schools carried a financial risk for the teacher, especially given the poverty prevailing in most settlements. Such schools generally took root in the larger centres, especially Saint John. A number of teachers who conducted these private venture schools advertised their services in local newspapers. While providing an outline of the curriculum and range of subjects to be taught, none of these advertisements promised that the teacher held a licence, sanctioned by the Governor or otherwise. The other option, and the one which employed the majority of the province’s first generation of teachers, was to be appointed schoolmaster for the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG). The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG) emerged during the rise of a spirit of moral reform in England at the end of the 17th century. Concern among clergy in the Church of England about the religious condition in the American colonies inspired the formation of this missionary organization, which flowed naturally from the establishment

⁹ MacNaughton, 44.
of its parent organization, the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge (SPCK) chartered in 1699 to combat vice and immorality. The SPG was chartered in 1701, just two years after the formation of the SPCK. Under the direction of the Lord Bishop of London, SPG missionaries were sent to North America to Christianize and civilize wayward, fallen, and heathen settlers and their mission was soon expanded to include indigenous and enslaved populations.\textsuperscript{10} Ignorance of Christianity could only be solved by education, and children would be raised up to understand and to live by the religious principles embraced by the Church of England.\textsuperscript{11} Education, then, was an integral component of the SPG mandate in the colonies, and the schoolmasters who were appointed were expected to meet if not exceed the threshold of piety as well as moral character.

The impact of the SPG cannot be overestimated. During the 18\textsuperscript{th} century, more than 300 ordained missionaries had been established in the American colonies.\textsuperscript{12} The SPG sphere of influence extended to Nova Scotia after it became a British Colony in 1713.\textsuperscript{13} It was only in following the Loyalists to Nova Scotia that the SPG left its liturgical and educational imprint on New Brunswick. The SPG missionaries faced an overwhelming task in establishing themselves and their missions in the new province. With New Brunswick, established in 1784, and having been carved into eight counties in 1786, including Charlotte, Kings, Northumberland, Queens, Saint John, Sunbury, Westmorland, and York, the missionary work began. Within a decade, the SPG had

\textsuperscript{12} O’Connor, 27.
\textsuperscript{13} Thompson, 128; MacNaughton, 44.
established missions with functioning schools in all but Northumberland County. Attempts to place a permanent Church of England clergyman in the Miramichi had proved problematic and not without certain scandal. It would not be until 1822 that the Miramichi would have its own resident Anglican clergyman.\(^\text{14}\) While the SPG assigned suitable clergymen to the other missions within the first few years, their challenges had only just begun. Establishing a functioning mission initially entailed the construction of churches, parsonages, and school buildings, which would facilitate ministry, education, and spreading the good word. Most missions experienced tremendous difficulty in completing these building projects in a timely fashion, given the challenges posed by the lack of local infrastructure.

Within a few years of the arrival of the SPG, missionaries reported that their missions were in “as flourishing a state as can be expected in a new country”,\(^\text{15}\) but such optimism was not reflected in individual mission reports, which provide numerous stories of privation and struggle. The missionary at Gagetown, the Reverend Richard Clarke, noted in 1788 that there were 50 families in the area, half of whom belonged to the Church of England. His congregants were too poor to subscribe towards the construction of either the church or parsonage. The mission was also in great want of a school, and its first schoolmaster would not be installed until the following year. Not surprisingly, the teacher hired to keep school was himself poor and his family in “low circumstances”.\(^\text{16}\) John James Cluett resigned his post as schoolmaster within a few months, and the schoolhouse was finally finished in 1790 just in time for Cluett’s successor, Anthony


\(^{15}\) Report to the SPG, 20 February 1789, MC 230, PANB.

\(^{16}\) Rev. Clarke, Report to SPG, 26 December 1789, MC 230, PANB.
Narroway, to take charge of it.\textsuperscript{17} Gagetown was not the only mission to experience long delays in the construction of churches and schools; the Fredericton mission experienced similar problems. In most cases, the missions had not yet received the promised governmental assistance, but proceeded with church construction nonetheless.\textsuperscript{18} Part of the building funds were also to be supplied by parishioners and by income generated from church lands. Local poverty prevented inhabitants from making contributions, and the glebe lands, clearly the greater issue, did not answer the needs of any of the missions.

The glebe lands, which had been set aside for the maintenance of both the clergy and schoolmaster, as directed by the Royal Instructions, were inadequate in most cases and complaints about the condition and location of glebe lands were frequent. In 1788, the Reverend Samuel Andrews, Missionary at St. Andrews, Charlotte County, noted in his report to the SPG that his mission expenses were so great that he had incurred considerable debt. Andrews also remarked upon the cost of living, noting that “all the necessaries of life are very dear.” He reported with certain resignation that the glebe would not yield a profit “for many years to come.”\textsuperscript{19} Bishop Charles Inglis reported his concerns regarding glebe lands to the SPG in 1792. Inglis complained that, although Governor Carleton had hired surveyors to select suitable glebe lands in each parish in the province, most were of poor quality, if they had been reserved at all. At that time, 37 parishes had been established, but were so large that Inglis recommended further subdivision to make parish management more tenable.\textsuperscript{20} The Reverend James Scovil

\textsuperscript{17} Rev. Clarke, Report to SPG, 25 September 1790, MC 230, PANB.
\textsuperscript{18} Hebb, see Chapter 4, “Church Buildings and Glebe Lands,” 91-114.
\textsuperscript{19} Rev. Samuel Andrews, Report to SPG, 11 December 1788, MC 230, PANB.
\textsuperscript{20} Bishop Inglis, Report to SPG, 15 October 1792, MC 230, PANB. Andrews suggested that his mission be divided in 1788, which request had been denied. Rev. Samuel Andrews, Report to SPG, 11 December 1788, MC 230, PANB.
described his challenges in ministering to such a large mission at Kingston, Kings County in 1789. Because the inhabitants were dispersed over such a large area, and with few horses available for hire along with the poor condition of the roads, he often had to travel on foot long distances to minister. Scovil further complained that, although he had exercised the utmost frugality in securing his living quarters, he still found himself in debt from the exercise.\textsuperscript{21}

The work of establishing and managing the missions was a constant challenge to the missionaries. Even after a church had been constructed, most settlers could not be counted on to travel the great distances from their homes to attend services. Scovil’s experience in travelling to his parishioners was not unique. The Reverend Samuel Andrews, based in St. Andrews, described not only the exertion involved in touring his extensive mission, but also the cost involved. Andrews found that he could not make the journey without the assistance of two servants, which added to his travel expenses.\textsuperscript{22} The church and school were intended to be centrally located to encourage attendance at both, but given the dispersal of inhabitants in every mission, missionaries became itinerant, like Scovil and Andrews. The same situation did not extend to the SPG teacher, who only taught at the school provided.\textsuperscript{23} Schoolhouse construction was generally delayed in every mission, a reflection of the difficulties attendant on establishing pioneer settlements. Gagetown had a completed school by 1790, but other missions conducted their schools in various buildings. Ozias Ansley, the first teacher at Norton, Kings County, taught in the

\textsuperscript{21} Rev. Scovil, Report to SPG, 20 November 1789, MC 230, PANB.
\textsuperscript{22} Rev. Andrews, Report to SPG, 11 December 1788, MC 230, PANB.
\textsuperscript{23} The SPG schools were staffed by Anglican teachers, and although denominationalism would become an issue in the second half of the 19th century in New Brunswick, separate schooling was not yet a factor during the time period under consideration. This study predates the arrival of Catholic teaching orders comprised of women instructors, and the establishment of convent schools in the period after 1856 would change the shape of Catholic schooling in the province.
mission parsonage. Three years later, Ansley, dissatisfied with his post, resigned and returned home to Sussex Vale. Ansley quit for want of a proper schoolhouse, and further, without subscription from parents, he was unable to care for his family on the Society’s bounty alone.

In addition to their extensive ministering duties, missionaries were responsible for finding and replacing teachers, often a daunting task. The Reverend Dr. Mather Byles had to re-staff his school at Carleton, Saint John, every few years, and suitable candidates were not always in the offing. Timothy Fletcher Wetmore, who had previously worked for the Society in the American colonies, taught the SPG school at Carleton from 1787 to 1789. Wetmore had been appointed schoolmaster in place of Benjamin Snow, the first teacher of the school, and Wetmore taught with the approbation of parents and the Society for nearly two years. In 1789, he temporarily left his school in the hands of his brother and father. Wetmore finally resigned just a few months later to become a full-time physician in Queens County. Byles quickly replaced Wetmore, but had difficulty in finding yet another teacher just three years later. The school at Carleton sat empty at different times during the 1790s for want of a teacher who could eke out a living on the meager income. Other missions faced similar staffing issues. In 1791, when Anthony Narroway accepted a better teaching engagement at New York, he left the Gagetown school empty. Missionary Clarke recommended that his own son, Samuel Richard

24 Bishop Inglis, Report to SPG, 30 September 1795, MC 230, PANB.
25 Ozias Ansley, Report to SPG, 1 May 1798, MC 230, PANB.
26 Hebb, 137.
27 SPG Records, MC 230, PANB.
28 Mr. Clarke, Report to SPG, 25 June 1791, MC 230, PANB. Timothy Fletcher Wetmore would return to the United States, and in 1795 completed a Dissertation at Columbia entitled “Puerperal Fevers”. He died in 1799.
29 Rev. Dr. Byles, Report to SPG, 24 June 1792, MC 230, PANB.
Clarke, be appointed schoolmaster. Should that not have been considered appropriate by the Society, he would have had to search for another teacher. Clarke was saved from the task as his son’s appointment was approved, but the additional £5 for him to serve as catechist was not.\(^{30}\) Turning to a family member could not only ease the burden on the missionary, but could provide an immediate successor for a teaching engagement. The Reverend John Beardsley, in charge of the Maugerville mission, also requested that his son, John D. Beardsley, be permitted to conduct the empty SPG school so that “the children may be no sufferers of the vacancy”. Rev. Beardsley impressed upon the Society his son’s extensive education and qualifications, including his intention to enter upon holy orders. The SPG approved young Beardsley’s appointment as schoolmaster for Maugerville.\(^{31}\)

Missionaries were remarkably influential in the hiring and firing of SPG teachers, perhaps playing a much greater role than what was originally intended by the Society. J.H. Fitch itemized a detailed process for engaging SPG teachers, whereby the Society directed that a prospective teacher must provide a certificate testifying to the candidate’s age, marital status, deportment, religious zeal, affection for the current Government, and devotion to the principles of the Church of England. In addition to this document, teaching candidates were required to prove their qualifications for the office by appearing before a three person committee appointed and approved by the Society.\(^{32}\) Although those guidelines had been codified in the official rules of the Society, the practice in New Brunswick was evidently far less rigorous. Schoolmasters were appointed based on a

\(^{30}\) Rev. Samuel Clarke, Report to SPG, 25 June 1791, MC 230, PANB.
\(^{31}\) Rev. Beardsley, Report to SPG, 27 October 1791, MC 230, PANB.
\(^{32}\) Fitch, 6-7; Elsbree, 30.
satisfactory character reference which also promised confidence in their teaching qualifications. A recommendation from the missionary to the SPG, supported and often funneled through the Bishop of Nova Scotia, was sufficient to secure a teaching position in New Brunswick. Teachers did not need to hold a licence from either the Governor or the Lord Bishop of London to teach school for the SPG. In none of the early SPG correspondence for New Brunswick were teachers described as being duly licensed; these were quite simply teaching appointments. Given the challenges of locating and replacing teachers, it is no wonder, then, that such a direct hiring practice had been adopted.

Once appointed, SPG teachers were expected to report to the Society on the state and progress of their schools every six months, and these reports were abstracted, or summarized, by an official with the SPG. In the first report, teachers expressed their gratitude to the Society for the appointment, followed by their Notitia Scholastica. These were the class statistics, including the number of scholars currently enrolled in the school, the average attendance, the subjects being taught, and any other relevant notations. In the American colonies, paper forms had been provided teachers to report to the SPG, but whether these forms were filled in regularly is not known.33 In New Brunswick, SPG teachers either had not been provided these forms or chose not to use them. Unless there was an issue, most teachers’ written reports were rather brief. This reporting practice was not always strictly observed, and it was common for the missionary, rather than the teacher, to comment on the school in his report to the SPG. James Berry, who taught his own private venture school at St. Andrews in 1792,34 was appointed SPG teacher there.

33 Elsbree, 76.
34 Owen, Report to SPG, 16 June 1792, MC 230, PANB.
that same year.\textsuperscript{35} Berry reported most consistently over the course of his 20 year career with the SPG, and his first report was gracious, eloquent, and appreciative. He promised that by this appointment and “by whose benevolent & timely aid he shall be put now upon a more agreeable footing, & be enabled to continue his office, which otherwise, from the slender maintenance he collected, he could not have done much longer. That he had been schoolmaster in the place for 4 years, & in general had under his care from 35 to 40 children, whom he instructed mainly in the manner recommended by the Society.”\textsuperscript{36} Even though Berry generally submitted his reports annually, rather than every six months, he was clearly finding the process tedious, writing, as early as 1799, that “nothing deserving notice has occurred since his last letter of January 2 1799. The number of pupils continue to be between 35 & 40, whom he invariably teaches agreeably to the method prescribed by the Society. He cannot sufficiently express his gratitude to them for their benevolent support of a school which must otherwise languish.”\textsuperscript{37}

James Berry’s teaching experience, by no means an isolated case, provides a useful illustration of the way a number of New Brunswick’s early schools were hybridized; private venture schools could be adopted or patronized by the SPG. As was often the case, a school already in operation struggled financially until absorbed by the Society. The Reverend Richard Clarke appealed to the Society in 1789 on behalf of schoolmaster, John James Cluett, who had accepted the teaching position at Gagetown in the hopes of being in receipt of the Society’s bounty. Cluett was accepted, rendering him eligible to draw on the Society’s account for teaching.\textsuperscript{38} Taking over an established

\textsuperscript{35} Bishop Inglis, Report to SPG, 15 October 1792, MC 230, PANB.  
\textsuperscript{36} James Berry, Report to SPG, 31 December 1793, MC 230, PANB.  
\textsuperscript{37} James Berry, Report to SPG, 11 October 1799, MC 230, PANB.  
\textsuperscript{38} Rev. Clarke, Report to SPG, 26 December 1789, MC 230, PANB.
school also satisfied the mission’s objective to offer proper religious education to the rising generation, without the additional task of seeking a suitable master. The SPG only patronized an existing school if it met the Society’s approbation. When John D. Beardsley, son of Maugerville Missionary Beardsley, took over the SPG school at Woodstock in 1803, he did not have the confidence of the community. Although young Beardsley was recommended by Missionary Dibblee there in Woodstock and had previously taught for the SPG in his father’s mission at Maugerville, neither did he have the approbation of the Society.\textsuperscript{39} Without the approval of the Society, John D. Beardsley was denied payment for his teaching services through the SPG. He resigned three years later, without having drawn a bill for payment from the SPG for keeping a school at Woodstock.\textsuperscript{40}

During the early years, the SPG managed to do what the fledgling New Brunswick government could not, and that was to offer a salary to teachers. Before the first School Act was passed in 1802, there was no provincial bounty or allowance set aside for the payment of teachers. The SPG filled the educational void, and, in paying its teachers, established many of the future parish schools.\textsuperscript{41} Though by no means providing a living wage, the SPG promise of a real income proved attractive to teachers. After having secured an appointment to teach for the SPG, schoolmasters were eligible to draw an annual bill for their services on the SPG account. SPG teachers were paid £10 annually, with an additional £5 for those who served as catechists.

\textsuperscript{39} Rev. Dibblee, Report to SPG, 24 June 1804, MC 230, PANB.
\textsuperscript{40} Hebb, 143.
\textsuperscript{41} Hebb describes these as Society-Sponsored Parish Schools. See: Hebb, 136
To honour bills submitted, the SPG kept a record of the teachers in their employ, published in an Abstract which was issued semi-annually. Should a teacher no longer meet the approbation of the SPG, his name was struck from the Society’s list of schoolmasters. The few teachers who were struck from the list had been dismissed for conduct unbecoming to their position, at least in the eyes of the SPG. In 1809 Henry Herbs was appointed to fill the vacancy at Springfield, Kings County, left by the departure of William Brasier Hayes. Herbs came well recommended and was readily added to the SPG list. Although “born a cripple”, Herbs’s parents had treated him to a liberal education. Within a year Herbs had been struck from the SPG list - he had proved unworthy. It would appear that Herbs was religiously fickle, having been “decoyed by a Baptist who made a great stir at Springfield last spring.” In striking a teacher from the list, the teaching appointment was cancelled, which denied access to the Society’s salary.

Because of the arm’s length system then in place, a few unscrupulous teachers continued to draw a salary either after being informed that they were ineligible for the bounty or after they left the employ of the SPG. In 1792, Elkanah Morton conducted a school at Sussex Vale which admitted both settler and aboriginal children, and the Bishop requested that he be added to the SPG list. Apparently he was appointed an SPG schoolmaster, but when Morton took a position at Fredericton in 1797, the Society would

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42 Elias Scovil, Report to SPG, 17 February 1809, MC 230, PANB. Hayes who began teaching that school in 1798, left an unspecified number of years later. Scovil’s report indicated that the school had been “vacant for some time.” William Brasier Hayes would become duly licensed, though his petition is not extant, on 5 November 1816. See: Regular Licences, 1816-1842, RS 115, PANB.
41 Elias Scovil, Report to SPG, 5 August 1809, MC 230, PANB.
44 Elias Scovil, Report to SPG, 18 May 1810, MC230, PANB.
45 Between 1787 and 1816, there were only three schoolmasters who were permanently struck from the SPG list. Two were struck for religious reasons, and the third for neglect of his teaching duties.
not honour his salary as the school did not answer their purpose, given that most of the pupils could pay the tuition. The SPG resolved at that time not to honour any future bills from Morton, and informed him of their decision.\textsuperscript{46} Without the benefits of the SPG salary, Morton surrendered his school at Fredericton and returned to Sussex Vale, where he started another school. Apparently disagreeing with the decision of the Society, Morton drew a bill for two years’ salary which would cover his time at Fredericton.

Although the attempted transaction was intercepted, the Reverend George Pidgeon was shocked that Morton had acted in such a manner.\textsuperscript{47} Not every such bill was intercepted as demonstrated by the case of Jedediah Phips in 1806. Phips met the approbation of both Rev. Scovil and the community of Kingston, Kings County, not only because of his teaching ability but for his musical inclinations. He proved to be rather useful in that capacity at church. Scovil assured the SPG that Phips would probably “keep the school for some years to come.”\textsuperscript{48} It is unclear precisely how long Phips taught at Kingston, but Scovil expressed his dismay in 1806 that Phips “has continued to draw bills, some of which have been paid, & that he drew one for a few days past” which Scovil hoped would be “protested” since Phips “does the Society no service at all.”\textsuperscript{49}

The teachers who legitimately drew an SPG salary might also expect, in theory, to receive additional monies from the parents through subscription. Yet the desperate conditions which marked the settlements in and around the SPG missions in New Brunswick meant that it would be virtually impossible to raise money by subscription.

Poverty was endemic throughout the scattered settlements. The missionaries and

\textsuperscript{46} Elkanah Morton, Report to SPG, 1 July 1797, MC230, PANB.
\textsuperscript{47} Rev. Pidgeon, Report to SPG, 12 April 1798, MC 230, PANB.
\textsuperscript{48} Rev. Scovil, Report to SPG, 26 March 1801, MC 230, PANB.
\textsuperscript{49} Rev. Scovil, Report to SPG, 13 October 1806, MC 230, PANB.
schoolmasters were witness to local conditions, and descriptions of community poverty can be found in their reports to the SPG. William Green, SPG teacher at Campobello, provided a rather vivid depiction of life on the island: “That the inhabitants being chiefly fishermen, & very poor, & the land so barren that they cannot raise their own bread, but if they can get a few fish & potatoes they are contented, he could not think of extracting anything of them for teaching their children, & for whom he has also bought books.”50 Like many teachers, Green could not expect or depend upon local subscription to augment his teaching salary. He had kept school in Saint John shortly before taking this position on the island,51 and probably chose to work for the SPG as it might prove more lucrative than conducting his own private venture school.

A new funding stream became available with the passing of the first School Act in 1802, entitled “An Act for Aiding and Encouraging Public Schools”. Each parish was entitled to £10 for the payment of teachers. Although the availability of a provincial bounty did encourage the opening of schools outside the SPG sphere of influence,52 a number of the Society’s teachers collected the provincial bounty in addition to the SPG salary. The 1802 School Act did not penalize teachers who already drew a salary from the SPG. The School Act simply allotted money to the teachers who kept school in each parish, and the £10 was divided evenly among them. Thomas Costin, appointed SPG

50 William Green, Report to SPG, 27 March 1792, MC 230, PANB.
51 William Green kept school in Saint John as early as December 1788, where he taught navigation, using “the new method of finding the Latitude at Sea by two Altitudes of the Sun, and Longitude by the Moon’s distance from a fixed Star”. See: The Royal Gazette, 13 January 1789, Tuesday, “Navigation”, p. 1. Katherine MacNaughton copied William Green’s school advertisement from The Saint John Gazette, 27 March 1789. See MacNaughton, 43-44. The same advertisement ran in The Royal Gazette, 7 April 1789, Tuesday, “Education for Young Gentlemen”, p. 4 In both advertisements, Green promised parents that the “strictest attention” would be paid to their children’s “natural genius, and their moral abilities.”
52 MacNaughton, 58.
teacher at Fredericton in 1801, collected his regular Society salary plus £5 from the 
province when the new School Act came into effect. Costin shared the provincial bounty 
with fellow teacher, Bealing S. Williams, who conducted his own private school in 
Fredericton. Should there be only one teacher in the parish, that fortunate teacher was 
entitled to the entire amount. In York County, some Justices of the Peace suggested that 
the money be divided in case a second or third teacher should be employed, with the 
unused portions to be kept in the county treasury. That practice was not followed, at least 
not in York, possibly to avoid accounting confusion for the Court of General Sessions.

The payments to teachers, made available by the 1802 School Act, were 
processed by the County Courts of General Sessions. The sessions system was 
essentially a regulatory body which administered county governance. Power to act was 
vested in the Justices of the Peace, whose duties included debt collection, overseeing 
minor criminal trials, and the issuing of regulatory licences, most notably for taverns. 
Although the Court of General Sessions administered the school grants, and had the 
power to appoint and dismiss public school teachers, it did not licence teachers. While 
MacNaughton contended that “those who framed the Act of 1802 took advantage of the 
existing machinery for the licensing of teachers”, there were no licensing procedure or 
regulations in place. The “existing machinery” to which MacNaughton referred was the 
Royal Instructions of 1784, but although the Royal Instructions had directed that teachers 
should be licensed, they did not provide a guide for the practical application of this

53 Rev. Pidgeon, Report to SPG, 20 Nov 1801, MC 230, PANB. 
54 York County Court of General Sessions, Minutes, 14 January 1803, RS 160, PANB. 
55 MacNaughton, 57. 
56 Paul Craven, Petty Justice: Low Law and the Sessions System in Charlotte County, New Brunswick, 
57 MacNaughton, 56.
particular instruction. Teaching appointments had been made in lieu of licensing, and though there were defects in such a system, it satisfied the demands at the time. The sessions system adopted an appointment scheme for teachers, similar to that which had been introduced by the SPG. It is unclear, though, what standards the Justices employed in approving teaching appointments. Their approbation may have been met by recommendation or by the simple fact that the school was already in existence. Greater infrastructure and surveillance was introduced in 1805 with the second School Act, entitled “An Act for Encouraging and Extending Literature in This Province.”

The Act of 1805 instituted a Grammar School at Saint John, and, in addition, established two county, or common, schools in each of the remaining counties. Each schoolmaster was paid £25 annually from a funding pool which would be available for the next six years. As with the previous Act, the Justices had the power to appoint schoolmasters who met their approval. The Act of 1805 went further by providing a means of inspecting the teachers appointed at these schools. By assigning a two-person committee to visit these county schools on a semi-annual basis, the 1805 Act introduced a system of teacher accountability. These schools were also intended to reach a wider geographic area, to serve the needs of a scattered population in great want of education. Given the extensive territory to cover in each county, these two schools would still be far removed from a great portion of the student body. To offer instruction to the greatest number of pupils, these schools were to be itinerant. The teacher moved throughout the county in rotation, until every parish had been visited by the county school.58 In Charlotte

County, the teachers moved within parishes. In St. Patrick’s Parish, the school served three different areas, moving every four months.  

Although the authors of the 1805 Act had intended to create a new level of schooling, with an elevated curriculum, the Justices interpreted the “county schools” as encouraging parish schools, or what were often referred to as public schools. Fitch and MacNaughton acknowledged that while a two-tiered school system existed in theory by virtue of the 1805 Act, the counties failed to make any distinction between parish and county schools. The parish school teachers who had been appointed by the Justices in 1802 were the same ones in receipt of the county school grant just three years later. For a brief period then, approved parish school teachers were paid significantly more than what had been their due under the 1802 Act. There were teachers prepared to take every advantage of the system, and for one in particular, his scheme was not only clever but largely successful.

Robert Payne taught his own private venture school in Prince William Parish, York County, from 1798 until 1805 without “fee or reward”, at least not from the SPG. Payne had been appointed public school teacher by the York County Justices in 1802, and given that he was the only master in the parish, he was entitled to the entire £10 as directed by the School Act. The level of Payne’s qualifications as a schoolmaster are not known, but he had caught the attention of the Bishop of Nova Scotia. In 1806, the Bishop not only recommended that Payne be appointed an SPG schoolmaster but also

59 Charlotte County Court of General Sessions, Minutes, April 1808, RS 148, PANB. The school was to be situated at Bocabec, the Mills, and also “up river”.
60 Fitch, 15; MacNaughton, 59.
61 Bishop of Nova Scotia, Report to the SPG, 12 November 1804, MC 230, PANB.
62 York County Court of General Sessions, Minutes, 14 January 1803, RS 160, PANB.
requested that he be compensated for having taught so many years without remuneration. Payne was admitted to the SPG list, and although it was not usual practice to offer a gratuity, the Society paid him a one-time gratuity of £20 for past service. Payne remained on the SPG list and continued to draw a salary from the Society until 1808 when his cunning plan finally backfired. With the passing of the School Act of 1805, Payne became eligible for the £25 bounty offered in encouragement of schools while he taught school in Prince William. Being in receipt of both the SPG and provincial bounty, Payne collected a handsome sum of £35 annually. To continue to collect both salaries, Payne had to follow the money. Because the provincial bounty rotated from parish to parish, he had to move to remain eligible for the significantly larger provincial school grant. The following year he moved his school from Prince William to Queensborough, maintaining both salaries. In 1807, he moved to Northampton, across the river from his school at Prince William, and again collected both salaries. In 1808, the SPG refused to pay Schoolmaster Payne given the difficulty students had in reaching the school. The Society preferred to pay a new master for the school at Prince William, which Payne had left empty to chase a greater income opportunity. In 1811, a new teacher was appointed by the York County Justices to teach school at Northampton, and it would appear that Payne returned to Prince William and the fold of the SPG with its annual £10 salary. He would continue to teach school in that parish until 1815, when it was reported that he had surrendered his school there on account of old age. Robert Payne’s actions suggest that

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63 Bishop of Nova Scotia, Report to the SPG, 12 November 1804, MC 230, PANB.
64 Because another school had been established in the parish, Payne had to share the provincial bounty. His request to be awarded the full amount was finally honoured in 1810. See: York County Court of General Sessions, Minutes, 4 July 1810, RS 160, PANB.
65 Rev. Dibblee, Report to SPG, 24 June 1808, MC 230, PANB. See also: Hebb, 145.
66 York County Court of General Sessions, Minutes, 8 January 1811, RS 160, PANB.
67 Rev. Dibblee, Report to SPG, 14 July 1815, MC 230, PANB.
he was prepared to do whatever was required to secure an income from teaching, and in 1817 he exercised the most important option open to him. Robert Payne petitioned for licence.

Three education acts were passed in 1816, the last of which addressed parish schools, and was entitled “An Act to encourage Schools in this province”. A significant shift in practice accompanied the passing of this act. After 1816, only those teachers who were duly licensed would be eligible for the provincial allowance. Coincident with this Act, the Provincial Secretary began keeping a record of duly licensed teachers, for administrative purposes with regards to paying salaries, but also as a means of surveillance. Before 1816, there was no record of teachers employed by the province, either at the local or provincial level. In 1803, Jonathan Odell presented a circular to all Courts of General Sessions on behalf of the acting provincial President, requesting that each county compile a list of its schoolmasters in light of the recent case of teacher impropriety in York County. The unidentified teacher had been suspected of being “an emissary sent here for the purpose of disseminating principles of immorality and sedition” and that as administrative bodies they were to “suffer no one to continue in that employment of whose character and principles you may at any time find reason to entertain doubt or distrust”. Maintaining a list of parish school teachers had thus been desirable for a great many years before 1816, but was only enforced with the adoption of a process for licensing teachers.

With the advent of licensing, the sessions system continued to administer the school grant, but the language regarding teachers had changed. Teaching “appointments”

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68 Sunbury County Court of General Sessions Minutes, 10 November 1803, RS 157, PANB.
were replaced with “duly licensed” teachers. Appointed and prospective teachers who wished to become “duly licensed” were required to submit petitions to their respective County Court of General Sessions beginning in 1816. The 18 petitions which were filed at that time identified 26 teachers. Nine of those teachers had kept school for more than a year, and four of these experienced teachers had been appointed by the SPG. More than half the teachers who petitioned, or 15 of the 26, received a licence in 1816. The majority of these original petitioners were granted licences to teach within months of making application. Jonathan Foster had taught his own private venture schools in Kings and Queens Counties since 1813, and after submitting his petition on 30 September 1816, received his licence on 9 October 1816. It would appear then that the licensing process could be rather expeditious, even though it was a novel form of bureaucracy for teachers.  

Minutes of the County Court of General Sessions indicated that teachers were licensed according to the Royal Instructions. This promise echoed the language of the 1816 School Act, but no clear licensing procedures had been put in place by either the Act or the Royal Instructions. For their part, teachers, though in compliance with the new regulations, were uncertain about the licensing process. Their concerns were revealed in the first petitions for licence submitted to the various County Courts of General Sessions in 1816.

When William Arthur Sterling, a teacher in Nashwaak, York County, submitted his petition for licence, he was keeping a school which met the approbation of George Pidgeon, SPG Missionary at Fredericton. There is no record of him working for the SPG,

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69 William Arthur Sterling, Teachers’ Petitions, 1816, RS 655; Regular Licences, 1816-1842, RS 115, PANB.
but for his earliest known teaching engagement, Sterling served as tutor for General Martin Hunter’s family. Sterling provided instruction in French and Latin, and it is possible he is the unnamed teacher mentioned in Hunter’s journal in 1804. Hunter wrote to his wife that “George goes to school to-morrow to begin French, so that I shall have a couple of hours to myself; which I devoted to him every day. He is really a fine boy, and I am very vain of his improvement.” Sterling had been teaching for a number of years prior to 1816, but from his petition it was clear that he had never been licensed, nor did he know how to acquire one. Sterling addressed his petition, dated 6 May 1816, to the Provincial Secretary, Jonathan Odell, and referenced the new School Act before stating: “I find it will be necessary for me to procure a Licence for that purpose, and being unacquainted with the proper mode of application & form of such Licence, I request You will have the Goodness to communicate the same.”

Veteran teacher, Bealing Stephen Williams, taught school in Fredericton from 1795 until his death in 1829. During that time he conducted a private school, a parish school, and was also appointed SPG schoolmaster. For the first 20 years of his career in the province, Williams had taught school without a licence. In his 1816 petition, he indicated his eagerness to comply with the new regulations. His petition, addressed to the Lieutenant Governor, read: “And whereas there is an Act passed that no one Shall teach a school without a License. And wishing to do everything that is requisite, and not to give any offence whatever, I thought it expedient to request the favor of you to obtain a license for me”. By his wording, Williams invoked the Royal Instructions, which were

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71 William Arthur Sterling, *Teachers’ Petitions*, 1816, RS 655, PANB.
72 Bealing S. Williams, *Teachers’ Petitions*, 1816, RS 655, PANB.
finally applied in 1816. Had there been a “Governor’s License” in existence before that
time Williams would have been in possession of it, for he had served as tutor to Governor
Carleton, instructing his children for six years.73 Petitioning for licence, then, emerged as
a result of the Act of 1816, and although a number of teachers were initially tentative
about how to make their applications, the petition process was not an unfamiliar one.

Petitioning was an egalitarian act, open to all members of the citizenry, without
any exclusion based on gender, race, religion, or literacy. In general terms, there were
two types of petitions, the petition of grace and the petition of right. In the petition of
grace, petitioners applied for compensation or pecuniary aid which they considered their
due. For compensatory petitions, the cases were emotionally driven, and the pleas for
individual financial assistance were often denied. For the petition of right, petitioners
were generally successful since they were making application for something to which
they were entitled.74 Petitioning for land was an example of the petition of right, and most
applications were honoured so long as the proper petitioning format had been followed.
In 1816, the Provincial Secretary’s Office published land petition regulations in The
Royal Gazette, since most applicants had apparently failed to provide pertinent
information in their petitions. Petitioners were to use the prescribed format or run the risk
of having their applications rejected.75

There were no such guidelines provided teachers, other than the directive that
they submit their petitions for licence to the County Courts of General Sessions. The

73 Bealing S. Williams, Teachers’ Petitions, 1819, RS 655, PANB.
74 Gail G. Campbell, “Disenfranchised But Not Quiescent: Women Petitioners in New Brunswick in the
Mid-19th Century,” Acadiensis XVIII, 2 (Spring 1989): 22-54; J.K. Johnson, “‘Claims of Equity and
Justice’: Petitions and Petitioners in Upper Canada 1815-1840,” Histoire Sociale-Social History, XXVIII,
75 The Royal Gazette, 8 April 1816, Tuesday, “Secretary’s Office”, p. 1.
earliest teachers’ petitions showed little evidence of a standard format. Typically, petitions addressed the highest authority in the province, usually the Lieutenant Governor, listing his rank and all his titles. Should the Lieutenant Governor be absent, petitions were directed to the President, or other official, who acted in the Lieutenant Governor’s stead. A few of the early petitions actually addressed the Provincial Secretary, whose duty it was to keep a record of all the teachers licensed in the province. More than a decade after the petition process was introduced, a relatively standard format had emerged. Most candidates opened their petitions with a common expression of intent, indicating that they were “desirous of obtaining a licence to teach”. Part way through the petition, teachers listed the subjects they “professed to teach”, and generally signed off with a variation of the salutation common to virtually every type of petition: “as in duty bound shall ever pray”. Notwithstanding these common conventions, petitions were descriptive in nature, detailing teaching experience as well as the location and duration of their current school post. Petitions also contained demographic details, including place of birth, age, religion, and marital status. It was also common for immigrants to list the date when they first arrived in the province. Other petitioners coloured outside these lines, and in so doing, revealed fascinating details about the individual lives of teachers. Most petitions were intended to be persuasive and perhaps even to impress to secure a licence, but quite often the petitioners deliberately tugged at the heartstrings. Robert Graham, who taught in Chatham, Northumberland County, identified himself in his 1817 petition as a married man from Scotland who had emigrated “with the view of teaching provided that he should meet with proper encouragement but he thinks it is hard that he should have so much to pay for Licence and only to receive so small a salary”. As he continued his
petition, Graham asked that he be granted a licence “seeing he is a poor man and had hard getting of his education on account of his Father’s death when he was young”. In a letter attached to his petition, Graham promised to pay the usual charge for licence “if necessary”. The licence fee must not have been that dear given that Graham was the only teacher to complain of it. He was, perhaps, simply trying to avoid paying it.

The appointment system, which had been the preferred method of screening teaching applicants before 1816, relied heavily on the strength of personal recommendations. With the shift to petitioning, teachers were still required to provide certificates which testified to their moral and literary sureties. At the time, their best advocates were the school trustees. The Act of 1816 created Boards of Trustees for each parish, consisting of a two or three person committee, which oversaw all matters related to schools and teachers. The trustees kept teachers apprised of regulations and expectations, and, on occasion, the trustees even made application for licence on behalf of their teachers. Alexander Burnett had the support of both the community and the trustees, and their 1817 recommendation read:

We the subscribers and School Committee appointed by the Honourable Court of Kings County for the Parish of Spring-field do recommend Alexander Burnett, a British born subject, and a native of Ireland as a person we think that will answer our purpose as a Schoolmaster and for that purpose we petition His Excellency if it meets his approbation to grant him a Licence so as to Intitle us to a share of the money granted by the House of Assembly for the assisting of schools, and as we in duty bound will ever pray.77

The recommendation might have been sound, but Alexander Burnett’s application was mishandled. Although he was awarded a licence within two months of its submission,78

76 Robert Graham, Teachers’ Petitions, 1817, RS 655, PANB.
77 Alexander Burnett, Teachers’ Petitions, 1817, RS 655, PANB.
78 Regular Licences, 1816-1842, RS 115, PANB. The date on the Trustees’ petition was 28 October 1817, and his licence was awarded 17 December 1817.
Burnett was later informed that he could not obtain a licence to teach until he supplied proof of his religious persuasion. Clearly Burnett was one of the first casualties of an emergent licensing system that suffered in the absence of a clear set of guidelines or regulations. From the outset, then, petitioning for licence was without a rudder and changes made over the course of the ensuing decades were belated attempts to correct an already imperfect and defective system.

Because licensing procedures were not provided in any concrete or published form after the Act of 1816 went into effect, teachers were often in the dark about what was expected of them. The confusion that surrounded proper licence petitioning procedure was not resolved immediately, and teachers continued to submit incomplete petition “packages”. To be a successful candidate for licence, teachers were to submit a petition supported by recommendations from trustees and the resident clergyman. These certificates testified to their teaching and moral qualities, the best guarantees at the time that suitable candidates would be selected to raise up the youth of the province. Evidently not all teachers were observing the proper licensing procedures, and apparently others still were keeping school without being duly licensed, a clear violation of the Royal Instructions. Campbell Gibb, who had emigrated from Aberdeen, Scotland in 1819, had opened a school in Saint John without first being duly licensed. He was reprimanded in writing, “having received notice from His Majesty’s Attorney General…either to desist from teaching or be proceeded against according to Law.” Gibb promised in his petition for licence that, “he shall cease from teaching until your Excellency be pleased to relieve him from his present embarrassment.”

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79 Alexander Burnett, Teachers’ Petitions, 1818, RS 655, PANB.
80 Campbell Gibb, Teachers’ Petitions, 1821, RS 655, PANB.
or prejudice his application, for within a month, Gibb was awarded his teaching licence.\textsuperscript{81}

Gibb’s case was clearly not an isolated one, for in 1827, a stern warning was published in

*The Royal Gazette*:

Public Notice is hereby given, that Application for school licences will be required hereafter, in all cases, to accompany their Applications with proper and sufficient testimonials of their Religious Persuasions, and of their moral characters, as well as of their other qualifications and fitness for the office of instructors – and all Trustees of Schools, and other persons recommending Applicants for Licences, are particularly requested to pay strict attention to the requisites. All persons venturing to keep school before they have obtained a Licence are hereby reminded of the penalties they may incur by such infractions of the Law, and cautioned against such proceeding.\textsuperscript{82}

Similar laws had been passed in the American colonies, particularly in Massachusetts and Connecticut, during the 18\textsuperscript{th} century, prohibiting the establishment of unsanctioned schools or those by unlicensed masters. Those caught contravening the law were subject to a fine.\textsuperscript{83} In New Brunswick, there is no record of the penalties alluded to, but perhaps it was intended or expected that the threat alone would prevent any further breaches of the law. Though such law breaking was not the common experience among teachers, the acquisition and submission of supporting documentation certainly was. All teachers were required to provide testimonials related to character and morality. Testimonials from the trustees were generally easy to obtain, given their sworn duty to visit schools and be in communication with teachers and parents. However, certificates from clergy could be a challenge, especially in areas where there was no resident minister, but such cases were relatively uncommon.\textsuperscript{84}

\textsuperscript{81} Regular Licences, 1816-1842, RS 115, PANB. Gibb’s petition was dated 20 November 1821, and his licence was issued 5 December 1821.

\textsuperscript{82} *The Royal Gazette*, 6 November 1827, Tuesday, “By Authority”, p. 3.

\textsuperscript{83} Elsbree, 49.

\textsuperscript{84} In 1842, out of the 462 petitions filed either for a new or a renewal of licence, only 8 petitioners complained of the inability to secure a clergy certificate. Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
School trustees and clergy commented on similar character traits in their letters, most commonly employing such words as “moral”, “sober”, “fit”, and “qualified”. Their recommendations often overlapped and mirrored each other. Robert Kay, who kept school at Salisbury, Westmorland County, was described by the Baptist minister as an “unmarried man of good moral character and habits”, while the trustees promised that he was a “young man of good moral character and conduct”.85 Both the trustees and the Presbyterian minister at Northesk, Northumberland County, were in agreement about Walter McAllister’s character and suitability as a teacher. The trustees testified that McAllister was an unmarried man who was “of good moral character and attentive to his duties”. His certificate from the clergyman likewise provided assurance that he “has a moral and religious character and is in my opinion a fit person to have his licence renewed.”86 Lydia McEntire, neé Berry, was described by the Baptist Minister at St. Martin’s, Saint John County, as a “moral and very worthy woman, and a fit person to be entrusted with the charge of a school.” The school trustees also commended her exemplary character, testifying that she was a “woman of moral and sober habits and we recommend that she may receive a licence”.87 With an ever increasing number of teachers seeking recommendations, letters of reference could not help but reflect a similar style and format, no matter who the individual candidate for licence might be.

With the shifting emphasis from character to credentials, stricter guidelines were introduced into the licensing process in 1837. A new School Act created County Boards of Education, which were staffed by persons appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in

85 Robert Kay, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
86 Walter McAllister, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
87 Lydia McEntire, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
Council. It was their duty to examine all prospective teachers relative to their knowledge and literary attainments, while also paying particular attention to morality, character, and loyalty.\textsuperscript{88} There are no records extant for the County Boards of Education, and both the examination questions and the deliberating process are a matter of speculation. In 1864, American school teacher and superintendent, Isaac Stone, published a collection of more than 2,500 examiner questions, geared to the proper preparation of teaching candidates for any board of examination. In his study of American teachers, Historian Willard Elsbree provided a sample of questions covering various subjects, including the identification of Improper Triphthongs and the semi-vowels as a test for competence in Orthography.\textsuperscript{89} Board examinations were intended to elevate the standards of the office of teacher, to admit only the better class of teacher, and to deter those who were not qualified for the position. Although New Brunswick reformers were satisfied with this new measure, it did not apply to teachers who were already licensed. Testing licensed teachers was beyond the scope of the County Boards.

Astride these changes or improvements in the licensing system, the number of teachers submitting petitions began to escalate. Although petitions for licence were on the rise, so too were petitions for remuneration. The School Acts determined how many teachers would be eligible for the provincial allowance, and limitations were set based on an equal division of the grant among teachers. Once that number had been reached, any other teachers who kept school in the same parish were ineligible for the provincial bounty. The School Act of 1833 had specifically addressed female teachers, setting the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{88} MacNaughton, 90. The loyalty component reflected the recent troubles in the Canadas.
\end{itemize}
limit at two teachers. Four years later, the number was raised to three schoolmistresses per parish, clearly reflecting an increase in the number of women entering the profession.\(^{90}\) Years earlier, Rachel Martin had complained about the discrimination inherent in provincial legislation which was injurious to the hiring of female teachers. In her 1823 petition to the Legislature, Martin wrote that she had been “deprived of the Provincial Bounty in consequence of the act of Assembly for the encouragement of Schools not expressing the word *Mistress* as well as ‘Master.’”\(^{91}\) In yet other cases, teachers suffered when the trustees failed to perform their duties with any due diligence. By failing to certify the school or turn in the teacher’s school returns, the trustees were responsible for teachers being denied payment of the provincial allowance. The only recourse for teachers, in such cases, was to file petitions seeking redress of their grievances, and they were doing so in increasing numbers. A further rise in the number of petitions was occasioned by an amendment introduced in 1840, which increased the school grant allotted to each parish, thereby increasing the number of government-supported schools.\(^{92}\) Such a measure ensured that a greater number of teachers were eligible for the provincial allowance, but payment issues remained a primary complaint amongst teachers.

Teachers, in many cases, were denied the provincial allowance because they were not following the rules of procedure. Under the appointment system, teachers who moved from one parish to another had to inform the Court of General Sessions to qualify for their share of the school grant, as the experience of Robert Payne demonstrates. The same

\(^{90}\) MacNaughton, 89.

\(^{91}\) Rachel Martin, Petition to the Legislature, 1823, RS 24, PANB. Underscoring by Rachel Martin.

\(^{92}\) MacNaughton, 89-90.
would hold true under the licensing system, and teachers were expected to apply for a licence transfer if they changed districts. A teaching licence was only valid for the parish in which it was issued, and teachers did not always observe this regulation. Moving without applying for a transfer could deny teachers their pay. Teachers remedied this situation, not by transferring their licences, but by filing petitions after the fact. The sessions system was becoming inundated with petitions from teachers by the 1850s. Petitioning was getting out of control, and the flood of petitions only served to make an already inefficient system even more defective.

In 1842, the Provincial Secretary issued directives from the Lieutenant Governor in the months of April, May, June, and July related to teachers’ petitions, which were published in *The Royal Gazette*. Clearly patience with the petitioning process was wearing thin, whether such applications were made by veterans or novices. In April, guidelines for submitting applications for licence, reflected a more detailed version of the order published in *The Royal Gazette* back in 1827. In May, attention was drawn to the same set of instructions, while conveying the displeasure of the Lieutenant Governor at the “very defective and unsatisfactory system under which Licences for keeping Parish Schools have been granted”. The next month the Public Notice directly addressed teachers who neglected to petition for licence transfers. Finally, in July 1842, the following Public Notice appeared in the newspaper:

Public Notice is hereby given, That all Licences for Parish Schools issued prior to the 24th of June last, are to be considered as cancelled; and such Teachers as are now employed, will receive new licences, free of expence, for the Parishes in which they are respectively engaged, upon producing proper Certificates from the

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93 In the United States, teaching certificates were only valid in the town, township, or county in which they were issued. Elsbree argued that this was both an “inefficient and wasteful practice.” See: Elsbree, 184.  
94 *The Royal Gazette*, 25 December 1850, Wednesday, “House of Assembly”, p. 5416. Teachers requesting “grants of money” were noticeably increasing “from year to year”.
Trustees of the Parish, conformably to the regulations published in the Royal Gazette, and transmitted to the Clerks of the Peace in the several Counties, on the 12th of April last.\textsuperscript{95}

The licence cancellation was intended to put all teachers on an even footing. The “old” and “new” licensing systems would no longer co-exist; all teachers would be judged and licensed by the same standards. Teachers who had not been Board examined, or those who had been licensed under the “old” recommendation system, would finally have their qualifications tested. The Board examination, in most cases, simply rubber-stamped the teaching approbation that they already enjoyed. However, there were other cases in which examiners were puzzled about how some teachers had ever managed to become licensed in the first place. Wilfred Forster, licensed under the old system in 1830, had been repeatedly examined by the County Board of Education after the 1842 cancellation. Forster had to return on multiple occasions because he had been impaired during his first examination. Although the Board was finally satisfied that he had requisite qualifications, the members preferred to defer their certificate until they saw testimonials on his behalf. His initial deportment gave the Board members considerable cause for pause. The Board even expressed concern that some misrepresentation had permitted Forster to become licensed. Apparently the “new” system had its own defects, because Forster had his licence renewed in October 1842, while his Board examination report, with its reservations, was issued in December 1842. The Board, having come into possession of Forster’s licence, could not understand how he had become licensed under the present regulations,\textsuperscript{96} and it is possible that the licence was not returned to him, for there is no evidence that he ever taught again after 1842.

\textsuperscript{95} The Royal Gazette, 6 July 1842, Wednesday, p. 203.
\textsuperscript{96} Wilfred Forster, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
The 1842 cancellation championed the adage: “out with the old and in with the new”. In that same spirit, teachers were to turn in their “old” licences before a new one was to be issued to them. When petitioning for licence began in 1816, the Provincial Secretary kept a list of all licensed teachers along with copies of their licences. According to the rules for renewal, teachers were to forward their Board examination report, all testimonials, and their old licence. The vast majority of teachers could put their hands on their old licence, no matter how old it might be. There were a few teachers, though, whose original licence had either been lost or destroyed. John Smith, who had been licensed in 1818, could not produce his licence because it had been destroyed in the Great Miramichi Fire of 1825.\(^\text{97}\) Two other teachers had also lost their licences to fire,\(^\text{98}\) but David Adams lost his when he had become shipwrecked,\(^\text{99}\) and Peter O’Farrell’s licence had been stolen.\(^\text{100}\)

Whether teachers had all the required documents or not, they were slow to respond to the 1842 renewal directive. A public notice ran in *The Royal Gazette* at the end of August, nearly two months after the cancellation had been announced. The notice reminded teachers about what was required for renewal, promising that if they had already been Board examined there was no cause for them to stand for re-examination. Anyone who had been licensed after 1837 would have been Board examined, which accounts for just over half the applicants for renewal in 1842. If reluctance to appear before the County Board of Education had been the only impediment to petitioning for renewal, then teachers would have re-applied accordingly and promptly, and the next

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\(^{97}\) John Smith, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.  
\(^{98}\) Hugh Alexander Mount and Ezekiel Wilson, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.  
\(^{99}\) David Adams, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.  
\(^{100}\) Peter O’Farrell, Teachers’ Petitions, 1843, RS 655, PANB.
announcements would have been unnecessary. By the end of November, yet another notice appeared in the newspaper reiterating the particulars related to the renewal process, while reminding both teachers and trustees to be mindful of the regulations regarding certificates. Clearly, reforming a defective system was rather challenging, and probably as inefficient as the system it attempted to replace. In June 1843, nearly a year after the cancellation and after repeated public notices, *The Royal Gazette* published a list of teachers who were still missing documents from their renewal applications.\(^{101}\)

The renewal process was a long and protracted one lasting nearly a decade. In the case of those who had submitted incomplete petition packages, the delay was not always a case of neglect or ignorance. Most teachers, no matter when they filed for renewal, swore in their petitions that they had been aware of the 1842 cancellation. Some might have been confused, as William MacKintosh, whose petition opened this chapter, claimed to have been. Given the wording of the cancellation notice, it is conceivable that William MacKintosh could have interpreted the word “last” incorrectly. The statement related to the dating of licences, “issued prior to the 24\(^{th}\) of June last”, could have been read as 1841 rather than the intended 1842. Given this logic, MacKintosh simply concluded that the notice did not apply to him. Most teachers read the cancellation notice correctly; otherwise hundreds would not have applied for renewal in 1842. Teachers had been labouring under a defective system for quite some time, and when they were in violation of any procedure or practice, they simply submitted petitions to rectify the situation. It is entirely likely that those who did not immediately apply for renewal were simply too accustomed to the defects in the system. These same deficiencies, which teachers

\(^{101}\) *The Royal Gazette*, 21 June 1843, Wednesday, p.1.
navigated rather fluidly under the “old” system, caused the Lieutenant Governor grave concern and consternation.

The most egregious defect of the licensing system was its duality. The two licensing systems, character versus qualifications, could no longer co-exist, working in opposition. Although critics shunned the recommendation system, because it did not test for knowledge or abilities, the “old” system was in no danger of extinction. The character reference continued to be a necessary part of the “new” system. The 1842 renewal served to unite the two systems by insisting on a single standard operating procedure, and in so doing merged the competing ideologies of character and credentials. While the reformers hoped that only the fit teachers should survive the rigours of the new system, it might be safe to conclude that the changes naturally selected the dedicated class of teacher.
Chapter 3
“A person fit to be entrusted with the charge of a school”
Profiling the Profession, 1842

We the Trustees of Schools for the Parish of Greenwich hereby certify that we have known the said Charlotte Holder from her childhood having been born and brought up among us. She received a Licence for teaching a School in Kings County on the nineteenth day of February 1836. And from that period, has been actually engaged in that service. She has taught a School near Mr. Zebulon Jones’s Mills, for the space of five years, and under our immediate inspection, and to our entire satisfaction of all her employers.

We are sorry to say that her literary attainments are not so extensive as we would wish. However, these have been quite sufficient for the above period mentioned, and still are, to teach the children belonging to her School. But in consequence of having so long engaged in the same place, Two of her employers prefer a Master to teach their big boys, boys who are now grown up.

The above trustees’ certificate provides a glimpse into the way attitudes and assumptions shaped hiring practices during the pre-credential period. Charlotte Holder submitted this certificate with her petition for a renewal of her licence, in 1842, by which time she was no longer teaching in Greenwich. Although the trustees had considered her “fit” to teach for the previous five years, early in 1842 she had been dismissed in favour of a male teacher. Her termination was a reflection upon both prevailing attitudes toward gender and expectations about the literary attainments of teachers. Trustees, and often parents, perceived the maintenance of discipline and order in the classroom to be more naturally vested in schoolmasters, and believed that the instruction of older pupils, especially as boys grew into men, was best placed in the hands of a commanding male teacher.

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1 James Bubar, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB. The quote was contained in one of Mr. Bubar’s certificates.
2 Charlotte Holder, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
case, although the trustees professed their satisfaction with their female teacher’s demeanor and manner of discipline, because clearly the parents, as “her employers”, held sway. Then, too, as the trustees admitted, given her less than extensive “literary attainments”, Charlotte Holder was only qualified to teach the youngest pupils. Her limited knowledge could not keep pace with the academic needs of a maturing student body, and, as a result, she could not expect to teach more than a few years in a single school. Accordingly, she moved to Hampstead, Queens County, in 1841, where she kept school for the next four years. Although she satisfied the subscribers there, she did not impress school inspector Dr. Sylvester Earle, who examined her school in 1844. Dr. Earle found her barely above mediocrity in both teaching method and content. The inspector complained that the “reading and spelling was but indifferently performed” by the students, and that “Mrs. Holder is no Grammarian, her knowledge of Arithmetic is limited.”

The mother of two children, Mrs. Holder had been widowed for about a year when she petitioned for a licence to teach in 1836. Although granted a licence, Charlotte Holder did not fit the preferred image of a teacher: she was neither young nor male. At 31 years of age, Holder was a mature woman when she began her career. Willard Elsbree noted that American schools were “manned by… youthful pedagogues”, and before the American Civil War, the young teacher was male. Although young teachers lacked both maturity and experience, and were assumed to have no professional aspirations, they were nonetheless still hired in large numbers in American schools. School

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4 Charlotte Holder, Queens County, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
administrators, and even school reformers, expected that teaching would prove only temporarily attractive to the young: a stepping-stone to more lucrative and permanent employment for young men and a means to bridge the gap between schooling and marriage for young women.\(^6\) Giving substance to this view, both contemporaries and modern researchers assumed not only a rapid but also a normative teacher turnover rate, with the stock of young instructors being continually replenished. For contemporary administrators, this contrived connection between youth and teaching justified the low salary, as it was never meant to support a growing family. Yet such assumptions neglected to account for personal motivations and aspirations. In entering the teaching workforce after a disruption in her life course, Charlotte Holder proved somewhat unusual but far from unique. Although the trustees recognized her limited “literary attainments”, she gained employment because a better, or preferred, class of teacher could not at that time be procured. The case of Charlotte Holder is instructive, illustrating the divide between preference and practice in the hiring of New Brunswick teachers. This chapter will examine the 1842 teaching workforce, profiling and identifying those who became teachers in the pre-credential period to demonstrate that realism grudgingly triumphed over idealism in pursuit of hiring fit and “proper” persons to teach school.

The image of the 19\(^{th}\)-century teacher has been a decidedly negative one, whether such depictions appear in contemporary accounts, older institutional histories, or in works of fiction. With the introduction of the New Social History, education historians began to

study teachers and their work patterns using quantifiable sources and a systematic approach. Compiling an occupational profile allows researchers to begin to unravel the reasons why teachers chose the profession or even why they left or remained in teaching. Wayne J. Urban has argued that a better understanding of the composition of the teaching workforce is crucial to gaining an appreciation of the lives of those employed in the occupation, while also explaining the actions of its members.\textsuperscript{7} To identify and enumerate who taught in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century, more recent American and Canadian scholars have developed demographic profiles based on census records, but earlier histories relied on impressionistic accounts, which generated prejudicial and perhaps inaccurate characterizations of teachers.

Reconstructing the 19\textsuperscript{th}-century teaching workforce poses considerable challenges, especially given the limitations of the extant documentary record. Willard Elsbree complained in his 1939 work on American teachers that secondary sources were littered with “sweeping generalizations based on insufficient factual evidence…and unjustified conclusions”, which in some cases reflected a “preconceived viewpoint.” Elsbree was further critical of the generalizations which had shaped the impression of the colonial schoolmaster, the result of “the smallness of their total number and the fragmentary nature of existing source material”.\textsuperscript{8} The colonial schoolmaster was apparently the embodiment of virtue and piety, and such a characterization was based upon a limited number of individual biographies. The virtuous life and extensive teaching

\textsuperscript{8} Elsbree, 6, 17.
career of Ezekiel Cheever,⁹ for example, certainly cast a lengthy shadow which eclipsed other teachers, making it nearly impossible for an ordinary teacher, let alone a defective one, to compete with such an ideal image.¹⁰ The 19th-century teacher, it would appear, could not maintain the same stature, and, as an occupational group, had fallen from grace. Public perception of teachers and of the vocation itself suffered with the expansion of the education system and the resulting increase in the number of teachers keeping school. Elsbree admitted that the early 19th-century teacher was not accorded the same respect or esteem as his colonial colleagues, and, without citing any source material, made his own “sweeping generalizations” when he suggested that it was the “queer, the lazy, and the incompetent” who “took to teaching for want of something better to do”.¹¹ This jaundiced view of early 19th-century teachers, though common, was perhaps undeserved. However, it is only in identifying the early 19th-century teachers, individually and as a group, that such a determination can be made.

North of the border, views of 19th-century school teachers, mirrored the perspective provided in Elsbree’s discussion of the American teacher. J.G. Althouse, in his 1967 study of Ontario teachers, commented that teaching “was commonly regarded as the last refuge of the incompetent, the inept, and the unreliable.”¹² Nineteenth-century social critics and school reformers had rationalized that teaching could only attract the least able, for the more astute or competent candidates would naturally abandon or avoid teaching altogether. Those most fit for teaching would never tolerate the poor pay and

⁹ Ezekiel Cheever had a 70-year teaching career, more than half of which was spent keeping school in Boston, Massachusetts. See: Elsbree, 81.
¹¹ Elsbree, 271.
contemptible working conditions, leaving in their stead morally and mentally bereft individuals who were ill-suited to any other form of employment. In the face of such damaging stereotypes, teaching did not command much respect. Althouse paints a consistently unflattering picture of early 19th-century Ontario teachers based largely on the highly prejudicial descriptions found in Dr. Thomas Rolph’s “A Statistical Account of Upper Canada”, published in 1836. According to Althouse, this account actually contained very little information about schools and teachers, but he considered its meager educational content authoritative.13

Sources which reveal the nature and composition of the teaching workforce during the first half of the 19th century are scant, and to identify teachers in 1840, Althouse extracted individuals from superannuation lists compiled from 1854 to 1866. He identified 40 teachers who, he contends, “must have” taught in 1840. All 40 teachers were male and the majority were British rather than Canadian-born. This “motley crew” of teachers originated primarily from Ireland and Scotland, with a few others from England, and fewer still of American birth.14 Harry Smaller used the same pension list from 1854 to identify not only longevity, but also the physical condition of teachers eligible for retirement. Smaller found that only nine of the 40 teachers were pensioned by reason of physical defect, whereas the rest retired because they met the eligibility requirements based on years of service and age. Early Ontario teachers, given Smaller’s findings, had extensive careers. Most of the 31 teachers who retired because of advanced age had taught for more than 20 years, and five taught for more than 50 years. Although a

14 Althouse, 5.
full demographic profile of early Ontario teachers still proves elusive, their commitment was clear.15

The earliest “reliable” impressions of the 19th-century teacher come courtesy of the census at mid-century, but this document cannot answer all questions asked of it. John L. Rury explored the social and economic origins of American teachers from the Colonial period to the late 20th century, examining in particular the social backgrounds of teachers at 50 year intervals between 1850 and 1950.16 Rury acknowledged that though there is no snapshot of the American teaching workforce in 1850, the aggregate data from the state and federal census returns can yield general trends in teaching, including most notably the feminization of teaching. These published census returns confirm regional differences amongst the Northeast, the South, and the Midwest, reflecting their respective urban or agricultural underpinnings. The spread of education, the result of increased school enrollments, and the expansion of the teaching workforce varied in each region. Rury was most interested in the social origins of teachers, and the census concealed rather than revealed specific social characteristics related to ethnicity and class origins. It was nearly impossible to determine ethnic origin from the information contained in the census. The 1850 United States census is also of limited value in determining economic and social origins, given that this could only be determined for teachers resident within the family home, as paternal occupation has generally been used as the accepted measure of class or station for young people, regardless of gender, and that “boarding ‘round”, which was the mainstay of 19th-century teachers, removed them from the family home.

Because the 1850 census is problematic, Rury instead chose to draw upon the work of Richard M. Bernard and Maris A. Vinovskis, who studied Normal School records from Massachusetts in 1859. The Normal School records contained information on paternal occupations, which helped situate teachers on the socio-economic ladder. The data collected for admission revealed that 43 percent of teachers had agricultural roots, reflecting the rural complexion of American society at the time. Additionally, 28.5 percent of Normal School applicants had been raised in artisan-headed households.

Teaching, then, was pursued primarily by middle-class Americans. While this study is valuable in providing a starting point for identifying class backgrounds, the Normal School approach presents its own limitations given that Bernard and Vinovskis only analysed a single year for one state which might not be representative of the wider American experience. To further complicate matters, it was estimated that only one in six Massachusetts teachers attended training schools.\(^\text{17}\) It was clear that further analysis would be required to capture a more complete profile of 19\(^\text{th}\)-century American teachers, and that lingering questions could only be answered by examining the census.

The study of 19\(^\text{th}\)-century occupations will inevitably intersect with census returns, for, while flawed, these records provide the best means of generating employment statistics, and charting change or continuity over time. While most American Education historians reference Delta Lotus Coffman’s 1911 study of the composition of the teaching workforce, they are hesitant to rely too heavily upon his findings, given its representative limitations. In 1910, Coffman circulated a 16-question survey among teachers then in service and received just over 5,000 replies from teachers

\(^{17}\) Rury, 15-23.
in 17 states. Coffman generated a number of profiles of the American teacher in 1910, differentiating between male and female teachers, those from agricultural or urban backgrounds, and their varying social origins. The various profiles suggest that regional and economic origins affected the careers of men and women teachers differently. Coffman suggested, though, that most teachers in 1910 came from lower middle-class backgrounds, findings which were later echoed in the work of Bernard and Vinovskis.\textsuperscript{18} Though Coffman’s study has been considered groundbreaking for its time given its scope and ambition, it fell short of national representation. Joel Perlmann and Robert A. Margo set out to rectify this situation with their own ambitious American census data collection project in 1989.\textsuperscript{19}

Perlmann and Margo, also intent on uncovering the social and class composition of the American teaching workforce, proposed to sample census records from 1860 to 1940. In an exploratory article, they outlined their methodology and research expectations. Their work would allow for deeper analysis of census data, rather than simply relying upon aggregate figures. The project would make a vast array of data available to researchers and scholars, not limited to the teaching profession but for the examination of other occupations as well. Perlmann and Margo intended that this sample set would provide for investigations into the social characteristics of teachers, including

\textsuperscript{18} Lotus Delta Coffman, \textit{The Social Composition of the Teaching Population} (Contributions to Education. No. 41. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1911).

\textsuperscript{19} Joel Perlmann and Robert Margo, “Who Were America’s Teachers? Toward a Social History and a Data Archive,” \textit{Historical Methods} 22, 2 (Spring 1989): 68-73. No follow-up article has been published to reveal the results of Perlmann and Margo’s work, but they used the National Samples of American Teachers generated from this research project in their 2001 study of American schoolmistresses. See: Joel Perlmann and Robert Margo, \textit{Women’s Work? American Schoolteachers, 1650-1920} (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001). For this study, Perlmann and Margo also used IPUMS-USA (Integrated Public Use Microdata Systems) samples from the 1850, 1860, and 1880 American census returns. Perlmann and Margo discovered that there were regional differences in the employment of schoolmistresses, with more women teaching schools in the Northeast than in the south.

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age, sex, ethnicity, marital status, and household structure. Class origins and economic status could be discerned more readily from later census records which recorded homeownership, wages, and annual income. One of the primary objectives of this undertaking was to generate a nationally representative sample from which to draw reliable conclusions and an accurate image of the American teacher.20

In Canada, the focus of studies of teachers that use demographic analysis has largely been confined to Ontario. Susan Laskin, Beth Light, and Alison Prentice identified the census as one of the major sources for studying an occupational group and profiling individual members of its workforce. Their study of the teaching workforce covered seven counties in the Ontario census from 1851 through 1891. The benefit in using census records is the ability to profile the profession over time. The census also provides valuable information regarding age, religion, place of birth, and household structure. As in the American case, the errors and omissions in the census pose a number of methodological issues. Ethnicity was only recorded in the 1871 and 1881 manuscript census records, making it impossible to determine ethnic origin for native-born teachers in earlier census records. Missing census returns and shifting community boundaries, which pose their own methodological issues, also had an impact on their study. Perhaps most challenging for their analysis, though, was the under-enumeration of teachers, especially of female teachers. Comparison with annual reports from the Ontario Department of Education revealed the discrepancy, thereby exposing the greatest flaw in the census. They reasoned that time of year and enumerator bias could account for the underreporting of women teachers. The census was taken during the winter, which was

typically the season during which more men were occupied as teachers. They further argued that since women commonly taught during the summer, it is possible that they did not self-identify as teachers when the census was taken. It is also possible that the male enumerator was far more “conscious” of recording male rather than female occupations.\(^{21}\)

Methodological issues regarding reliability, accuracy, and under-enumeration aside, the census remains a significant source in reconstructing the 19\(^{\text{th}}\)-century teaching workforce. Using the census as the starting point of analysis confines the study of teachers and teaching to the second half of the 19\(^{\text{th}}\) century. In so doing, census driven studies must necessarily exclude the pre-credential period, since, by mid-century, the Normal School movement was gaining momentum. Training schools would usher in a new era of professionalism, in which teaching credentials were becoming a pre-requisite for work in the classroom. The duly trained and educated teacher had accredited skills and increasing professional credibility, which elevated not only the status of the profession but of the teachers themselves. The trained teacher could potentially rise to and perhaps even above mediocrity, and being exposed to the art of instruction might help dispel the stereotypical assumptions which plagued the pre-credential teacher, about whom so little is known given the paucity of source material. It is also important to note that, by virtue of the period and the associated changes in the workforce, studies which examine census records are usually those which explore the feminization of teaching. Women would come to dominate the teaching profession by the third quarter of the 19\(^{\text{th}}\) century, and it was already apparent by mid-century in both British North America and

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the United States that women were coming to the fore. There has been considerable historical inquiry into the feminization of teaching to explain this shift.²²

The inversion studies, which reflect on the reasons why men left teaching, though far fewer in number than the scholarship on feminization, are no less fascinating.²³ Thomas Morain suggested that persistently low wages and encroaching professionalization drove men out of the occupation. The work of Myra H. Strober and Audri Gordon Langford supports this contention. Emergent professional standards had not only created an increased demand for credentials, but also lengthened the school year. The combined impact of these changes made teaching undesirable to men who preferred a more casual classroom commitment, and who considered teaching a part-time occupation. It would appear that the pre-credential period answered male occupational expectations and satisfied their presumably low level of teaching ambition. The “formalization of schooling”, which included most notably the grading of formerly ungraded schools, resulted in a cost efficient sexual division of labour bringing more women into the lower grades while men ascended the ranks to the more desirable


teaching positions.\textsuperscript{24} Myra Strober and David Tyack argued that as men left the profession, the low wages paid to schoolmistresses meant tremendous fiscal savings for school boards. These savings could be spent on salaries for lengthening the school term, encouraging credentialling, schoolhouse construction and improvements, or even the expansion of libraries.\textsuperscript{25} In contrast, Perlmann and Margo found no consistent evidence to support the association between “school formalization” and increased feminization. Instead they insisted that men were not driven out of the occupation because of longer school terms or an increasing demand for credentials, and contend that more women were hired as teachers simply because they were cheaper to employ.\textsuperscript{26} Despite pay inequities which likely would not have afforded women much in the way of disposable income, Donald H. Parkerson and Jo Ann Parkerson have argued that women turned to teaching to participate in the new consumer culture, and that they were not immune to the rise in materialism taking root in America.\textsuperscript{27} The latter argument, though perhaps a novel approach to feminization, is not entirely convincing and indeed has little merit.

The timing of feminization, at least in the American context, has directed many American scholars to the Civil War as a contributing, if not the determining, factor in the feminization of teaching. The Civil War had taken a considerable portion of schoolmasters out of the classroom and onto the battlefield. When the conflict ceased, the proportion of men entering the profession steadily began to decline. During the War, not

only did the percentage of schoolmistresses increase, but they proved their worth. Contemporary observers and reformers noticed that schoolmistresses actually had redeeming characteristics which qualified them as competent teachers. They were even seen to be suitable disciplinarians during this unexpected trial by fire period.\textsuperscript{28} But if the American Civil War could help explain the increasing feminization of teaching in the United States in the decades after mid-century, such a model does not present itself in the Canadian context.

Explaining the feminization or the de-masculinization of teaching is beyond the scope of this current study, but an increase in the number of female teachers was becoming noticeable in New Brunswick during the 1830s and 1840s. Certainly, women had kept school in this province from the early Loyalist period onward. The first female teachers advertised their schools in the local newspapers. Mrs. Cottnam and Mrs. Hedley opened their schools in Saint John in 1786 and 1787 respectively.\textsuperscript{29} Not much is known about Mrs. Hedley’s background, except that she was a milliner from London, England. At her school, Mrs. Hedley not only offered instruction in needle-work, writing, and English Grammar, but promised to provide moral guidance to all young girls who attended. She also operated a clothing business on site, fashioning such elegant garments as caps, bonnets, cloaks, and mantuas, made to order for reasonable prices. Mrs. Cottnam offered a more diverse curriculum than Mrs. Hedley, which included, in addition to the above-named subjects, arithmetic and French language instruction. The expansive course of study reflected Mrs. Cottnam’s cosmopolitan background. Born Deborah How, the

\textsuperscript{28} Elsbree, 234-238; Perlmann and Margo, \textit{Women’s Work}, 107-108.
\textsuperscript{29} \textit{The Royal Gazette}, 22 August 1786, Tuesday, p. 3; \textit{The Royal Gazette}, 6 February 1787, Tuesday “A School”, p. 3.
daughter of Irish-born parents, she was raised on Grassy Island located off Canso, Nova Scotia. There she met and married Captain Samuel Cottnam of the 40th Regiment. Casualties of the fall of Louisbourg in 1745, Mrs. Cottnam fled to Massachusetts with her infant daughter. She settled in Salem where she would establish her first school for young ladies in the early 1770s. In anticipation of the American Revolution, Captain Cottnam moved his family to Windsor, Nova Scotia. Mrs. Cottnam would open another school in 1777, located at Halifax. After her husband’s death in 1780, she kept the school in operation for a few more years before relocating to Saint John in 1786, where she conducted a school with the assistance of one of her daughters. An enlightened teacher, Mrs. Cottnam prepared her students well for polite, genteel society. Perhaps because of Cottnam’s reputation prominent Loyalist, Edward Winslow sent his daughter Mary to her school. However progressive or advanced she was as a teacher of young ladies, Deborah How Cottnam was perhaps best known as a gifted writer and poet, whose literary works were still being referenced four decades after her death in 1806.

The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG) hired exclusively male teachers to teach in the schools they established in the province until 1806, when Mrs. Ann Woodland was hired to teach in Northampton, Kings County. Originally from England, Woodland was widowed soon after her arrival in New Brunswick when her husband drowned. She started her own private venture school around 1805, and her school was absorbed by the SPG the following year. The Reverend Frederick Dibblee expected that Woodland would be eligible for the provincial allowance which had been

30 MacNaughton, 43.
made available by the School Act of 1805. Because of its gendered wording, she was excluded. Dibblee complained that “the word Schoolmaster was an obstacle [sic] to her success, tho’ she did all the duties of one.” Woodland taught for the SPG for the next decade, drawing the same annual salary as her male colleagues, and, upon her death in 1816, she was replaced by Miss Lavinia Carvel.\textsuperscript{32} Katherine MacNaughton suggested that the employment of women at Madras schools, established by the SPG, paved the way for greater acceptance of female teachers.\textsuperscript{33} Before 1816, there were only three female teachers on the SPG payroll, including Woodland, Lavinia Carvel, and Charity Williams. The wife of Bealing S. Williams, Charity was paid £5 for teaching girls in her husband’s school.\textsuperscript{34} Rachel Martin and her sister, Mary M. Leggett, were the only women known to teach in Madras schools for the SPG between 1816 and 1825.\textsuperscript{35}

Before 1816, it is difficult to determine with any degree of accuracy or certainty how many teachers, male or female, kept school in New Brunswick. Because of the prominent role the SPG played in education, both by establishing and adopting schools, their records are the key to uncovering the first generation of New Brunswick’s teachers. The SPG reporting process by both schoolmasters and missionaries, not only identified teachers by name, but in some cases included such biographical information as marital status, place of birth, or age. W.O. Raymond compiled a list of 14 SPG schools in operation before 1801, while also identifying 25 schoolmasters who taught at these mission schools.\textsuperscript{36} Raymond’s list was far from complete. A closer examination of the

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  \item \textsuperscript{32} Frederick Dibblee, Report to the SPG, 13 January 1816, MC 230, PANB.
  \item \textsuperscript{33} MacNaughton, 66.
  \item \textsuperscript{34} Rev. Pidgeon, Report to SPG, 15 Nov 1808, MC 230, PANB.
  \item \textsuperscript{35} Rachel Martin, Minute Books of the Madras Board Meetings, Madras School Collection, 1820, 1824, 1825, MC 374, PANB; Mary M. Leggett taught with her husband, Joseph Regan Leggett.
  \item \textsuperscript{36} W.O. Raymond, “New Brunswick Schools of Olden Times,” \textit{Educational Review} VI, 9 (February 1893): 171. Raymond’s list actually enumerated 26 teachers, but he had listed James Berry twice. James Berry was
SPG records reveals that 15 parishes had mission schools in operation at some point between 1774 and 1801, employing a total of 39 schoolmasters. During this pioneering period, schools had been established in seven of the eight counties. There were five SPG schools in Kings County, and two in each of Charlotte, Sunbury, Westmorland, and York Counties. Saint John and Queens Counties each had only one school in operation. Three “Indian schools” had been established in this same period by what was known as the New England Company,37 which reported directly to the SPG, bringing the total number of teachers employed by the SPG to 42. An additional 10 teachers were known to conduct private venture schools, the majority of which were located in Saint John County. All but three of these 52 schools were taught by men.38 Background information on half of these early school teachers comes courtesy of SPG records, obituaries, genealogies, and newspapers, thus providing a profile of the profession.

Before 1802, the typical New Brunswick teacher was an American-born male, aged between 30 and 49 years. Nearly half, or 44 percent, of American-born teachers hailed from Connecticut; their origins concentrated in three contiguous counties, Fairfield, Litchfield, and New Haven, situated at the western-most end of the state. This is not necessarily surprising given that the SPG had a strong presence in Connecticut, and

37 Chartered as The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England in 1649, with “And Parts Adjacent” later being added to its title, this arm of the SPG would simply become known as The New England Company. The aim of the New England Company was to “civilize and teach” the Native populations throughout New England, which activity was transferred to New Brunswick with the arrival of the SPG. MacNaughton, 47-48. See also: Judith Fingard, “The New England Company and the New Brunswick Indians, 1786-1826: A Comment on the Colonial Perversion of British Benevolence,” Acadiensis 1, 2 (Spring 1972): 29-42.

38 There were three schoolmistresses known to keep school in New Brunswick before 1802. They were the aforementioned Mrs. Cottnam, and Mrs. Hedley, in addition to an unnamed female Methodist teacher who had opened a school in Carleton, Saint John in 1788, in direct competition with the SPG school located there. See: Report to SPG, 1788, RS 230, PANB.
that four missionaries who became established in New Brunswick during this early period had previously proselytized for the SPG in that state. Both Samuel Andrews and James Scovil, missionaries at St. Andrews and Kingston respectively, were originally from New Haven County, Connecticut. John Beardsley, of the Maugerville mission, came from Fairfield County, while Samuel Clarke, of the Gagetown mission, came from Litchfield County, Connecticut. These missionaries might be considered “late Loyalists” having arrived after 1787 when their appointments were confirmed. All four of these missionaries requested that their Connecticut-born sons be appointed SPG schoolmasters. Their appointments approved, these schoolmasters were among the youngest, yet the best prepared, to keep school in the province.

Frederick and Walter Dibblee, of Fairfield County, Connecticut, were both related to the esteemed Reverend Ebenezer Dibblee, who long served as SPG missionary at Stamford. Frederick Dibblee, who conducted the “Indian School” at Woodstock from 1790 until 1799, was ordained and operated the mission there. Walter Dibblee taught for the SPG at Maugerville from 1789 until 1791, resigning to take a more lucrative position in Upper Canada. He would return in 1794, to resume his position at the Maugerville school, displacing its teacher, John D. Beardsley, son of missionary Beardsley. Well-respected as a teacher, Dibblee certainly did not lead the quiet life expected of someone in his position. In 1796, Walter Dibblee was detained on a charge of assault with intent to kill. He pled not guilty and was released on his own recognizance pending trial, and ordered to appear at the next General Sessions of the Sunbury County Court. The minutes of the next session note that Dibblee was discharged on account of

39 Bishop Inglis, Report to the SPG, 5 September 1793, MC 230, PANB.
the “Bill not found”.\textsuperscript{40} It is uncertain whether Dibblee’s well-known physical infirmity and inability to engage in “labourious occupations” had any bearing on this decision. Yet, this would not be the last time that Dibblee would be incarcerated. In 1805, he was imprisoned for indebtedness, in this case reflecting financial problems that might not have been unique or even rare for poorly paid school teachers. After serving his six month sentence, he returned to teaching at an SPG school this time in Kingston, Kings County.\textsuperscript{41}

A number of the early Loyalist teachers were originally from New York. Both James Wetmore and his nephew Timothy Fletcher Wetmore had taught for the SPG at Rye, New York, where they were from. Loyalist exiles, they came to New Brunswick in 1783, and again served as schoolmasters for the SPG. Timothy Fletcher Wetmore,\textsuperscript{42} as noted in Chapter 1, had worked part-time as a Physician while teaching the SPG school at Carelton, Saint John County. He was the second teacher of the Carelton SPG school, remaining in the position for two years, at which time he left teaching to become a full-time doctor in neighbouring Queens County. He later returned to New York to undertake a degree at Columbia. Timothy Fletcher Wetmore completed his thesis, entitled “An Inaugural Dissertation on the Puerperal Fever”, in 1795, and died four years later at age 35. His successor, in the Carelton school, William Burton, taught there for three years, and was replaced by James Wetmore in 1792. Wetmore taught at the school for just over a year, and likely would have remained in the position longer, but the SPG did not approve his appointment given his advanced age. When James Wetmore had taught for

\textsuperscript{40} Sunbury County Court of General Sessions, 1796, RS 157, PANB.
\textsuperscript{41} Walter Dibblee, Report to the SPG, 12 November 1805, MC 230, PANB.
\textsuperscript{42} Thomas Wetmore, future Attorney General of New Brunswick, was Timothy Fletcher Wetmore’s brother.
the SPG in the former American colonies, he had been 47 years old. Clearly officials at the SPG had done the math, and declared that, if he were the same teacher who kept school at Rye, New York in 1774, his “very advanced age would be an objection”. The Reverend Dr. Mather Byles, Missionary for Saint John, wanted to keep Wetmore at the school even though, at age 65, he was older than what was preferred in a teacher, for as Byles reasoned, “it is very difficult to get a young one of good character & well qualified.” Once Byles shared the communication with him, however, Wetmore decided to resign.43

Before 1802, when the first Parish School Act was passed, three out of four schools in New Brunswick had been established or supported by the SPG. Unfortunately, very little is known about the teachers who conducted their own private schools during this period. From what is known, their origins appear to have been more diverse than those of the SPG teachers, with teachers from the United States, two from England, and one from Nova Scotia. Jeremiah Pecker, a Loyalist from Haverhill, Massachusetts, kept school from 1783 until his death in 1809. Harvard educated, he began his teaching career in the province at age 49.44 William Jennison, also a graduate of Harvard, was an officer during the American Revolution and was wounded at the Battle of Bunker Hill. Jennison advertised that he intended to open a “Grammar School” for the education of young boys at Maugerville in 1787.45 How long he conducted this school is unknown, but soon he would return to the United States, teaching school in Pennsylvania and Louisiana.46

41 Rev. Byles, Report to SPG, 24 June 1794, MC 230, PANB.
44 Times or True Briton, 13 April 1809, p. 3.
45 The Royal Gazette, 24 April 1787, Tuesday, “Grammar School”, p. 3.
46 The New Brunswick Courier, 7 December 1844, p. 3.
Eventually he returned to his hometown of Boston, where he died in 1843 at the age of 86.

The School Act of 1802, with its promise of a provincial payroll for teachers, encouraged the spread of schooling beyond the SPG sphere of influence. The number of teachers keeping school certainly increased with such an incentive, but by what degree is unknown. The identity of teachers is unfortunately obscure during the period from 1802 until 1815. To be eligible for the provincial allowance, teachers had to be appointed by the County Courts of General Sessions. The Justices for each Court then had to submit a report to the Legislature accounting for how the provincial allotment was distributed among the appointed teachers. The Sessions system was rather negligent in recording in its own minute books the names or numbers of teachers appointed in each county. The Charlotte County Court simply indicated that, upon receipt of the appropriate warrants, the Clerk was authorized to draw upon the treasury. Any mention of teachers in the Sunbury County Courts was related to other matters, as in the case of William Harnett, Sheffield schoolmaster, who was assaulted on two different occasions, first in 1811 and again in 1812. In 1802, York County kept a record of how the provincial bounty was spent, but the diligence of this reporting procedure quickly dissipated. By using a variety of sources, including SPG records, the sessions system, newspapers, and early teachers’ petitions, a total of 34 teachers have been identified as having kept school in the province between 1802 and 1815. This is most assuredly an incomplete account of the teaching workforce during that time, and very little biographical data on individual teachers have been collected. All but three of these teachers were men. Only eight of them identified their place of birth, with three from England, two from the United States, two from New
Brunswick, and one from Ireland. Just over one-third of these teachers remained in the occupation long enough to respond to the licensing directive issued in 1816.

The requirement that teachers become licensed assigned new administrative duties to the Provincial Secretary, who kept not only an alphabetical listing of teachers but copies of their licences. This educational initiative provides an opportunity to chart the expansion of the teaching workforce over time, while identifying the teachers who entered the occupation annually. In 1816, the Provincial Secretary’s Office issued 19 licences, enabling 18 men and two women to keep school. This is not an accounting mistake, because for the first and only time, a husband and wife shared a licence. In his 1816 petition, Bealing S. Williams requested that, as his wife, Charity, taught school in Fredericton, would it “not be proper that her name shd also be inserted in said license.” Charity Williams along with Julia Beckwith were the first women licensed to teach school in New Brunswick. Women observed the licensing directive, and filed application petitions along with their male colleagues. The licence list compiled by the Provincial Secretary provides a means of measuring the female presence among the teaching workforce, even making it possible to pinpoint the beginnings of feminization. Between 1816 and 1819, of the 122 teaching licences issued, only three had been granted to women. During the 1820s, just eight of the 461 licences had been issued to schoolmistresses, but a transition was underway by the early 1830s.

In no single year before 1833 had more than two licences been issued to women, but suddenly, in that year, 24 women became licensed, comprising 26.3 percent of newly

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47 Rachel Martin and Charity Williams, the New Brunswick-born teachers, were daughters of Loyalists.
48 Bealing S. Williams, Teachers’ Petitions, 1816, RS 655, PANB. There is one other case of a shared licence in New Brunswick. In 1839, sisters Ann and Sophia Cox were licensed by the same certificate. See: Regular Licences, 1816-1842, RS 115, PANB.
certified teachers. Such a dramatic rise in the number of female teachers could not go unremarked. The School Act passed in that year specifically addressed the emerging issue of schoolmistresses, limiting the number eligible for the provincial allowance to two per parish. Women continued to apply for teaching licences in roughly the same proportion over the course of the next few years, hovering around one-quarter of all licences issued annually. In 1837, coincident with a revision of the School Act, 29 women, representing 29.2 percent of licences awarded, became certified to teach school. That number would climb to 39 in 1838, representing 45.8 percent of licences issued that year. The School Act of 1837 had increased the number of women eligible for the provincial allowance to three per parish, again reflecting not only awareness but an acceptance of the social change currently underway in the teaching profession. During the 1830s, the Provincial Secretary’s Office issued a total of 810 teaching licences, 189, or 23.3 percent, of which had been granted to women.\(^{49}\) According to the 1833 Act, women were paid half the salary of their male colleagues, but the School Act of 1837 drew no distinction between the subsidy paid to men and women.\(^{50}\) The temporary salary parity was officially suspended with the School Act of 1852, and the differentiated pay scale was based not only on gender but on qualifications. Licence classification was introduced with the establishment of the training school, and after the new school act went into effect, men who held the same licence class as women, were paid more for their services.\(^{51}\)

\(^{49}\) Regular Licences, 1816-1842, RS 115, PANB.
\(^{51}\) Males were granted £30, £20, and £18, while women were paid £20, £18, and £14 for first, second, and third class licences. See: MacNaughton, 148-149.
Theoretically, according to the School Acts of 1833 and 1837, a total of 136 and 219 schoolmistresses respectively could be admitted to the provincial school list. In 1833, there were a total of 68 parishes contained in the 11 counties, while in 1837 that number had risen to 73 parishes in 12 counties. This type of calculation, though, assumes that schools kept by women would be evenly distributed throughout the parishes, and that they did not exceed the limits set by the School Acts. The available parish school lists for 1833 and 1837, as submitted to the County Courts of General Sessions, suggest that the limits related to the employment of schoolmistresses were not tested. In 1833, the four parishes of Gloucester County contained 17 schools taught almost entirely by men. There was one schoolmistress among the five unlicensed teachers, none of whom were eligible for the provincial allowance, and such schools usually would not even have been recognized by the trustees. In 1837, 13 of the 14 schools in Gloucester County were staffed by men. The number of schoolmistresses increased in 1839, with six of the 17 schools in Gloucester County being kept by women. In York County in 1837, there were 20 schools in operation, 18 of which were kept by men. One of the three schools kept in Kingsclear, York County was conducted by a schoolmistress, and the only school in Queensbury, York County was kept by a woman. Should the number of women have exceeded the limits set by the School Acts, the affected schoolmistresses had the option of petitioning the government for the salary which they considered their due. Isabel F. Jouett petitioned in 1842 seeking compensation for the year she taught without pay in

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52 MacNaughton, 89.
53 The survival rate of the Parish School Lists is disappointingly low, and where they are extant, there was no standard form for reporting or presenting school returns to the County Courts of General Sessions. Some trustees identified teachers by name, whereas others simply provided the number of teachers, whether male or female, currently employed.
54 Parish School Returns, Gloucester County, RS 657, PANB.
55 MacNaughton, 89.
consequence of the “district already filled by the number allowed by law”. Although an amendment was made in 1840 to the 1837 School Act to increase the number of government subsidized schools, women teachers continued to petition for remuneration during the 1840s.\textsuperscript{56}

These School Acts stand as proof that attitudes were beginning to change, in favour of women as teachers. Before these “limits” were set, there were no guarantees that women would be paid for their work in the classroom. As already noted, Ann Woodland had been denied the provincial allowance made available by the 1805 School Act because the framers had specifically identified “schoolmasters” as eligible for said funding. Rachel Martin would complain in her 1824 petition about the gendered language which excluded women from the provincial payroll. The School Acts of 1833 and 1837, then, while establishing limits on the number of women eligible to receive the government subsidy, actually provide the first legislative guarantee that female teachers would be paid for their labour. Yet, although these Acts would help pave the way toward acceptance of female teachers, opinion remained divided.

The Provincial Secretary’s Office issued a number of circulars on behalf of Lieutenant Governor Colebrooke, seeking information about parish schools and teachers, which were distributed to the various County Boards of Education in 1841. The circular dated 5 October 1841 addressed the topic of hiring women to teach children of both sexes, and whether or not there were enough respectable women available to attend a training school course. Training would ensure that the “system of instruction would thus become efficient and uniform in the Parish Schools.”\textsuperscript{57} This circular suggests that the

\textsuperscript{56} Campbell, 30-31.
\textsuperscript{57} Journal of the Legislative Assembly, Appendix, 1842, RS 24, PANB.
government was open to hiring not only women, but particularly those who were trained. The government was gauging local reactions to such a proposal, while also widening the discussion about the possibility of instituting a provincial training school. There were only three County Board responses to the circular extant, two of which addressed the question of hiring trained schoolmistresses. The Kings County Board of Education was rather optimistic in its response to the question, stating that:

The Board think very favourably of the more general employment of females, and are persuaded that this popular measure would not only have a beneficial influence as respects morals, but would secure better teachers; in as much as the same remuneration that is now given to males would induce females of more respectable attainments to engage in conducting public schools.  

The Northumberland County Board of Education, on the other hand, dismissed the notion of hiring more women to keep school. Should there be a sufficient number of schoolmistresses between the ages of 25 and 40 willing to become trained to take over schools taught by men, as it was reasoned, the School Act would have to be changed to permit such a shift in teaching. Not only that, but to “place the schools wholly under female tuition, however well such a system may have been found to operate, in certain districts in England”, was not tenable in this province where a great number of grown boys attended school during the winter season. Social norms had often limited women to teaching younger pupils, given the assumptions regarding their predisposition to caregiving and nurturing, and even dictated what they could teach. The Northumberland Board contended that not only were women less competent than men to teach penmanship and advanced mathematics, but that they could not maintain proper  

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58 Parish School Returns, Kings County, Executive Council Records, RS 8, PANB.
discipline. The often contentious relationship between teachers and trustees was apparently made all the more complex when it was a woman who kept school. According to the Northumberland Board, “Trustees of Schools Cannot exercise the same efficient control over female teachers which they can over teachers of the other sex.”

While the government might have been amenable to the idea of hiring schoolmistresses, clearly there was resistance at the county level, where the decisions were made. Although the increasing number of licences being issued to women demonstrates the growing presence and acceptance of women in the profession, the numbers do not reveal precisely how many of those licensed teachers, male or female, were actually engaged in teaching in any single year. The only source which permits a reasonably accurate reconstruction of the pre-credential teaching workforce comes courtesy of educational inefficiency and licensing deficiencies. The 1842 renewal, an attempt to standardize the licensing process, required all teachers to re-apply, or petition, for licence to remain eligible for the provincial allowance. The 686 teachers who complied with this directive, whether immediately or eventually, comprised the 1842 New Brunswick teaching workforce. Such an occupational reconstitution is possible for this particular year, given that this was the only time when all teachers who were currently employed and wished to remain so were called to action. These teachers’ petitions, then, provide a unique window through which to capture a glimpse of the pre-credential teaching workforce, and to unmask this much maligned group of teachers, about whom very little is actually known.

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60 Parish School Returns, Northumberland County, 1841, Executive Council Records, RS 8, PANB.
Though the employment of schoolmistresses had been described by the Kings County Board of Education in 1841 as a “popular measure”, this phrase reflects the increasing number of women in the occupation rather than their dominance of it. Teaching would gradually begin to feminize during the 1830s, but in 1842 hiring practices made clear that schoolmasters remained the prevailing preference in New Brunswick. Schoolmasters constituted 78.4 percent of the pre-credential workforce, accounting for 538 individual male instructors, while the 148 schoolmistresses accounted for 21.6 percent. Men were still considered best suited to raise up the next generation, because contemporary wisdom insisted that they possessed not only superior intellect, but also the imposing presence necessary to keep pupils in line and academically on track. The preference for schoolmasters did not provide any real measure of job security to individual male teachers, especially when a more suitable or preferred candidate presented himself. On his own accord, John Lahy left his teaching engagement in Madawaska, after a twelve month term because he could not instruct pupils in the French language. His petition did not indicate whether or not a replacement teacher had been found, but clearly the inhabitants were willing to have their children taught in English rather than not educated at all. Robert Douglas, who had taught for the space of six years in Shediac, Westmorland County, was replaced in 1841 with “a Teacher conversant with the Madras system” and who could provide instruction in “the Latin tongue”. Even though Douglas had kept the “best school in the Parish”, the community was not “sufficiently populous” to warrant two teachers. The trustees were reluctant to lose Douglas, but in consequence of a better or more qualified teacher available for hire, he

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61 John Lahy, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
was released from his engagement. Douglas quickly found employment in Wellington, Kent County where he taught for the next few years. His replacement, Anthony Barron Tayte, had been highly esteemed in Bathurst, Gloucester County, where he had kept school for nearly a dozen years. Pupils were known to make rapid progress under Tayte’s tutelage, so the choice was clear to hire Tayte. At the relatively young age of 34, Tayte had cultivated an enviable reputation for teaching excellence with 14 years of experience.

Age had always been a point of contention among contemporary critics and school officials. The SPG did not support the hiring of older teachers, but what exactly constituted “old”, “aged”, or “elderly” in their eyes is not entirely clear. James Wetmore had been deemed unacceptable as a teacher at the age of 65, but this did not imply that the SPG sought particularly young teachers, for the following year they hired a “Mr. Miles”, a 50-year-old schoolmaster to teach in Gagetown, Queens County. At the opposite end of the age spectrum, 19th-century American teachers were criticized for being “immature”, a complaint that reflected not only their youth but their inexperience. Despite the varying opinions with regard to the maturity of teachers, no regulations on age were included in the licensing process. New Brunswick teachers rarely supplied their age in their petitions for licence, possibly because they did not know precisely how old they were. Thomas Conner, who indicated that he was “about thirty” in his 1842 petition, recorded on his 1844 Inspection form that he was 32, and in the 1851 census, he was 37. Robert Edgar, who was 60 years old in 1842, had aged two years by the 1844 inspection,

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62 Robert Douglas, Trustees’ Certificate, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
63 Anthony B. Tayte, Trustees’ Certificate, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
64 School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
65 Regular Licences, 1816-1841, RS 115, PANB. Anthony B. Tayte became licensed on 28 July 1828.
but was listed as only 65 years of age in the 1851 census. Either Robert Edgar was unwilling to admit his true age, given the subtle undercurrents of age discrimination in teaching, or he was simply not terribly age conscious. Rachel Martin, a veteran teacher well-versed in the art of petition writing, was rather circumspect about her age even as she sought superannuation on account of her advanced age. In an 1834 petition to the British Colonial Office, Martin indicated that she had “passed the meridian of her life”, while in a petition submitted the following month she specified that she had “passed the Forty fifth Year of her Age”. Apparently feeling the march of time or possibly making an attempt to tug at the heart strings, she noted her “declining years” in a petition written to the New Brunswick Legislature a decade later. In 1849 she indicated that her life was “drawing to a close”, yet just two years later, Rachel Martin’s age in the census was recorded as 50, which was clearly inaccurate. When her life did draw to a close in 1867, her obituary made direct reference to her age ambiguity, stating that: “Great age (the supposition is, for no one could find out with accuracy, over ninety) and suffering of late years added much to her extreme eccentricity”.

Even though teachers did not, as a matter of course, provide their age in their petitions, it is a vital piece of information, necessary in the compilation of a profile of the teaching workforce. To determine the ages of the pre-credential corps of New Brunswick teachers, the 1844 Inspection, the 1851 census, along with genealogies and obituaries have been consulted. By cross-referencing the 1842 petitioners with these other sources,

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66 Rachel Martin, Petition, 1834, Public Record Office: Colonial Office, MC 416, PANB.
67 Rachel Martin, Petition, 1834, Public Record Office: Colonial Office, MC 416, PANB.
68 Rachel Martin, Petition, 1844, Legislative Assembly, RS 24, PANB.
69 Rachel Martin, Petition, 1849, Legislative Assembly, RS 24, PANB.
70 *Saint John Globe*, 29 August 1867, p. 2.
nearly two-thirds of all teachers have been assigned an age. Age could be determined for more men than women, at 67.8 percent and 54.0 percent respectively. Because age could be considered a moving target, demonstrably changing, shifting, and being fabricated over time, categorization by cohorts proves the most reliable method for representing teachers’ ages. Kay Whitehead and Stephen Thorpe, in tracing the career of one 20th century Australian teacher, divided her teaching tenure into four age stages. These categories, identified as “immature”, “marriageable”, “mature”, and “senior”, correspond to different career stages, and reflect changing power positions within education and teaching.\textsuperscript{71} In adopting these age cohorts for this analysis, a clearer picture of the pre-credential teacher begins to emerge.

According to Whitehead and Thorpe, age categories reflect career expectations for women. Although their study focused on a later period and profiled one woman’s teaching career, their observations could be applied to the New Brunswick context, for both men and women teachers. Immature teachers, who were under 20 years of age, were probably financially dependent and living at home, which was used to justify a lower salary. Given their dependent position, immature teachers were also likely to be single. Marriageable teachers, aged 20 to 29, would, presumably, soon be married, and, at least in the case of women, finding a mate was expected to take precedence over a career. Teachers of marriageable age were not necessarily expected to remain in teaching long, given the impetus to form families. Mature teachers, between 30 and 49 years of age, had passed over marriage for a career in teaching. This age category reflects the particular time period and the female focus of their study, in which the marriage bar was a factor for

women; and, while single schoolmistresses were common in New Brunswick, married schoolmasters were the norm for this age group. Senior teachers, over the age of 50, had to contend with physical infirmities, and this certainly applied to both men and women. As already noted, the 19th-century American teacher was criticized for being too young, and in 1856, one-third of teachers in Pennsylvania were under the age of 21, while in Maine in 1866, the average age of teachers was 21.75 years. Marta Danlywycz and Alison Prentice identified an older age profile for teachers in Montreal and Toronto. Between 1861 and 1881, more than 80 percent of male teachers were 25 years of age or older, and one-half were over 30. About one-third of women were over the age of 30, but from 1861 to 1871, the proportion of women over the age of 25 increased from 45 to 66 percent.

The New Brunswick teacher in 1842 reflected the older age patterns found in Montreal and Toronto, rather than mirroring the youthful American profile. Nearly two-thirds, or 445 out of 686, teachers identified their age, and, among them, only 8.3 percent fit the immature age cohort. Just over one-third, or 35.5 percent, of those who taught school in 1842 were of marriageable age, whereas 44 percent of teachers could be considered mature. The senior teacher, comprised 12.1 percent of the teaching workforce. Most of the teachers in 1842 were neither too young nor too old to keep school, but the profile shifts when broken down by gender.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1842 Teaching Workforce by Age</th>
<th>Men (365)</th>
<th>Women (80)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immature</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriageable</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>35.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mature</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>47.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>365</td>
<td>99.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The ages of 445 of the 686 pre-credential teachers were identified using various sources.

There were relatively few schoolteachers under the age of 20, and half of these teachers made teaching a career. All immature schoolmasters were single when they petitioned in 1842. Patrick Howlett began teaching at age 18 in his home county, Kent, and had been keeping school in Richibucto for two months when he petitioned for licence in 1842. Shortly thereafter, Kent transferred his licence to Weldford where he continued to teach for the next decade.\(^{74}\) At age 17, Jared Smith was described as a “young man of moral sober habits, possessed of loyal and constitutional principals.”\(^{75}\) He opened a school in Wakefield, Carleton County in 1842, and would teach at four schools in three counties over the course of the next seven years, ultimately identifying as a farmer in the 1851 census. Although Smith would abandon teaching for farming, he remained in the profession longer than what might be expected given his youth and the perceived casual male attitude towards teaching.

The pre-credential female teacher had not yet earned a reputation for longevity in the profession, and the expected future for most young, single schoolmistresses was marriage rather than career. A significant number of women not only stayed in the profession but remained unmarried. The immature schoolmistress accounted for 28.7

\(^{74}\) Patrick Howlett. Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.

\(^{75}\) Jared Smith, Trustees’ Certificate, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
percent of female teachers, and, true to burgeoning stereotypes, all these young women were single. This fits the pattern found in Ontario where youth and singlehood were linked, and among schoolmistresses 54.2 percent were under the age of 25.\footnote{76 Danylewycz, Light, Prentice, 100; Laskin, Light, Prentice, 79.} Perlmann and Margo were less specific when they also claimed that “most” women who kept school in the New England and New York were also under the age of 25.\footnote{77 Perlmann and Margo, \textit{Women’s Work}, 46.} In New Brunswick, Mary Cowperthwaite and Emma Amelia Spragg were the youngest teachers in 1842, both aged 16. Cowperthwaite taught in Sheffield, Sunbury County, where she was born and raised, and in 1842 petitioned for licence.\footnote{78 Mary Cowperthwaite, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.} A decade later, it would appear that not much had changed, as Cowperthwaite was still teaching, still single, and still living at home.\footnote{79 1851 New Brunswick Census, Sheffield Parish, Sunbury County.} Spragg moved around her native Kings County, teaching in three different parishes between 1842 and 1852. Though she was not enumerated in the census, Spragg taught in Greenwich in both the winter and summer terms during the 1850-1851 school year.\footnote{80 Journal of the Legislative Assembly, 1851, RS 24, PANB.} As the image of the 19th-century schoolmarm began to take shape, she was depicted as a single woman, who remained so throughout her teaching tenure. Geraldine Joncich Clifford has suggested that while being engaged in an occupation did not “create spinsters”, it would appear that in teaching it did.\footnote{81 Geraldine Joncich Clifford, 314.} Singlehood prevailed among New Brunswick schoolmistresses, as nearly two-thirds, or 60.3 percent, were unmarried in 1842.
Table 3.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital Status of the 1842 Workforce</th>
<th>Men (384)</th>
<th>Women (101)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>45.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>48.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Betrothed*</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widowed</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>384</td>
<td>99.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Betrothed" refers to teachers who were known to marry sometime between 1842 and 1852. Marital status was identified for 485 of 686 pre-credential teachers.

The typical pre-credential teacher was older than what might be expected, with an average age of 34.4 years. On average, men were older than women by seven years, at 36.2 and 29.8 years respectively. New Brunswick schoolmistresses and schoolmasters were concentrated in the marriageable and mature age categories. Women who kept school in 1842 were most likely to be of marriageable age, comprising one-third of all schoolmistresses in the occupation at that time. While most of these women were single, a significant portion, or nearly one-quarter of them, were already married. At age 24, Mary Ann Loane was a married woman with children who kept school in Beresford, Gloucester County. Her husband, Thomas Loane, taught his own school about a mile away in the same district. The demands of a young family apparently did not hinder Mrs. Loane’s pursuit of a career in teaching. She continued to teach at least until 1852, and her husband was still conducting his school in 1861.

Among the married teachers, very few had a spouse also engaged in the occupation. Samuel and Catherine McCurdy, both mature teachers in their thirties, were

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82 Mary Ann Loane, Teachers’ Petitions, RS 655; Mary Ann Loane, Thomas Loane, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
83 Mary Ann Loane, Payment Schedules, 1852, RS 114, PANB.
84 1861 New Brunswick Manuscript Census, Beresford, Gloucester County.
85 There were four known teaching couples who were actively engaged in the occupation in 1842. Mary Ann and Thomas Loane, and Samuel and Catherine McCurdy were already duly licensed by 1842.
one such couple. They taught together at the Madras school at St. Andrews, where high enrollments left Samuel rather disgruntled about his unsatisfactory salary. Catherine was already a licensed teacher in her own right when she married Samuel McCurdy, having originally petitioned in 1837 under her maiden name, Catherine Boyd. In 1842, Samuel McCurdy wrote to James Brown, Charlotte County representative in the Provincial Legislature, requesting that both he and his wife be permitted to draw the teaching bounty. Their school, which had been modestly attended when he began instruction in 1838, currently accommodated from 80 to 100 scholars between the male and female sections of the Madras School. He complained that “it is with great difficulty that we can get the mere necessaries of life.” Perhaps owing to McCurdy’s continued battle to become eligible for the provincial allowance, which he needed to supplement the paltry endowment from the Madras Board, he left the province in 1849 for California. Catherine and their children stayed behind in St. Andrews, where she continued to teach her own school, and it is uncertain when or if Samuel returned to New Brunswick.

In 1842, the typical schoolmaster was a married man of mature age. Nearly half of the men then keeping school were between the ages of 30 and 49, and two out of three were married. Given their familial demands and the low teaching salary, we might predict that teaching was not their sole means of employment. The level of occupational

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Licensed teachers, Thomas Bowser and John Baird, were assisted by their wives, who were not licensed to teach school. Margaret Connor and Edward Jagoe, both licensed teachers, kept school in different counties in 1842. By 1847 both had moved to Simonds Parish, Saint John County and were joined in matrimony. Mrs. Jagoe petitioned for a licence transfer in 1847, and the Trustees’ Certificate identified her as the former Margaret Connor. See: Margaret Jagoe, Trustees’ Certificates, Teachers’ Petitions, 1847, RS 655, PANB.

Samuel McCurdy, Teachers’ Petitions, 1843, RS 655, PANB.
Catherine McCurdy, Teachers’ Petitions, 1851, RS 655, PANB.
Letter from Samuel McCurdy to James Brown, 1842, James Brown Correspondence, MC 295, PANB.
1851 New Brunswick Manuscript Census, St. Andrews, Charlotte County.
pluralism, though, is difficult to determine. During the Loyalist period, only a couple of teachers whose schools were adopted by the SPG acknowledged their employment in other sectors. As noted in Chapter 2, Timothy Wetmore served as a physician while teaching school. Before Bealing S. Williams’ school was patronized by the SPG, he worked as a bookbinder for the government. SPG missionary George Pidgeon reported that Williams “would have removed to another part of the province, but for a trifling income he derives from the Government” in his capacity as a bookbinder. Pidgeon went on to argue that “succeeding to the Society’s school will ensure his continuance with them”; the implicit suggestion being that, before the SPG adopted his school, Williams could only afford to work as a teacher so long as he had a second job. He apparently did not aspire to a career in bookbinding, and the SPG salary permitted him to continue in his vocation. Williams did not indicate in future reports or petitions whether he had to resort to other employment after his absorption into the SPG. However, he remained in teaching for the rest of his days.

It was rare for teachers of any age category to claim the pursuit of other employment during teaching engagements in their petitions. Even in the 1851 manuscript census, only five out of the 362 male teachers admitted an occupational plurality, and all of them identified as both teacher and farmer. In petitions, teachers usually indicated that their teaching service had been interrupted by employment elsewhere, or that they had left other occupational pursuits to take up teaching, as was the case with James Ritchie. Soon after his arrival in New Brunswick, Irish immigrant James Ritchie began working

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90 Mr. Pidgeon, Report to SPG, 13 September 1806, MC 230, PANB.
for the Saint John firm, T. McAvity & Company, in whose employ he continued for a year. At that time, the company was primarily a wholesale business, but would later move into manufacturing. Ritchie abandoned his position with this company to become a teacher, and remained in that occupation for at least the next decade. By attending the Training School in 1848, Ritchie would also bridge the credential gap, earning for himself a second class certificate upon completion of the training programme. The fact that so few teachers, mature or otherwise, indicated additional employment does not suggest that they had no need to supplement their incomes, but rather that they more strongly self-identified as teachers than with their other, part-time occupations.

About 40 percent of mature schoolmistresses were married women of immigrant birth, three-quarters of whom had made a career of teaching. Irish-born Anne Ellis was already married with children of her own when she petitioned for licence in 1838. She continued to teach until at least 1852, and although the trustees complained about her temperament, she had the approbation of the community. Eleanor Walker was also married when she applied for licence in 1833. Over the course of her 12-year career, the County Donegal, Ireland native taught exclusively in York County, during the last three years of which she taught in a schoolhouse built on her husband’s property in St. Mary’s parish. Although the local Baptist minister testified that Walker “conducts her school with regularity and to the satisfaction of her employers”, Inspector John Gregory considered her education defective and reported that her pupils had “made very little progress”.

91 James Ritchie, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB. The company was known at that time as “T. McAvity & Sons”, rather than as identified by Ritchie.
92 Anne Ellis, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
93 Eleanor Walker, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
94 Eleanor Walker, School Inspection Returns, RS 657, PANB.
The senior teachers, those over the age of 50, were most likely to be infirm, lame, instructionally uninspired, and the focus of the majority of complaints against the teaching workforce. By virtue of their advanced age, most senior teachers were physically unable to pursue any other occupation, yet the care of their families remained paramount. Nearly three-quarters, or 73.1 percent, of all senior schoolmasters were married with children. In his 1843 petition, Thomas Cusack described his family situation:

I am about 60 years of age, I landed in Saint John in the year 1834 with my wife and ten children, viz, seven sons and three daughters, they are all in the same neighbourhood, that I live in, viz, the Parish of St. Martins and County of Saint John there are four of them doing for themselves, and I have to provide for my wife and the other six which comes very hard on me to do.

Cusack concluded his petition with a plea for the renewal of his licence, which would grant him permission to teach since he was “too Feeble to Labour.” His physical infirmity did not prevent him from teaching, as he continued to keep school in St. Martins until the summer term 1851.

There were very few senior schoolmistresses in 1842, with seven in total, four of whom were widows. Margaret Merry emigrated from Ireland with her husband, Nicholas Merry, and their children in 1819. Nicholas Merry became licensed to teach in 1829, and Margaret followed suit in 1835. They taught their own separate classes at opposite ends of a log building. After Nicholas Merry died in 1837, Margaret continued to keep what she described as an Infant School in her home in Newcastle, Northumberland County.

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95 Thomas Cusack, Teachers’ Petitions, 1843, RS 655, PANB.
96 Journal of the Legislative Assembly, 1851, RS 24, PANB.
97 Nicholas Merry, Margaret Merry, Regular Licences, 1816-1842, RS 115, PANB.
99 Margaret Merry, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
In 1842, Margaret was 60 years of age and she continued teaching until shortly before her death in 1866.\textsuperscript{100} The limited evidence that can be gleaned about senior schoolmistresses, would suggest that they had become licensed while their husbands were still living, and that teaching was not a strategy employed to replace lost income by infirmity or the death of the head of household. Presumably a woman’s teaching income had helped to augment the family economy, and in widowhood it was even more imperative that she continue to teach.

Thomas Cusack and Margaret Merry were not only among the oldest teachers keeping school in 1842, but they were also classified in the senior age category when they became licensed. This begs the question about age at licence among the pre-credential teaching workforce. Teachers were not as young as might be expected, with only one-quarter being immature. Proportionately speaking, teachers were more likely to be mature than immature when they first applied for licence at 27.9 percent. It was most common, though, with 47.9 percent of teachers to be of marriageable age when they submitted their petition for licence. Very few teachers applied to teach school while in their fifties or beyond, with only 4.4 percent of teachers being classed in the senior category. When divided along gender lines, the age at licence shows that women were just as likely to be immature as marriageable, comprising 35 percent in each age category when they originally petitioned for licence. Women, then, started teaching at a younger age than their male counterparts.

\textsuperscript{100} The Gleaner and Northumberland Schediasma, 8 December 1866, p. 3.
Table 3.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1842 Workforce - Age at Licence</th>
<th>Men (357*)</th>
<th>Women (80)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immature</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>17.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriageable</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>50.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mature</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>28.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>357</td>
<td>99.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*There were 365 men with known ages, but 8 of those had no licence date.

If ages were recorded accurately, there were a number of schoolmistresses who were remarkably young when they were licensed. Six schoolmistresses were under 16 years of age when they became licensed. Mary Ann MacKenzie, who was 18 in 1842, had been licensed in 1838 when she was 14 years of age. She kept school until at least 1847, when she transferred her licence from Brunswick, Queens County to Salisbury, Westmorland County.¹⁰¹ Frances Jemima Earls, who arrived from Ireland with her parents in 1835, apparently began teaching that same year. She petitioned for licence in 1836, and taught school in Queensbury, York County before moving to Gagetown, Queens County where she taught in a Madras school. Her younger sister, Mary Ann Earls, became licensed in 1843, and they taught together in the same building. At the School Inspection in 1844, Inspector Dr. Earle reported that “previous to the inspection the school was united and kept in one room.”¹⁰² The Inspector had already noted that having two female schools could not be justified, and that the inhabitants had complained about the arrangement. Perhaps owing to local public opinion, Frances Jemima Earls apparently quit teaching soon after. Her name appeared on the provincial list of licensed teachers.

¹⁰² Mary Ann Earls, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
teachers, released in 1848, but there is no further record of her keeping school. She returned home to Queensbury, and wed Charles Morehouse in 1849. In the 1851 census, Frances J. Morehouse, then 27, was the mother of a one-year old daughter, which means that she had been about 13 years old when she became licensed, and quite possibly 12 when she first began teaching.

The youngest schoolmasters were almost as young as the youngest schoolmistresses, but there were proportionately far fewer of them. Only 17.1 percent of male teachers were immature when they became licensed, with three under 16 years of age. Robert Caldwell, a native of County Tyrone, Ireland, arrived in New Brunswick in 1835. He petitioned for licence to teach school in Brighton Parish, Carleton County, the following year when he was 15 years of age. He was still teaching in Brighton when the census was taken in 1851. It was more common for schoolmasters to petition for licence at relatively older ages, and half the schoolmasters were of marriageable age when they became licensed. It might be surprising to learn that relatively few men, as compared to women, became licensed at a young age, that is, until place of birth is factored into the equation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Men (321)</th>
<th></th>
<th>Women (50)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>57.6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Brunswick</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>321</td>
<td>99.7</td>
<td><strong>50</strong></td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Place of birth was identified for 371 of the 686 pre-credential teachers.
During the pre-credential period, teaching could be described as an immigrant occupation. Earlier in the century, schools were staffed largely by men of American birth. That profile began to shift with the arrival of British-born immigrants in the decades after 1815. Generally speaking, licensed women were primarily New Brunswick-born, at 60 percent of female teachers, while fully three-quarters of men were immigrants. On the whole, immigrant teachers of any extraction were older than their New Brunswick-born colleagues, and the average age at licence reflects this finding. Immigrant teachers were, on average, 29.3 years of age when they petitioned for licence, whereas the New Brunswick-born were 23.6 years old. When divided by gender, native-born men and women were both aged 24 when they became licensed, but immigrant schoolmistresses were nearly two years older on average than their immigrant male colleagues, at 31.7 and 29.2 years respectively, when they applied for licence.

More than three-quarters of all immigrant teachers hailed from Ireland, and two out of three became licensed within two years of their arrival. Irish immigrants were part of an educated diaspora, and given that the majority applied for licence so soon after their arrival suggests that they came to New Brunswick with the intention of teaching school. Walter Patterson emigrated from Ireland in 1819 and acquired his teaching licence the following year when he was 18 years of age. Patterson had already been teaching a school at Oromocto, Sunbury County, for twelve months when he submitted his petition. Patrick Flannagan was 32 years of age when he petitioned for licence in

103 The New Brunswick Board of Education adopted the textbooks produced by the Irish National Schools in the late 1840s, which continued in use until 1871. See: MacNaughton, 150, 182.
104 1851 New Brunswick Manuscript Census, Blissville Parish, Sunbury County.
105 Walter Patterson, Teachers’ Petitions, 1820, RS 655, PANB.
1832. He had arrived in Miramichi from Ireland a year earlier, and was interested in opening a school there as he had been a private tutor with three years’ experience in his home country. Flannagan was still teaching in Chatham, Northumberland County, when he applied for a renewal of his licence in 1842, and when the census was taken in 1851. For schoolmistresses, only one-third of their origins have been identified. As already noted, 60 percent were native-born. Among the immigrant-born schoolmistresses, more than half came from Ireland. Although there are very few successful cross-references between date of arrival in New Brunswick and the date at which they became licensed, the sparse evidence suggests that immigrant women waited longer than immigrant men to apply for licence. This would help to explain why immigrant schoolmistresses were older than immigrant schoolmasters when they petitioned for licence. Rebecca Porter, who arrived from Ireland in 1824, began teaching in 1827 after the death of her brother, Robert. Rebecca took charge of Robert’s school, and it was after she completed his teaching contract in Norton, King’s County, that she petitioned for licence. When her licence was conferred in 1828, she was 26 years of age. Two years later she wed Benjamin Guiou, and how long she taught after her marriage is unclear, but when Rebecca Guiou sought a renewal of her licence in 1842 she was a widow. Rebecca Porter Guiou’s initiative is significant, as she was the first Irish schoolmistress licensed in the province, and she petitioned at a time when only a few women held a licence to teach school. When County Donegal native, Eleanor Walker petitioned for licence in 1833 at the age of 29, she noted that she had been teaching a

106 Patrick Flannagan, Teachers’ Petitions, 1832, RS 655, PANB.
107 Rebecca Porter, Petition to the Legislature, 1828, RS 24, PANB.
108 Rebecca Porter, Teachers’ Petitions, 1827, RS 655, PANB.
school “for the greater part of the time” since her arrival in the province three years earlier. Her petition for licence made direct reference to the School Act of 1833 when Walker stated that she had “observed that female teachers are now encouraged by Law.”

Clearly Walker had hesitated to apply for a licence until it was sanctioned by government legislation. The 1833 School Act, then, not only recognized the increasing presence of women in teaching, but also prompted more female teachers to join the ranks of the profession.

While Eleanor Walker had deliberately delayed applying for licence, other teachers encountered unexpected licence deferments. Missing documentation was the most common cause for a licence being delayed, and any teacher could experience difficulty securing all the required certificates and recommendations. For immigrants, licences could be withheld on the grounds of insufficient residency in the province. Such a postponement would ensure that petitioners had acquired sound referrals and recommendations gained through actual acquaintance with teaching candidates. Edward Cavana had been denied a licence in 1841 because he “had been but a short time in the province.” After teaching for 13 months in Carleton, Kent County, Cavana was awarded his licence, apparently having fulfilled the unexpected residency requirement. Similarly, David Power, a candidate for licence in Queens County, produced the required testimonials but was instructed that “the Certificates are satisfactory but the time is insufficient, since July last, within which a sufficient knowledge can be acquired by the Members who certify.”

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109 Eleanor Walker, Teachers’ Petitions, 1833, RS 655, PANB.
110 Edward Cavana, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
111 David Power, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
conducted a school, and after a six month term he procured the proper certificates, which
he presented to the local Board of Education. That administrative body decided not to
examine Power since he had been examined and recommended by the Board in Queens
County. In his 1842 petition, Power displayed restrained frustration at his situation when
he asked that his case be taken into “human consideration” and requested that he might
be granted a licence. After a year-long struggle, David Power was awarded a teaching
licence in 1842.

Those who had been denied licences were deprived of the provincial allowance.

Given the tremendous fault lines in educational administration, many teachers fell
through the cracks, sometimes to their advantage. Delia Watson, who was licensed in
1834, married Solomon Trites in 1843 when she was 61 years old. When she petitioned
for renewal in that year, she noted that she had married and moved to Moncton Parish,
Westmorland County. Delia Trites submitted her petition apologetically, declaring that
she had only recently become aware of the 1842 cancellation of licences. Not only was
her original licence cancelled in 1842, but it had also been rendered invalid because both
the name and place for which it had been issued had changed. A note tacked onto the end
of her petition package read: “I wish to have a report in this case as it is stated that she
has recd the provincial allowance without being duly licenced according to law”.112 She
would not officially adopt her married name for at least two years. In 1844, she collected
the provincial allowance under the name Watson, and that same year, she used the name
Watson when filling in the form to have her school inspected. School Inspector James
Brown noted her classroom was small and crowded and that her “manner of teaching was

112 Delia Watson, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
inefficient”. Inspector Brown indicated that the “Mistress is to discontinue teaching when
the present engagement expires.” Perhaps she delayed officially changing her name
owing to her intentions of surrendering her teaching career. In 1847, she renewed her
licence for Moncton Parish as Delia Trites, and she is so-named on the list of licensed
teachers published in The Royal Gazette in 1848. Delia Trites, who would become
widowed in 1851 at the age of 69, operated a boarding house according to the census
that year, apparently having abandoned her teaching career.

Officials had objected to the fact that Delia Trites had fraudulently continued to
collect the provincial bounty as Delia Watson, not that she had married. There was no
apparent marriage bar in effect in New Brunswick during the pre-credential period.
Exactly when the marriage bar came into effect is unclear, but at least one American
study suggests that it began to take hold “sometime in the late nineteenth century”.
When the subject of training women to keep school was broached in the government
circular in 1841, whereby the Lieutenant Governor wished “to know if respectable
women, married or unmarried, between the ages of 25 and 40, could be found that would
undertake the charge of a Parish School, and who would come to Fredericton for the
necessary training in the Normal Seminary”, the wording suggests that the marital status
of schoolmistresses mattered but little at that time.

The pre-credential teaching workforce was staffed by the usual suspects, or more
particularly mature schoolmasters of immigrant birth. Yet the 1842 schoolmaster,
whether he was aware of it or not, reflected a fading ideal. The preference had

113 Delia Watson, School Inspection, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
114 The Royal Gazette, 10 February 1847, Wednesday, “Parish School Teachers”, p. 1.
115 New Brunswick Courier, 24 May 1851, p. 3.
116 Perlmann and Margo, Women’s Work, 113.
traditionally been to hire men to teach school, as they were judged the most capable of shaping minds while inculcating youth with character and principles. The 1842 schoolmaster, who had become licensed when he was of marriageable age, was growing old in the profession. Many male teachers, simply by virtue of their age, were considered stuck in their ways, at least in terms of pedagogy. Wisdom and experience would soon take a back seat to the youthful novice who, through the art of instruction, could be trained to teach using the most approved and modern methods. While immaturity might have been criticized in some circles, there would be no denying that the youthful teacher was on the rise, in part because of shifting demographics. The trends identified at mid-century and beyond were already beginning to take shape during the pre-credential period. The immigrant generation was not only aging but dying, and would be replaced by young, native-born successors. Youth would begin to prevail, which would also be reflected in the changing gender composition. Even if the preference might remain to hire men, shifting demographics would ensure that in practice increasing numbers of women would be hired. A new image, stereotype, or ideal was beginning to surface during the pre-credential period, and even though certain prejudices against schoolmistresses lingered, the hiring of women was increasingly becoming a “popular measure”. The strict and stern schoolmaster would soon transition into the spinster schoolmarm. These popular images, often the work of fiction, do not accurately depict the character of the teaching workforce. It could be argued that images and stereotypes could be used to forge or force change. Hiring practices confirm that the mature immigrant schoolmaster was preferred in the classroom, but should his performance not measure up, negative images
could be the catalyst for change. As the next chapter will demonstrate, even the preferred teacher might not be the most fit and “proper” person to teach school.
Chapter 4
“Pays excellent attention to his pupils”
Teachers, Scholars, and the Schoolhouse

That your Petitioner is a British and loyal subject, and has been a licensed teacher in this Province since 1838. That your Petitioner having relinquished the vocation of teaching is still desirous of lending his aid towards the instruction of the rising generation through some useful medium. That your Petitioner contemplates issuing a weekly Newspaper, to be called – The Young Aspirant – devoted to the use of children…That your Petitioner intends making select and copious extracts from the most popular works on Education, such as those of the “Committee of Schoolmasters of the Established Church of Scotland,” &c, which will render the Child’s Magazine a suitable work, to be introduced into common school use; and assist the teachers in the best method of conducting their Schools. That your Petitioner’s pecuniary means render him unable to make personal and extensive exertion for the publication of said work; and he therefore humbly prays that Your Excellency may in your wisdom and desire to aid Education, grant your Excellency’s Petitioner such sum of Money as may enable him to carry out his intended publication and Your Petitioner as in duty bound will ever pray &c &c &c.²

John G. Lorimer inserted into his teacher’s petition this unique plea for government funding to publish a children’s magazine, to be entitled The Young Aspirant. He was proposing to enter a nearly vacant space in British North American journalism, for while juvenile periodicals proliferated in the United States after the 1789 publication of the aptly titled Children’s Magazine,³ relatively few child-centered journals were produced north of the border. Between 1789 and 1873, more than 370 American juvenile periodicals would be launched,⁴ with varying degrees of popularity, longevity, and appeal. During that same time, not more than a dozen children’s periodicals went to print in British North America. By the mid-19th century, two titles would be printed in New

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¹ Alexander McQueen, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB. This quote was contained in one of McQueen’s certificates.
² John G. Lorimer, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
Brunswick, and *The Young Aspirant* was one of them. Lorimer’s foray into publishing not only made a significant contribution to children’s periodical literature, which should be examined, but also suggests that he was aware of contemporary educational theory and teaching methods. His petition promised that he would extrapolate from the “most popular works on Education” to aid teachers who toiled in the common schools. Such an enlightened view does not fit the negative schoolteacher image which informed public opinion at the time. Most important, though, was Lorimer’s intention to produce a magazine for children. It is possible that Lorimer conceived the idea for this magazine while teaching in his own schoolroom, and even if that experience were not the source of his inspiration, it still begs questions about the 19th-century New Brunswick school environment and the relationship between teacher and student both within and beyond its confines.

A study of 19th-century teachers and career would be incomplete without an exploration of the iconic teaching space: the schoolhouse. Images of teaching are inextricably linked to this pedagogical environment, within which instruction, discipline, and socialization took place. School Inspectors commented on the physical environment, while also critiquing teaching methods and student progress. The School Inspection Returns from 1844-1845 provide not only a window into the schoolhouse, but also into teaching commitment, and ultimately illuminate teachers at work. While inspection reports provide only a glimpse into the working relationship between teachers and students, an exploration of teaching resources and children’s periodicals can demonstrate how some teachers regarded their students. This chapter will enter the 19th-century
schoolhouse, exploring the spatial and special relationships which defined the teaching experience.

Schoolhouse accommodation and provision were of immediate concern to the SPG Missionaries, but the priorities of pioneer settlement demanded that the construction of a church and parsonage should take precedence over a dedicated school building. In most missions, the hiring of schoolmasters could only come after the construction of at least one of these buildings, as they could serve as instructional space for teachers until an actual schoolhouse was completed. The St. Andrews mission was fortunate to have a school building ready for occupation soon after the arrival of the Reverend Samuel Andrews, who reported to the SPG in June 1788 that “the Governor has erected a School at St. Andrew’s; with a salary from the Indian Fund.”

His son, Samuel J. Andrews, conducted the school for the first two years it was in operation. Most of the remaining missions experienced delays not only in the hiring of teachers but in acquiring proper schoolhouses. In 1787, the Reverend James Scovil complained that his own house had not yet been built at Kingston, and noted with considerable exasperation that the mission was also in great want of a school. Though Scovil did not include in any of his reports to the SPG information about when a schoolhouse or other accommodation for instruction had been provided, approval for a schoolmaster did not come until 1796, when Jesse Hoyt was hired. During his two years as SPG teacher, Hoyt kept school in a house near the church. In 1788, the Fredericton mission began construction of its church and parsonage, but the process was overly protracted because the building plans were far too

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5 Rev. Andrews, Report to SPG, 24 June 1788, MC 230, PANB.
6 Jesse Hoyt, Report to SPG, 24 October 1797, MC 230, PANB.
7 Rev. Scovil, Report to SPG, 9 April 1800, MC 230, PANB.
ambitious for the budget. While the church remained under construction, Walter Price established a small school in 1790, but was soon forced to surrender it, given that he had violated SPG regulations. Price was not permitted to pull double duty as both an SPG minister and schoolmaster.\(^8\) Presumably private schools were in operation in Fredericton at this time, but an approved SPG teacher would not be legitimately engaged until 1795, when Valentine Peters began teaching a Grammar School for the Society.\(^9\) The type of building that Peters used for instruction was never noted, nor was that kept by Matthew Brannen, who taught a school in Fredericton for poor white and Black children from 1798 to 1799.\(^10\)

Localized poverty often hindered construction of any ecclesiastical building, and the Gagetown mission was no exception. The poverty of the mission notwithstanding, the Reverend Richard Clarke managed to have a schoolhouse erected in rather short order. In 1789, Clarke reported to the SPG that his mission was too poor to provide either a church or a parsonage, and he implored the Society to make some provision for a schoolmaster. Clarke was given permission to hire a schoolmaster, and within a year not only was Anthony Narroway installed as SPG schoolmaster, but he was teaching in the “handsome Schoolhouse” completed in 1790.\(^11\) Not all SPG schoolmasters had the luxury of teaching in a building constructed specifically for that purpose. When Ozias Ansley was hired to keep school in Norton in 1795, a proper schoolhouse had yet to be built. The parsonage was offered as a substitute, and with housing in short supply, Ansley and his family also resided in the same. Building maintenance must have been part of Ansley’s living

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\(^8\) Rev. Cooke, Report to SPG, 29 June 1791, MC 230, PANB.
\(^9\) Bishop of Nova Scotia, Report to SPG, 30 September 1795, MC 230, PANB.
\(^10\) Rev. Pidgeon, Report to SPG, 21 May 1799, MC 230, PANB.
\(^11\) Rev. Clarke, Report to SPG, 25 September 1790, MC 230, PANB.
arrangement for he noted in his 1796 report that he had made repairs to the parsonage at “considerable expence, there being no Schoolhouse in the parish.” Finally in 1798, Ansley surrendered his teaching position, citing poor pay, the paucity of pupils, and the want of a proper schoolhouse as the reasons for his resignation.\footnote{Bishop of Nova Scotia, Report to SPG, 30 September 1795; Ozias Ansley, Report to SPG, 2 July 1796; Ozias Ansley, Report to SPG, 1 May 1798, MC 230, PANB.}

Schoolhouse construction and accommodation concerned educationists and reformers, especially as ideals about teaching and schooling shifted throughout the 19th century. The New Brunswick School Act of 1802 made no specific reference to schoolhouse construction, but after the introduction of the licensing process in 1816, teachers and trustees were expected to report whether a suitable building had been provided. Originally, teachers applied annually for renewal of their licences, and schoolhouse provision was repeatedly indicated in these early petitions. The provision of school space, either through new construction or accommodation in an existing building, formed the foundation of a new educational unit of organization: the school district. In 1816, a trustees’ certificate promised that “two School Houses have been actually built, and provided for, in the Parish of St. Andrews, making two districts.”\footnote{Ebenezer Bugbee and Charles Mooney, Teachers’ Petitions, 1816, RS 655, PANB.} From this early period, then, schoolhouse was synonymous with school district, and each parish was carved into as many school districts as there were schoolhouses. For at least the first five years after the inauguration of the licensing procedure, petitions included reference to schoolhouse provision. Presumably the practice was abandoned as the increasing number of licensed teachers seeking annual renewal created its own bureaucratic burden for the Provincial Secretary. Between 1816 and 1821, it is possible to provide a rough estimate
of the number of school districts then established. During that short period, at least 59 new school districts had been formed,\(^\text{14}\) the nucleus of which was the schoolhouse.

The number of school districts would climb over the course of the 19\(^{\text{th}}\) century, and by the 1840s most parishes had been divided into at least a dozen or more districts. That there were 686 teachers actively keeping school in 1842 roughly approximates the number of school districts then in existence. During the 1844 Inspection, James Brown, Dr. Sylvester Earle, and John Gregory visited 492 schools, for which 489 inspection reports are extant. The great reduction in the number of schools in operation between 1842 and 1844 might be explained by worsening economic conditions in the province. The New Brunswick government was in debt in 1842,\(^\text{15}\) and in that same year a number of teachers complained in their petitions that they had lost their jobs due to the “badness of the times”. Clearly the teaching profession had been hit hard, and, on their tour, the Inspectors found many schools vacant. James Brown noted that in Norton, Kings County three of the 10 schools were unoccupied, while 13 of the 17 schools in Studholm Parish stood silent and empty.\(^\text{16}\) The inspectors were also only instructed to visit “recognized” schools, or those which were in receipt of the provincial allowance, so it is entirely possible that a number of other schools were in session but not included in the inspection tour by reason of local rather than provincial arrangement for their operation. The three inspectors began their junket in July 1844, and it took about six months to examine all government supported schools. John Gregory had been tasked with Charlotte, Gloucester, Kent, Northumberland, and Restigouche Counties, for a total of 178 schools. Dr. Earle

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\(^{14}\) Teachers’ Petitions, 1816-1821, RS 655, PANB.

\(^{15}\) Katherine MacNaughton, *The Development of the Theory and Practice of Education in New Brunswick, 1784-1900* (Fredericton, 1947): 86.

\(^{16}\) James Brown Diary, 25 July 1844, 17 August 1844, MC 295, PANB.
was assigned Carleton, Queens, Sunbury, and York Counties, which gave him at least 115 schools to visit. James Brown examined a total of 196 schools throughout Kings, Saint John, and Westmorland Counties. It took Brown more than a month to inspect all 72 schools in Kings County, travelling great distances daily. On 24 July 1844, James Brown examined four schools in Hampton, covering a distance of 18 miles. All three inspectors were remunerated for their services and provided an allowance for their expenses, though whether that included Brown’s purchase of a portable desk when he began his inspection duties is uncertain. Ordinary trustees who were expected to visit all schools under their jurisdiction on a quarterly basis were not afforded any such luxuries. It is not surprising then that trustees rarely fulfilled their obligation to examine parish schools to the prescribed schedule.

In 1841, a trustee for Queens County described the position as a “profitless thankless errand”, insisting that their primary occupation as farmers necessarily took precedence over this rather burdensome work. That same year, a trustee in Carleton County echoed the work burden but quantified the job in terms of time and distance. Given that Wakefield Parish was “twenty miles long and eight broad”, that meant it would take one week to travel the sixty miles to visit all 10 schools in the parish. To do that four times a year without any pay was out of the question. This trustee reported that because the duty was “of such an arduous nature and receiving no compensation” he and his fellow trustees had not “not visited the Schools oftener than half yearly.”

The nearly impossible task of regularly monitoring and evaluating these schools, or, more correctly, the negligence of trustees, meant that teachers were fairly autonomous and taught to their

17 Parish School Returns, Queens County, Charlotte County, 1841, RS 657, PANB.
own standard rather than one imposed upon them. The irregularity of trustees’ visits might, in part, account for their distant and sometimes even acrimonious relationship with teachers. Anne Ellis, of New Bandon, Gloucester County, had a reputation for being disrespectful to the local school trustees. Though the reasons for her attitude were not disclosed, she was also known to be “too violent in her temper for her dependent situation.”

Ezekiel C. Wilson complained in his 1843 petition that two of the three school trustees for Upham, Kings County refused to visit his school, and, because they had not filed the required paperwork on his behalf, Wilson was denied the provincial allowance.

In 1842, Richard Delaney had been teaching in West Isles for three years, during which time his school had not once been visited by the trustees, nor had the school been visited for at least four years before Delaney’s tenure. Perhaps what prompted the trustees to visit Delaney at that time was his move from the old schoolhouse to the new one just completed.

Though petitioners might help chart the rise in schoolhouse accommodation, they were not disposed to divulge specific details regarding design, dimensions, or shared usage. It is the rare petition which provided schoolhouse agreements or an image of the school building itself. John Smith, who had become licensed in 1819, petitioned for renewal of his licence in both 1820 and 1821, stating in those petitions that a schoolhouse had been built in Northesk, Northumberland County. His petition identified not only its builder but the financial arrangement related to its use. Henry McCullam had built the schoolhouse on his own property, and he rented the building to John Smith annually for

18 Anne Ellis, Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
19 Ezekiel C. Wilson, Teachers’ Petitions, 1843, RS 655, PANB.
20 Richard Delaney, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
the exclusive use as a schoolhouse.21 That same year, Bealing S. Williams also petitioned for renewal of his licence, which had originally been granted in 1816. Williams had been teaching in Fredericton for about 30 years by this point, first in his own private venture school and later for the SPG. In his 1821 petition, Williams indicated that he had built his own schoolhouse, further stipulating that it was “the sole property of the said B.S. Williams, and used exclusively for the purposes of a School…from January 1820 to January 1821.”22 In 1842, the Trustees for Brighton Parish, Carleton County testified that Robert Caldwell taught an average of 25 scholars in a frame building measuring 18 feet by 20 feet which was situated on the highway in the centre of a populous community.23

Exactly how long school buildings remained in use is a matter of conjecture, but by the 1860s, the Chief Superintendent of Education kept statistics on the quality of schoolhouses then in use. School Inspectors examined the schools in their jurisdiction and submitted their findings to the Chief Superintendent. Based on these reports, 54.2 percent of school buildings in 1866 were in good repair, while 10.4 percent were of middling quality, and a discomfiting 35.2 percent were considered inferior.24 New Brunswick was not alone; Nova Scotia’s Superintendent of Education reported in 1862 that “fewer than one-third” of schoolhouses could be considered “acceptable”, and in 1866, half the schools in operation were in good repair.25 The deplorable condition of many New Brunswick schools might be blamed upon age; however, determining the construction date of most schoolhouses, especially those built before mid-century, is a

21 John Smith, Teachers’ Petitions, 1821, RS 655, PANB.
22 Bealing S. Williams, Teachers’ Petitions, 1821, RS 655, PANB.
23 Robert Caldwell, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
24 Chief Superintendent’s Report, 1867, Journal of the Legislative Assembly, RS 24, PANB.
nearly impossible task. Few documents reveal that elusive information: the age of a schoolhouse. A limited number of school inspection returns and teachers’ petitions do contain this information. For one school in operation in 1844, its construction date can be traced to about 1826. The school had been built in Newcastle with funding provided by the “Great Fire Contributions”, apparently part of the rebuilding process following the Great Miramichi Fire of 1825. An accidental fire, which claimed the schoolhouse at Simonds Parish, Saint John County where Richard Langtry taught, forced him and his scholars to take refuge in a building adjoining the local burial ground. The location of the replacement schoolhouse mattered less than its inhospitable accommodation. The building was ill-suited for instruction, and parents complained that it was especially inconvenient during the winter season. Construction of the proposed new schoolhouse was probably undertaken soon after Langtry’s petition for licence was filed in the fall of 1842. James Brown was unable to inspect a school in Harvey Parish, Westmorland County, given that its teacher, John Barrett, was engaged with a number of the locals building the chimney on the new schoolhouse then under construction. Most districts were too poor to undertake any new construction, but where funds and local support permitted, outdated schoolhouses could be replaced. When Dr. Earle inspected Thomas Howell’s school at Stanley, York County in 1844, he had the opportunity to see the new schoolhouse that was nearing completion. Earle heartily approved of the new school, which was being erected with the assistance of Colonel Hayne of the Nova Scotia and

26 James O’Neil, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
27 Richard Langtry, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
28 John Barrett, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 655, PANB.
New Brunswick Land Company. According to Earle, the new school was “highly
creditable to the parties concerned, and admirably adapted for its destined purpose.”29

Much like the early SPG period, parish schools represented a mixture of spaces,
not all of which had necessarily been built for exclusive use as a schoolhouse. During the
1840s, Norman McNaughton kept school in a building which also functioned as the local
meeting house in Addington Parish, Restigouche County.30 Samuel Grimshaw, of
Johnston, Queens County, taught for seven years in a building which had been
constructed to serve as both a school and a house of worship.31 Ann McLeod had use of a
room adjoining the Methodist vestry in Sackville, Westmorland County, to instruct her
scholars.32 George Parker taught in a “substantial building” in Ludlow, Northumberland
County, which served as a meeting house, a place of worship, and a schoolhouse.33 An
untold number of schoolhouses had been built on church property, and where petitions
were silent on the subject of landownership, the 1844 Inspection Returns were not.

One third of inspected schoolhouses had been built or provided on private
property, and, in roughly equal measure, they were situated upon public property. The
remaining third were either unidentified or consisted of rented rooms of indeterminate
ownership. By 1866, more than two-thirds of all schoolhouses were located on public
property. Rural schoolhouses situated on public property were “tolerably well taken care
of”, whereas rented rooms in the urban areas were not.34 Schoolhouses which served
other community functions, with the exception of denominational spaces, were probably

29 Thomas Howell, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 655, PANB.
30 Norman McNaughton, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 655, PANB.
31 Samuel Grimshaw, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 655, PANB.
32 Ann McLeod, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 655, PANB.
33 George Parker, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 655, PANB.
34 Chief Superintendent’s Report for 1866, Journal of the Legislative Assembly, 1867, RS 24, PANB.
not as well maintained as single purpose buildings, it being an unresolved question of responsibility. Without a meeting of the minds, it is possible that some multi-purpose buildings fell into disrepair because it was unclear whether maintenance was the responsibility of the teacher, the trustees, or the community. In the late 1860s, the inhabitants of Welshpool, Campobello Island, petitioned the government for assistance in repairing the schoolhouse which had been considerably damaged during the Fenian Raid in 1866. In being repurposed as a guard house during the Fenian crisis, the schoolhouse sustained damage to “all inside fittings, the floor, the walls and windows”. Since that time, the school had been moved into a building owned by the church. Two schools in the neighbouring district sustained damage from the Saxby Gale, which ripped through the region in October 1869. Evidently, all of these schoolhouses languished in a state of disrepair, the result of either local poverty or apathy. Although the inhabitants were only seeking aid to rebuild the schoolhouse quartered during the Fenian Raid, their petition clearly insisted that the government should bear the financial responsibility for these natural and unnatural disasters. The Legislature rejected the plea for assistance without any report to confirm that the school had been converted to a military purpose during the conflict.\(^\text{35}\) In other cases, responsibility for school maintenance was felt and remedied locally. In June 1863, James Brown complained rather bitterly in his journal about the “malicious person” who smashed a window of the schoolhouse “all to pieces” in St. David, Charlotte County. He suspected the culprit as belonging to “a gang of depradators” who had caused trouble the year before in the upper part of the parish. He did not mention repairing the schoolhouse at that time, but three years later Brown

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\(^{35}\) Inhabitants of Welshpool, Petition, n.d., Charlotte County, Report of Schools, RS 657, PANB.
boarded up the windows to prevent “mischievous boys” from breaking them, while also removing the old wood porch.\(^{36}\) James Brown demonstrated considerable concern for the local schoolhouse, which might have sprung from a sense of civic duty or from his experience as a School Inspector.

On their tour of the province in 1844, the School Inspectors despaired of the condition of schools which were too small or which had either fallen into disrepair or had never been intended for instructional purposes.\(^{37}\) The inspectors agreed that a “very considerable number” of the schoolhouses inspected were “extremely deficient”, principally in terms of their interior comfort and arrangements.\(^{38}\) A decade later the Chief Superintendent of Schools supported schoolhouse reform as an instructional imperative.

As part of the Superintendent’s report for 1852, individual county school inspectors provided their own impressions about the state of local schoolhouses. The conditions were grim indeed, and William Wilkinson, inspector for Northumberland County, reported that there were “too many school houses below any reasonable standard of comfort and convenience, and from some of which I was glad to make my escape as soon as possible.” Schoolhouses also suffered a want of aesthetic appeal, and George T. Taylor, inspector for Sunbury County, noted that in addition to their inadequacies on the

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\(^{36}\) James Brown Diary, 21 June 1863, 12 July 1866, MC 295, PANB.

\(^{37}\) Poor schoolhouse accommodation was not unique to New Brunswick. See: Paul Axelrod, \textit{The Promise of Schooling: Education in Canada, 1800–1914} (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997): 19. Inspectors were expected to comment on the state of schoolhouses in their reports, but Marcus Child not only critiqued the poor condition of schools under his jurisdiction, but also provided his own designs. Child designed a schoolhouse which had an indoor privy, separate cloakrooms for boys and girls, and a wood shed. With an eye on the teacher’s role and instructional demands, Child insisted that the teacher’s desk be positioned on an elevated platform. Although Child’s suggestions may have been sound, his design plan was not adopted. J.I. Little, “‘Labouring in a Great Cause’: Marcus Child as Pioneer School Inspector in Lower Canada’s Eastern Townships, 1852-1859,” \textit{Historical Studies in Education} 10, 1-2 (1999): 107.

inside, schoolhouses “present a very mean external appearance when compared with
dwelling and other houses.”

The mechanism for change came with the 1858 School Act, which introduced
standards in new schoolhouse construction by the inclusion of a set of government
approved building plans. These plans were widely circulated and championed as an ideal
in modern schoolhouse design. In his 1859 report, the Superintendent noted that a total of
54 new schools had been built in 1858, and suggested that if construction continued at
relatively the same pace, within a few years “a great many of the old and worn out
buildings” would be “displaced by new and better structures.” The complaints made
against the schoolhouse building stock in these reports suggest that the schoolhouses
which had been erected in decades past were not only inferior but had not been
constructed with an eye to the future. The new building standards principally addressed
building size. Nothing rendered a school building obsolete more rapidly or more
completely than insufficient space. Too many school houses had been built too small, and
could not accommodate the increasing number of students attending school. In 1852,
Albert County School Inspector Charles H. Connell wondered how teachers could
effectively instruct their pupils in a building which measured 18 feet square. At this
time, deficient space was equated with deficient instruction, perhaps because there was
not room enough for scholars and the necessary teaching apparatus. In 1844, Joseph
Tahany taught in a small schoolhouse at Johnston, Queens County, that was “nearly
destitute” of desks and benches and measured 16 feet by 14 feet, with a 6 foot ceiling. A

39 Chief Superintendent’s Report for 1852, Journal of the Legislative Assembly, 1853, RS 24, PANB.
40 Chief Superintendent’s Report for 1858, Journal of the Legislative Assembly, 1859, RS 24, PANB.
41 Chief Superintendent’s Report for 1852, Journal of the Legislative Assembly, 1853, RS 24, PANB.
number of the pupils were absent, being kept home to work on the farm, and there were insufficient books for the few children who were in attendance.\textsuperscript{42} Given its small size, such a building would be deemed inadequate not only at the time but certainly a decade later when schools were under close spatial scrutiny. From 1858 forward, it was expected that no new school should be built in dimensions smaller than what was recommended for both superior and common schools.\textsuperscript{43}

The New Brunswick schoolhouses of the 1840s, clearly distinctive for their small size and unsightly appearance, were comprised of a variety of frame and log structures. The first official accounting of schoolhouse type came courtesy of the 1852 Chief Superintendent’s Report, in which the local inspectors had identified majority of schoolhouses as frame buildings. At the same time, log huts, considered the least convenient or commodious instructional spaces, comprised 15 percent of all school buildings.\textsuperscript{44} When the Inspectors described local log schoolhouses, they were invariably poorly lit and in a state of disrepair. John Lynch taught in a “dimly lighted” log schoolhouse at Douglas, York County, in which his pupils were considered backward in their education.\textsuperscript{45} Not all log structures were necessarily bleak and devoid of instructional inspiration. William Quinn taught school in a “log building not well lighted”, but he had access to valuable school apparatus including slates, paper, pencils, pens, and ink.\textsuperscript{46} If erasing the log schoolhouse from the educational landscape had been part of the school

\textsuperscript{42} Joseph Tahany, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
\textsuperscript{44} Chief Superintendent’s Report for 1852, Journal of the Legislative Assembly, 1853, RS 24, PANB.
\textsuperscript{45} John Lynch, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
\textsuperscript{46} William Quinn, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
reform objective, then it was largely successful within a generation. By 1871, coincident with the passing of the Common School Act, log schoolhouses were nearly extinct, representing only 4.6 percent of all school buildings in use at that time.\footnote{Chief Superintendent’s Report for 1871, Journal of the Legislative Assembly, 1870, RS 24, PANB.}

The 1840s schoolhouse was marked by few amenities, and the lack of conveniences attached to the building placed additional demands on a teacher’s time. Caleb Bennett, an unlicensed teacher who taught school in Stanley, York County, from November 1846 until May 1847, kept a diary during that time.\footnote{Caleb Bennett Diary, MS23/26B, MC 300, PANB. Caleb Bennett did not petition for licence and only taught for the period of six months.} Given that the majority of his teaching term took place in winter months, keeping the school warm was a high priority. The day before he opened his school, Bennett banked the schoolhouse with snow to insulate it and brought in wood to heat the building. Cutting and hauling wood would be a primary preoccupation over the course of the next four months, often with the assistance of the boys who attended his school. Early in January 1847, Bennett cut and hauled wood into the school every day that week, and was assisted on three of those five days by his male pupils. Bennett was also gifted wood for the school on at least two occasions by members of the community. The frequency with which Bennett had to gather firewood might suggest that not only did his schoolhouse lack a wood porch, but that there was precious little room inside the schoolhouse to store fuel for the stove.

The School Inspection returns for 1844 indicate that Bennett was not alone; most teachers at that time worked in schools that made no provision for a wood porch. Only 5.3 percent of schools had such a convenience,\footnote{School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.} suggesting that teachers and possibly pupils devoted considerable time each week through the winter term hauling wood for the
school. Given that a majority of teachers, or 88.9 percent of those inspected in 1844, kept school year round, the work associated with heating the schoolhouse was an additional burden that affected nearly every teacher, whether male or female. The pattern of seasonal employment in which men taught in winter while women kept school in summer did not hold true in 1840s New Brunswick. Three-quarters of schoolmistresses kept school year round, whereas 86 percent of schoolmasters taught both terms. Year round employment among male teachers might be surprising since it has been argued that schoolmasters resisted such a fulltime commitment. Yet in 1840s New Brunswick, it was uncommon for either men or women to teach only in winter, though women were more likely than men to teach only in summer at 17.3 percent and 7.7 percent respectively. Teaching was not strictly a seasonal occupation in the province, and although the proportion of year round teaching declined by mid-century to about 50 percent, it is important to note that men and women shared a similar work and teaching contract profile. If teachers worked a single season, the pattern had shifted by mid-century to winter over summer, with 26.5 percent of women and 24.6 of men keeping school only during the winter term. It would be expected, then, that schoolmasters and schoolmistresses in New Brunswick would not only have similar daily schedules but also


52 School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.

53 Journal of the Legislative Assembly, 1851, RS 24, PANB.
would have experienced similar kinds of seasonal demands when it came to their work in the schoolhouse.

The daily teaching schedule also conformed to a seasonal rhythm. Given the shorter and colder days of winter, school was usually dismissed earlier than in the summer term. Most schools were in session from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. during the summer, with an hour break at noon for lunch. Although some schools opened at 8 a.m. during the winter session, most of them closed at 4 p.m., while maintaining the noon hour. In 1841, the school trustees for St. Stephen, Charlotte County, advocated vacations to improve efficiency and student progress. Keeping school year round with few interruptions wearied both teachers and pupils. These trustees further suggested that the school year be divided into quarters, with a one week break between terms. Without any government sanctioned move in this direction, apparently teachers and trustees granted vacations and declared school holidays at their own discretion. In May 1847, Caleb Bennett gave his pupils one month’s holiday, but he never re-opened the school. He had received a parcel of land right before suspending his school, and he turned to farming and lumbering full-time right after he declared the holiday. It is perhaps exactly this type of practice which raised the ire of the newly appointed Chief Superintendent of Schools. He not only complained of “capricious” holidays and vacations, but despaired of the increasingly abbreviated summer teaching term. Schools were generally being kept for 19 weeks during the summer, which was a far cry from the six-month term expected and

54 Perlman and Margo, 19.
55 School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
56 Parish School Returns, Charlotte County, 1841, RS 657, PANB.
57 Caleb Bennett Diary, 8 May, 11 May 1847; 1851 New Brunswick Manuscript Census, Douglas, York County.
required. Thus, in 1852, the Board of Education set regulations pertaining to holidays and vacations, drawn from the model of the Common School Board for Upper Canada. There were to be three vacations, with time off at Christmas and Easter, and two weeks’ holiday in August. The school day, whether summer or winter, was not to exceed six hours, exclusive of the noon hour recreation.\textsuperscript{58}

The winter classroom, with the laying of fires, the hauling of wood, and the tracking in of snow, was an especially filthy place. The accumulation of dirt was a reality in all schools no matter what the season, and an unkempt classroom inspired contempt among inspectors and trustees. Teachers were expected to model and impart fastidious habits, but Inspector Gregory despaired that Donald Downie of Durham, Restigouche County, was “not likely to induce habits of neatness order or subordination in his pupils without being taught.”\textsuperscript{59} Alexander Mageehan’s schoolhouse in Douglas, York County, was “kept in a slovenly state.”\textsuperscript{60} Inspector Gregory noted that at James Muirhead’s school in St. David, Charlotte County, it was not “doubted that some religious instruction was imparted but cleanliness and neatness were not exemplified.”\textsuperscript{61}Apparently, cleanliness was indeed next to Godliness. Alison Prentice noted that schoolhouse cleaning duties were often the subject of some debate. Trustees considered cleaning and maintenance part of a teacher’s work, whereas teachers increasingly began to object to this assumption.\textsuperscript{62} New measures to alleviate this particular burden would be introduced towards the end of the century, perhaps in surprising ways. Improved school desk design,

\textsuperscript{58} Chief Superintendent’s Report for 1852, Journal of the Legislative Assembly, 1853, RS 24, PANB.
\textsuperscript{59} Donald Downie, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
\textsuperscript{60} Alexander Mageehan, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
\textsuperscript{61} James Muirhead, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
especially of the folding variety, would be introduced late in the 19th century in European and American schools to facilitate sweeping and cleaning under desks.63 With the advent of janitorial staffing still well in the future, most teachers assumed the majority of the domestic chores. Ordinary cleaning duties could be tasked to the children, and extra tasks were assigned to them as punishment for minor infractions and bad behaviour. John Millidge, who taught at the Gagetown Grammar School for more than a decade, used school tasks to punish his pupils for minor offences.64 Assigning school tasks was but one option teachers exercised in the wide disciplinary spectrum.

Attitudes and approaches to school discipline were changing by the 1840s, and reformers were looking to dismiss the rod in favour of inculcating character in scholars through moral reasoning, thereby leading them to become self-governing.65 The need for order and discipline changed as the school environment changed. Prentice argued that because the private schoolroom, kept in a dwelling house, contained relatively few scholars, order was, in all likelihood, easy to maintain. Larger school environments, with a more populous student body, naturally posed greater threats to order and governance.66 An orderly schoolhouse was ensured by a rigid or strict mode of discipline, with an emphasis upon silence and regimentation.67 Although educational reformers increasingly enjoined teachers to encourage such obedience through gentler means than the rod, New Brunswick teachers were not yet ready to surrender corporal punishment.

64 John Millidge, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
Most teachers distinguished between minor and major behavioural infractions,\textsuperscript{68} and firmly believed that ‘the punishment should fit the crime.’ Teachers usually had at least three if not four different methods of discipline that they used in their schoolroom, whether singly or in combination. For minor offences, teachers might keep students after school, put them outside, or use confinement to punish them. In some American schools, confinement meant sequestering scholars inside a closet in the schoolroom,\textsuperscript{69} but since such a space was generally unheard of in New Brunswick schoolhouses, it is possible that putting pupils in the corner served as confinement. Of these methods, detention was the least common type of punishment, with only three percent of teachers using it. Teachers were more likely to send a child outside, with 28.3 percent of schoolmasters and 39.1 percent of schoolmistresses using this method to correct behaviour. The most common approach to school discipline for both men and women was to admonish a child; 59 percent of men employed this tactic while 58.2 percent of women did the same. If these methods did not work or when the infraction was considered entirely willful, teachers resorted to corporal punishment.\textsuperscript{70}

Three-quarters of teachers used some form of corporal punishment to correct behaviour. “Slight corporal punishment”, a category of physical punishment that was apparently less severe than whipping or flogging, was employed by 25.2 percent of women and 23.7 percent of men.\textsuperscript{71} Abigail Pierce of Sackville, Westmorland County exercised her own version of slight corporal punishment by boxing her pupils’ ears when

\textsuperscript{68} School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
\textsuperscript{69} Parkerson and Parkerson, 152-154.
\textsuperscript{70} School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
\textsuperscript{71} School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
warranted. With increasing feminization of teaching, administrators expected that women would introduce a more gentle form of punishment, given their natural role as nurturers. Proportionately speaking, schoolmistresses used the whip and the rod as much as their male counterparts. Rebecca Guiou, who kept school in her home in Norton, Kings County, “seemed like a mother surrounded by a numerous family”, and even though she applied the whip as a first resort in punishing her pupils, Inspector Brown noted that she was “deficient in the art of governing”. While there were a great number of teachers who either used whipping as a last resort or did not resort to it at all, 13.0 percent of schoolmistresses and 13.3 percent of schoolmasters used the whip as a first resort in punishing misconduct and disobedience. A further 9.6 percent of men and 6.9 percent of women used the whip as the only means of punishment. Michael McNamara, who taught for a decade in Blackville, Northumberland County, noted that the reason he employed “Severe Corporal Chastisement with the birch rod, and no indulgence” was because he wanted “children to see their deficiency.”

Just as New Brunswick teachers evidently continued to embrace older forms of discipline, Normal Schools in Ontario were still instructing prospective teachers when to flog pupils. Apparently there was a divide between practice and theory when it came to

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72 Abigail Pierce, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB. Licensed in 1843, Abigail Pierce was not part of the 1842 pre-credential workforce. Although it is possible that she taught in 1842, as many teachers kept school for a period before petitioning for licence, available records cannot confirm that she did.
74 Rebecca Guiou, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
75 School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
76 Michael McNamara, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
77 Prentice, “From Household to School House,” 22.
During the 1840s, reformers considered corporal punishment not only harsh but an impediment to learning. Dr. Earle, one of the 1844 School Inspectors, was particularly vocal on this point. He insisted that only through persuasion and kindness could a teacher instill in students an interest and a thirst for knowledge. Strictness did not always take the form of corporal punishment. There were a number of other examples of teacher rigidity and harshness exposed during the 1844 Inspection. Inspector John Gregory encountered at least two caustic teachers in his travels through Charlotte County. He thought that George Fitzgerald, of St. Stephen, was “incapable of maintaining proper discipline or respect. The latter indeed he forfeits by frequently applying vulgar epithets to his pupils.” And Thomas Barber, a teacher for more than two decades in St. Andrews, demonstrated “too mean an opinion of the mental powers of children.” Both these teachers applied “slight corporal punishment” in their schools, with no system of reward or praise for pupils.

Contemporary educational reformers such as Samuel R. Hall and Horace Mann encouraged teachers to make learning a more pleasant experience for scholars, arguing that children could only flourish in an environment which used encouragement rather than threats. And, it would seem that at least some New Brunswick teachers were aware of the ideas of these and other leading educational thinkers. A system of rewards used to encourage good behaviour and orderly conduct was not common practice in this province.

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78 Curtis noted that teachers were to discipline and govern their pupils “by their affections and reason, rather than by harshness and severity”. See: Bruce Curtis, Building the Educational State: Canada West, 1836-1871 (London, Ontario: The Althouse Press, 1988): 230.
79 George E. Fenety, Political Notes and Observations (Fredericton, 1867): 168-169.
80 George Fitzgerald, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
81 Thomas Barber, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
82 Elsbree, 226; David Hogan argued that New England reformers and pedagogues preferred a Lockean approach to discipline, based on the development of a bond between teacher and student known as “affectionate authority”. See: David Hogan, “Modes of Discipline,” 3.
during the 1840s; however, about one-quarter of all teachers made some attempt to insert praise or rewards in their schools.\(^{83}\) Schoolmistresses were slightly more inclined than schoolmasters to offer rewards as incentive for good behaviour, at 27.8 and 23.2 percent respectively.\(^{84}\) At her school in Brunswick, Queens County, Mary Ann MacKenzie used no form of discipline, but offered unidentified rewards for what she considered superior conduct.\(^{85}\) Ann Dibblee, of Greenwich, Kings County, rewarded her pupils with toys and books.\(^{86}\) Sarah Seely Thain and Catherine Flewelling both offered “tickets” to students as rewards for good behaviour.\(^{87}\) Tickets given to those pupils who exhibited good behaviour could be redeemed for small books, toys, or balls. This system of reward had been popularized by Joseph Lancaster, one of the creators and promoters of the monitorial system of instruction,\(^{88}\) and the adoption of such a reward system here suggests that teachers were aware of Lancaster’s educational philosophy. James Miller of Chatham, Northumberland County, dispensed unidentified rewards to his scholars, which he provided at his own expense.\(^{89}\) Michael McGirr and James Kent, both teachers in Simonds, Saint John County, offered rewards to their students. Kent gave his pupils small presents while McGirr rewarded proper behaviour with books.\(^{90}\) Rewards were not only intended to show appreciation for good and proper conduct but to encourage emulation. For John Torrens, of St. Mary’s, York County, “small rewards and honorary distinctions”

\(^{83}\) School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.

\(^{84}\) School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.

\(^{85}\) Mary Ann Mackenzie, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.

\(^{86}\) Ann Dibblee, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.

\(^{87}\) Sarah Seely Thain, Catherine Flewelling, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.


\(^{89}\) James Miller, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.

\(^{90}\) Michael McGirr, James Kent, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
were “conferred to stimulate exertion.” The bestowing of actual presents, toys, and other tangible rewards was relatively rare, perhaps owing to the cost involved. These examples demonstrate that there were teachers who acknowledged that children deserved encouragement within an otherwise regimented environment. By awarding presents, prizes, and toys, both schoolmasters and schoolmistresses recognized and acknowledged that childhood included the element of play. The anticipation of such rewards could also help to foster the pleasant environment which reformers advocated as conducive to individual academic success. For those who could not justify the expense, though, there was a reward option that any teacher could exercise, which came in the form of applause. The majority of teachers who offered rewards did so by giving good students a standing ovation. Thomas Davis of Greenwich, Kings County even distinguished between presents for academic success and applause for obedience.

While silence might be golden, reformers wanted that silence broken by more than a round of applause. Improved teaching methods insisted that oral instruction was not only the wave of the future but greatly beneficial to pupil progress. According to the 1844 Inspection report, a number of teachers in New Brunswick either adhered to the old method of instruction, or demonstrated no method at all. The old method consisted of teachers instructing pupils through the uninspiring practice of rote and rule. This antiquated pedagogical practice entailed recitation of material, whereby individual students repeated memorized material to the teacher at his or her desk. The newer method advocated simultaneous recitation, with instruction being delivered to classes rather than

91 John Torrens, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, PANB.
92 Thomas Davis, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
93 School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
individual scholars.\textsuperscript{94} Alexander McConamay incorrectly applied the method of simultaneous instruction by having all students in his school at Burton, Sunbury County, “study their lessons in audible voices” at the same time. Inspector Earle decided that this practice would “retard rather than advance the Learner, from noise and confusion it must create.”\textsuperscript{95} In 1844, only 5.5 percent of schools were explicitly recorded as employing the preferred method of instruction, whether it was so indicated as oral, Madras, or the Bell system. Since an integral part of the enlightened form of instruction included dividing the children into classes, based on age or achievement, a greater number of teachers apparently adopted the newer methodology than what the inspectors were willing to credit. Nearly 20 percent of teachers divided their pupils into classes, with a further 3.4 percent offering a blend of class and individual instruction.\textsuperscript{96} As Willard Elsbree argued, though, dividing students into classes did not necessarily mean that instructional delivery had changed; teachers could still be using individual recitation even with students arranged in classes.\textsuperscript{97}

Demonstration was to be used in conjunction with oral instruction to engage pupils. School apparatus gained popularity under the philosophy of “object teaching”, as espoused by educational theorists, John Locke and Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi. Teaching and learning were made more meaningful through “visible illustration” and “direct experience”. Initially at least such visible illustrations took the form of charts and maps, but would expand to include globes, magic lanterns, and a wide variety of mathematical

\textsuperscript{94} Johnson argued that the simultaneous mode of instruction had fallen out of favour by mid-century, but the technique lingered in Baltimore schools until the 1890s. See: William R. Johnson, “‘Chanting Choristers’: Simultaneous Recitation in Baltimore’s Nineteenth-Century Primary Schools,” \textit{History of Education Quarterly} 34, 1 (Spring 1994): 1-23.
\textsuperscript{95} Alexander McConamay, \textit{School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845}, RS 657, PANB.
\textsuperscript{96} School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
\textsuperscript{97} Elsbree, 229.
instruments. The manufacture of such school apparatus would become an industry all its own, under the pioneering efforts of James Green of Baltimore, Maryland and Josiah Holbrook of Hartford, Connecticut. Holbrook made his mark by offering school apparatus at the best rates, while marketing his product line under the umbrella of educational reform. The availability and use of school apparatus was an important part of the professionalization of teaching, and served as tangible evidence that teachers were not only aware of but implementing the newest pedagogical trends. Clearly the inspectors were interested in how advanced New Brunswick teachers were in 1844, because school apparatus was duly recorded.

Nearly 20 percent of schools inspected contained at least one type of educational apparatus, which might be surprising given that the common school apparatus industry had only gained traction in the 1830s. The instructional apparatus industry had initially supplied colleges and universities with scientific implements, but would also in short order target common schools. James Smith, teacher of the Bathurst Grammar School in Gloucester County, used his own scientific instruments in the school, including a microscope. Math and science equipment were relatively rare in the 1840s New Brunswick schoolhouse, and such apparatus was used in only 2.3 percent of schools. George Corry Irvine of Westfield, Kings County had a clock in his classroom, not only a mark of innovation but definitely a unique feature in the schoolhouse of the time. Maps and globes were highly prized as a means of providing visual illustration in the teaching

100 School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
101 George Corry Irvine, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
of geography, but only 2.2 percent of schools were so equipped.\textsuperscript{102} The typical schoolhouse, then, was rather undersupplied with educational apparatus,\textsuperscript{103} and more than likely the interior was largely unadorned. Catherine Percival might have been an exception to that rule, as her Chatham, Northumberland County schoolroom was described as “comfortable and ornamented with useful lessons for the smaller children.” Inspector Gregory’s report seemed to suggest that Percival had her own instructional materials that decorated the room, but the nature of these ornamentations is unknown.\textsuperscript{104}

Paper was known to be a rather dear item,\textsuperscript{105} and a mere 4.7 percent of schools had access to it.\textsuperscript{106} When paper was used, teachers and students would necessarily have to write with either pens or pencils. Pencils were used more often than pens, perhaps because a considerable portion of a teacher’s day could be consumed by making or repairing quill pens, and preparing ink. One scholar suggested that steel pens would not replace the old quill pens until about mid-century,\textsuperscript{107} but a few steel pens were in use in New Brunswick schools before that. James Howe of Nelson and Matthew Broderick of Northesk, Northumberland County, both used steel pens in their schools.\textsuperscript{108} A more practical item than paper for individual instruction was the slate, which could be erased and reused. The slate was the most common school apparatus, and 12.4 percent of all schools contained this instructional tool.\textsuperscript{109} Though slates were in use, they were still most likely shared. Francois Legere, who taught school in Dorchester, Westmorland

\begin{thebibliography}{100}
\bibitem{102} School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
\bibitem{103} Ontario schools also suffered a lack of school apparatus. Susan E. Houston and Alison Prentice, \textit{Schooling and Scholars in Nineteenth-Century Ontario} (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988): 247.
\bibitem{104} Catherine Percival, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
\bibitem{105} Elsbree, 222.
\bibitem{106} School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
\bibitem{107} Elsbree, 223.
\bibitem{108} James Howe, Matthew Broderick, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
\bibitem{109} School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
\end{thebibliography}
County, had only four slates on hand for his pupils, whereas Elizabeth W. Grannel was better supplied with eight slates in her school in Wellington, Kent County.\textsuperscript{110}

The greatest technological and instructional advance of the age, the blackboard, was a rare commodity in schools in mid-19\textsuperscript{th}-century New Brunswick. Only 2.4 percent of all schools in 1844 had blackboards installed.\textsuperscript{111} The blackboard was invented and first used at West Point Academy around 1800.\textsuperscript{112} The original intent and function of the blackboard has recently been challenged in a study by Christopher J. Phillips, who contends that it was introduced at West Point not simply to instruct a large corpus of students, but to instill greater discipline over “students’ minds and bodies.” This disciplinary role of the blackboard was part of what Phillips calls the “examination culture” in which students were to focus their attention on the blackboard and were to inscribe on it their own examples or illustrations when called upon.\textsuperscript{113} The blackboard, then, could aid in the internalizing of self-discipline, an educational goal which gathered momentum over the course of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century. The adoption of the blackboard in New Brunswick was more likely an expression of educational reform and professionalization, facilitating the implementation of simultaneous recitation, rather than as a means of social control.

The first generation of blackboards in use in New Brunswick schools were likely those which were positioned on an easel rather than attached to the wall. This might have

\textsuperscript{110} Francois Legere, Elizabeth W. Grannel, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
\textsuperscript{111} School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
\textsuperscript{113} Phillips, 83.
been both practical and economical. If a school changed locations, it was useful to have a blackboard that was portable. Only two of the 12 blackboards in use in 1844 were found in schools kept by women. Catharine Fayerweather, who taught in Fredericton, York County, had a rather well stocked schoolhouse with not only a globe and slates, but a blackboard as well. John Gregory inspected this school even though it was not considered a parish school, nor was she a licensed teacher at that time. Perhaps the reason that Catharine Fayerweather’s school was so well-equipped was that Lady Colebrook was covering the rent of the building. Matilda Moore had been teaching for a decade when her school at St. Stephen, Charlotte County was inspected. She was described as being “at ease in the school room”, which had no other school apparatus than the blackboard.\textsuperscript{114} It is unclear whether either of these schoolmistresses made as much strategic use of their blackboards as did John H. Rolfe, whose blackboard was “systematically used.”\textsuperscript{115} In contrast, although Charles Shelton had introduced a blackboard in his school in Southampton, York County, it was only “partially used.” Cain Spillane, of Richibucto, Kent County, taught using oral instruction, but Inspector Gregory insisted in his report that when teaching arithmetic, the “use of a Black board for illustration is absolutely necessary.”\textsuperscript{116} Clearly inspectors were in favour of such a method being adopted in schools, but it is entirely possible that teachers did not yet recognize the usefulness of the blackboard, given their general adherence to individual rather than mass or class instruction. Nova Scotia school inspectors complained that even when teachers possessed modern school apparatus, including the blackboard, they did not use them effectively.\textsuperscript{117}

\textsuperscript{114} Catharine Fayerweather, Matilda Moore, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.  
\textsuperscript{115} John H. Rolfe, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.  
\textsuperscript{116} Cain Spillane, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.  
\textsuperscript{117} Lanning, 137.
Parents, who often supplied books or other materials for the schoolhouse, lacked the means to provide blackboards in many districts. Saint John School Inspector, William P. Doyle, noted in his 1852 report to the Chief Superintendent that parents were “quite unable to furnish the School Room with maps, black-boards, and other things which are necessary where the Teacher desires to economize his time.”

Evidently, the adoption of the blackboard was not only the key to modern pedagogy, but was also considered a means of introducing greater efficiency in the classroom. It is no wonder, then, that the blackboard would emerge as one of the most important instructional tools in the New Brunswick schoolhouse. By 1866, three-quarters of all schools in the province had a blackboard installed. Prentice charted the increase in blackboard use in Upper Canada, demonstrating that in most districts, blackboards increased significantly between 1856 and 1866. In some districts, blackboards were installed in more than 90 percent of schools then in operation.

The most striking feature of the schoolhouse interior, besides lack of instructional equipment, was the arrangement of desks and benches. The schoolroom furniture set the tone of an inspection in many cases. It was nearly impossible to conceive that the ill-furnished schoolroom could be an efficient learning environment. James Brisland’s pupils exhibited considerable restlessness given the “discomfort of the seats”, which he provided in his own house in Fredericton. Inspector Gregory further noted that this poor arrangement “must have greatly tended to counteract the exertion of the teacher”.

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118 Chief Superintendent’s Report for 1852, Journal of the Legislative Assembly, 1853, RS 24, PANB.
119 Lanning, 137-138.
120 Chief Superintendent’s Report for 1866, Journal of the Legislative Assembly, 1867, RS 24, PANB.
121 Prentice, “From Household to School House,” 23.
123 James Brisland, School Inspection Return, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
Edmund Kelly’s school in Weldford, Kent County, was judged to be of inferior quality given its general appearance. The furniture was considered poor and the schoolroom not kept “sufficiently clean.” 124 The absolute lack of school apparatus and the interior arrangements convinced Inspector Gregory that David Owen Gaskill intended to pursue other employment, which proved to be accurate as Gaskill left teaching at the end of his contract after five years in the profession. Perhaps his departure could be explained by the working conditions and environment. There was no desk provided for Gaskill in this school in West Isles, Charlotte County, and the students’ benches, which “constituted the whole of the furniture”, were at least four to six inches too high. 125 Christian Miliken, who taught in her home at St. Stephen, Charlotte County, did not provide benches and desks which suited the size of the pupils in her charge. 126 Daniel J. Morrison’s schoolhouse in St. Andrews, Charlotte County not only had a “good black Board” but contained seats and desks which were admired for their quality construction. This promising, and possibly even superior, school arrangement was compromised by its lack of maps and globes. 127

If the blackboard had the power to foster social control, then so too did the school desk. This particular piece of classroom furniture would invite invention and innovation, but at its core it was intended to control the student, to keep each pupil in place while facing the teacher. The transition from benches to individual seats separated students inside the classroom, 128 while keeping them in view of the teacher. The seating

124 Edmund Kelly, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
125 David Owen Gaskill, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
126 Christian Miliken, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
127 Daniel J. Morrison, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
128 Prentice, “From Household to School House,” 20, 22.
arrangement was also intended to promote proper posture,\textsuperscript{129} which needed to be corrected by the teacher if found wanting. At his school in Blissfield, James Breen neglected his duty in this regard, for his students did not demonstrate the proper “position of the body” which would promote “good writing.”\textsuperscript{130} David Lynch, of Chatham, did not serve as a good role model for his pupils as he was “unacquainted with any approved position of the body, and allowed the children to sit as they chose.”\textsuperscript{131} It is no wonder then that schoolhouse reform included specific reference to desks and seats. In 1858, the approved architectural drawings stipulated the size and arrangement of schoolhouse furnishings. The desks were to be screwed to the floor, further entrenching the sense of control and regimentation, and should increase in elevation from front to back so that all students could clearly see and be seen by the teacher.\textsuperscript{132}

The deficiencies in schoolhouse accommodation were considered major defects in the educational system, and both reformers and architects in the United States subscribed to the notion that a beautiful school could encourage attendance and discourage truancy. This compelling and attractive theory was widely advanced during the mid-19\textsuperscript{th} century. Although there was no proof to support such a theory at the time, the belief that school architecture and its surroundings could uplift and inspire fueled schoolhouse reform.\textsuperscript{133} New Brunswick reformers would begin to call for improved schoolhouse accommodation by mid-century, and while orderliness was paramount in any school building, the unexpected beauty of a schoolhouse amid the commonly encountered squalor was indeed

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{129} Herman \textit{et al.}, 103.
\item \textsuperscript{130} James Breen, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
\item \textsuperscript{131} David Lynch, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
\item \textsuperscript{132} Chief Superintendent’s Report for 1858, Journal of the Legislative Assembly, 1859, RS 24, PANB.
\end{itemize}
arresting. James Brown was duly impressed by Lansdale Cottage, the family home of Joseph and Mary Leggett, where they had been teaching school for two decades. On his inspection of Studholm Parish, Kings County, Brown visited the Leggetts in August 1844.

Went into the Parish of Studholm to Inspect the School taught by Mr. and Mrs. Leggett. After wandering through various groves and bye paths, leaping fences, and crossing the Kennebeckasis on a foot bridge made of poles laid lengthwise, came at last to the School House in a romantic rural scene, just as the inmates were singing their evening Hymn. There were 2 boys and 6 girls in attendance, a number of the larger boys having left for haying. Shewed samples of Spelling, Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, Grammar, & needlework...The school was managed jointly by Mr. and Mrs. Leggett - every branch carefully explained, and model samples of Reading given by the teachers. This school is in every respect superior to the parish Schools in general, and in a connection highly satisfactory. The dwelling house, a cottage, to such the school house is attached is exceedingly well planned the exterior decorated with shrubbery - a garden and

"a stream of water, clear & clean,
Runs purely by"

The school room is convenient, comfortable, & pleasant, and the principal room in the cottage is very neatly furnished, and decorated with various ornamented curiosities, including original paintings, and specimens of needle works so admirably finished as to make it difficult to distinguish them from the work of the pencil.134

There were few cases in New Brunswick in the 1840s where the actual condition of the schoolhouse affected attendance rates. Given the deplorable condition of some schools, it is not entirely unreasonable to suggest that this factored into attendance. Fifteen panes of glass were broken in Alice Thompson’s school in St. David, Charlotte County when Inspector Gregory visited during the second week of November 1844. There was nothing in the report to suggest that the cold kept students from attending, but those who were there were observed shivering while completing their lessons.135 The containment of

134 James Brown Diary, 14 August 1844, MC 295, PANB.
135 Alice Thompson, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
disease, which was directly related to school accommodation, was certainly a reason to interrupt attendance. Most of John Megaw’s scholars were absent when James Brown arrived to inspect the school in Kingston Parish, Kings County. The recent outbreak of the measles kept most students home to “shun the disease.” Given the increasing concern over public health, hygiene, and the spread of infectious disease, school ventilation was becoming a most pressing issue. Even though there was no current contagion in Fredericton, James Brown was concerned about the poor ventilation in Hugh Moore’s schoolroom. He commented that because of the poor air circulation, the summer heat was rather oppressive. Children’s health was also scrutinized during the inspection of 1844, and Brown noted that the pupils in Lucy Ann Holmes’s school in Saint John were not only “decently dressed”, but “clean and healthy looking.”

Poor attendance could be influenced by factors which had no connection to the schoolhouse environment, including work and weather. Attendance at George Corry Irvine’s school in Westfield, Kings County, was down late in the summer of 1844 owing to the “haying and the picking of berries for the Saint John Market”. Michael Furlong’s school at Springfield, Kings County, was dismissed for a few days “in consequence of the hurry of haying.” When the colder weather hit, poorer pupils were often unable to attend school because they did not possess the proper clothing. Rachel Martin remarked in her 1824 petition to the Legislature that she had spent at least “£10 in clothing many of the Poor children before they could come to school.” The following year, Martin spent

136 John Megaw, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
137 Hugh Moore, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
138 Lucy Ann Holmes, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
139 George Curry Irvine, Michael Furlong, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
nearly half that amount again in clothing the children in her class.\textsuperscript{140} Hers might have been a special case. She was teaching at the Madras School in Fredericton, which, by its nature, encouraged education among the poorer classes. Thomas Conner noted in his 1842 petition for renewal that attendance at his school was sporadic during bad weather especially for the children without shoes. He did not mention having purchased shoes for the children in need.\textsuperscript{141} Given their meager salary, most teachers could not afford to come to the aid of their students even if they themselves were inclined to do so.

The daily routine included a lunch break, and all teachers suspended instruction at either 11 a.m. or 12 p.m. for an hour of recreation. Students might have been on their own or they may have been required to assist the teacher with certain school tasks. Caleb Bennett did not indicate whether the work of hauling firewood was undertaken during or after school hours, and it is purely a matter of speculation to suggest that he engaged his male students to help during their lunch break. How children in the 1840s spent their lunch hour, or even how their teachers occupied that same block of time, is without documentation for this period. It can be assumed with a reasonable degree of certainty that children were sent outside, where an untold number of them engaged in games and various types of play, some of which took place in close proximity to the school, and which might have involved the actual physical features of the schoolhouse. In his examination of English schoolhouse architecture and children’s play, Marc Armitage identified the structural elements which were used in playing school yard games. The school drain pipe featured prominently in children’s play, especially in games of the hide

\textsuperscript{140} Rachel Martin, Petitions to the Legislature, 1824, 1825, Journal of the Legislative Assembly, RS 24, PANB.

\textsuperscript{141} Thomas Conner, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
and seek or tag variety, as a place where the tagger waited and counted while the other children found hiding spots. Such games, at least in the English context, took their names from the physical feature to which the activity was attached. The hide and seek game played from the focal point of the drain pipe was known as “Long Black Pipe.”

There are no records depicting any such games around New Brunswick schoolhouses, but it is entirely possible that assorted outdoor games and activities were also named for and associated with parts of the schoolhouse. Children’s play might have been contained to a space in close proximity to the schoolhouse in areas where no official access to a schoolyard had been provided. Only 2.8 percent of schools in 1844 had a specific area set aside as a recognized school yard where children could play, which is not to suggest that other schools had no such provision, just that the land was not officially designated as a school yard or a playground. In 1852, nearly one-third of all schools had a yard, and in 1858, playground provision was included as part of the modern schoolhouse design plans. Playgrounds were to be enclosed by a picket fence and shade trees were to be planted thereon.

Robert Edgar’s school in Petersville, Queens County, was situated on private property, where 20 acres had been reserved for the school. There is no further suggestion about the intended use of that lot, but presumably his pupils used a portion of the property for playing. Of the few schools that had a designated outdoor space for

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143 School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB
144 Chief Superintendent’s Report for 1852, Journal of the Legislative Assembly, 1853, RS 24, PANB.
145 Chief Superintendent’s Report for 1858, Journal of the Legislative Assembly, 1859, RS 24, PANB. Provision for a privy was included in the yard, and in this report it was directed that segregated facilities be provided for boys and girls for them to do their separate but equal business.
146 Robert Edgar, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
children, most were located in Saint John County, particularly in the city.\footnote{School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.} James Paterson, who conducted the Grammar School in Saint John, had a designated space for children adjoining his school. William Mills, who operated his school out of his home in Saint John, also had a yard in which children could play during the lunch break. Both Mills and Paterson taught in accordance with the modern or approved pedagogical methods, using not only oral instruction but “demonstration”. Their schoolrooms were rich in educational resources and they were praised for their efficiency and scholastic success.\footnote{James Paterson, William Mills, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.} Paterson had always included school apparatus in his instruction, and in an advertisement for his school in 1822, he promised that the students who were to study Globes would have access to “an elegant 21 inch Celestial Globe” which he had “lately imported for the purpose.”\footnote{The City Gazette, 17 October 1822, Thursday, “Board and Education”, p. 3.}

The 10 teachers in the city of Saint John who provided an outdoor space for children received, without exception, glowing inspection reports. The most advanced teachers of the 1840s, at least according to the Inspectors, were the ones who took the whole child into consideration, including their moral, educational, and social development.

The lack of books was a constant complaint shared nearly equally among teachers, trustees, and inspectors. Not every schoolhouse was robust in books, and yet a significant number of teachers still managed to divide their students into classes, that challenge notwithstanding. More significant is the ingenuity and creativity which certain teachers demonstrated in carrying out their vocation. Some teachers resorted to buying cheap American textbooks, usually a cause for some alarm given the “highly
objectionable” political perspectives they contained, which were “conveyed in language exceedingly dangerous”. In using American textbooks, teachers ran the risk of instilling scholars “erroneous opinions both of monarchical and republican forms of Government” which would be difficult to erase.150

When books did not exist in plentiful supply or any supply at all, there were those who designed their own. William Corry, who was licensed in 1828,151 published his own spelling book for use in New Brunswick schools.152 It is uncertain when Corry quit teaching, but he left a legacy in his speller. Alexander Stevenson, who taught in St. Andrews, was using Corry’s Spelling Book when his school was inspected in 1844.153 Anthony Barron Tayte, who was known as a gifted teacher, wrote a mathematical treatise in 1845 for which he was awarded the sum of £10.154 James Paterson, master of the Saint John Grammar School, published a book of Modern Geography in 1845 to considerable critical acclaim. The review in The New Brunswick Courier praised Paterson:

As an elementary work very great care has here been taken to avoid two very common evils - that of extreme brevity on the one hand and of too great prolixity on the other. As a class book for British Colonial Schools it is certainly unequalled, being the only one ever got up expressly for their use. It is printed on good paper, from a clear and distinct type, and substantially bound, for the astonishing low price of five shillings.155

151 Regular Licences, 1816-1842, RS 115, PANB.
152 James Brown Diary, 1 September 1844, MC 295, PANB. While on the Inspection tour, Brown was in Westfield and called upon friends of his, Mr. and Mrs. Corry.
153 Alexander Stevenson, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
154 The Royal Gazette, 7 May 1845, Wednesday, p. 6.
155 The New Brunswick Courier, 1 November 1845, Saturday “Notice to Teachers of Schools and Academies”, p. 2.
Paterson’s geography text was not his first foray into publishing; he was the editor of a children’s magazine introduced in New Brunswick in 1824, entitled *The Youth’s Instructor*. Most of the children’s magazines produced in British North America had a motto, and James Paterson chose a line from William Cowper’s poem “The Progress of Error”, which read “our most important are our earliest years.” This one line not only recognizes childhood as a significant stage of life but also suggests the importance of education and the shaping of the mind. In the inaugural editorial, Paterson makes it clear that the “youthful mind” required special attention and that to neglect it would result in unproductive, useless adults. Making comparisons to uncultivated fields turned to weeds, Paterson advocated the cultivation of the mind lest it return to its “natural depravity”.

Paterson was hopeful that with his introduction of *The Youth’s Instructor*, he was “not intruding upon” the public “an unwelcome guest.” Indeed he was not. *The Youth’s Instructor* was met with considerable approbation. Reviewed in *The City Gazette* after the release of the second issue, *The Youth’s Instructor* was lauded for the array of articles which reflected the magazine’s motto. A sample of articles included “The Fine Arts During the Reign of George III”, “Eruptions of Mount Etna”, and “On Obedience”. The article on obedience directed that such a quality was the fundamental virtue of youth, and the message about personal morality was evident. The intent of the magazine was to foster an appreciation for knowledge while following the path of righteousness. An original poem printed in the first issue of the magazine, and reprinted in *The City Gazette*, promised that the contents would appeal to men of any age, whether young or old.

But come ye men of years and sense,
Peruse this wonderful production
Nor at the title take offence -

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156 *The Youth’s Instructor*, January 1824.
Here’s something too for your instruction.\textsuperscript{157} Periodical circulation was a perennial challenge in the publishing industry, and although this magazine was intended to appeal to as wide an audience as possible, the reason for its demise can be blamed on insufficient subscription rather than poor reception. There were six issues published between January and June 1824, and though this was the first youth periodical published in New Brunswick, it would not be the last.

It is tempting to speculate that John G. Lorimer might have consulted James Paterson before embarking on the publication of his own periodical, \textit{The Young Aspirant}; however, there is no evidence to support a connection between these two career teachers. Lorimer’s teaching contracts did not take him to Saint John, but his earliest known publishing effort did. In 1842, Lorimer wrote and published a 24-page poetical tale entitled “The Recluse of New Brunswick, or the Hermit of Point Lepreau”, which Robert Shives issued from his printing office in Saint John.\textsuperscript{158} At the time, Lorimer was teaching in Pennfield, Charlotte County, where he had been keeping school since becoming licensed in 1838.\textsuperscript{159} In “The Recluse”, the elderly hermit narrator on the verge of his own demise reveals many tales of the “Brunswick shore”. The Hermit’s protracted soliloquy includes reference to the plight of the emigrant and the insufficient salary afforded the male teacher. The latter topic was the subject of Lorimer’s 1843 teacher’s petition, in which he complained that as a married man he made “a sacrifice of five pounds annually in consequence thereof.”\textsuperscript{160} The poem appears to blend allegory with personal and historical references to New Brunswick, while being generously interspersed with

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item The City Gazette, 26 February 1824, Thursday, p. 2.
\item John G. Lorimer, “The Recluse of New Brunswick, or the Hermit of Point Lepreau,” (Saint John, 1842).
\item Regular Licences, 1816-1841, RS 115, PANB; Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
\item John G. Lorimer, Teachers’ Petitions, 1843, RS 655, PANB.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
religious allusions. Given the tone of the Hermit’s dying words, it is possible that Lorimer intended this work to serve as an informational text for children or for use in schools.

There is a place, they call it Pennfield, friend, And one lives there to whom I wish to send The “manuscript” traced by this aged hand, And much it does contain of Brunswick’s land. What, tho’ this breath of mine it must conceal, The Hermit’s manuscript will all reveal; Tell him to send it soon to every youth, That it may be, (what “Boaz” was to “Ruth,”)\(^{161}\)

Around this same time, Lorimer submitted his petition for renewal, which contained his proposal for \textit{The Young Aspirant} magazine. It is curious that Lorimer claimed to have quit teaching, because not only was his licence renewed, but he continued to keep school until 1851. The proposal for funding apparently ignored, Lorimer did not abandon his plan to publish a children’s magazine. On his 1844 Inspection form, Lorimer used coloured inks and filled in the various blanks using calligraphy and stylistic fonts.\(^{162}\) He was the only teacher known to so decorate his inspection return, and these embellishments should not be dismissed as mere doodling or scribbling. His inspection return is evidence that while he was teaching, he was also dreaming of becoming a typesetter and newspaper editor. Two years later, the prospectus for \textit{The Young Aspirant} appeared in the pages of \textit{The Loyalist and Conservative}.\(^{163}\) The prospectus contains clues to Lorimer’s educational philosophy and belief system, more so than the inspection of his school in 1844. Although Lorimer’s method of dividing his

pupils into classes met with Inspector Gregory’s approval, the absence of oral instruction did not. While Lorimer was supplied with enough books to arrange his scholars into classes, he had no other school apparatus at his disposal.\textsuperscript{164} Clearly the absence of the preferred teaching methodology and approved school apparatus was not the mark of an unenlightened teacher. Lorimer’s views on children and their potential were eloquently and unequivocally expressed in the prospectus. He considered children as possessing the “same curiosity as men”, and that their inquisitive natures could be satisfied in the most pleasing manner by reading the proposed weekly periodical. Lorimer encouraged contributions from the public, but invited children in particular to make their own submissions. By offering children a space in which to publish their work, Lorimer expected that such publicity would call even more children into action.\textsuperscript{165} Making children the cornerstone of this publication, both as readers and writers, suggests that he held the intellectual capacity of children in high regard. A disciple of Dr. Isaac Watts, Lorimer revered most especially “Divine Songs for Children”, and he chose to quote the celebrated hymnist for the motto of \textit{The Young Aspirant}: “Knowledge and virtue, truth and grace, - these are the robes of richest dress.”\textsuperscript{166}

After five months of promotion, \textit{The Young Aspirant} made its debut in May 1846. The advertising campaign was evidently successful, because the magazine would only go to print if it met the 500 subscription threshold. Clearly the reading public, including parents of school aged children, responded favourably to the prospect of a newspaper “devoted to the exclusive use of children.” Within two weeks of the prospectus appearing in the press,

\textsuperscript{164} John G. Lorimer, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
\textsuperscript{165} \textit{The Loyalist and Conservative}, 29 January 1846, Thursday, “The Prospectus for the Young Aspirant”, p. 39.
\textsuperscript{166} \textit{The Young Aspirant}, 11 July 1846, p. 1.
George S. Hill of Charlotte County mentioned the new periodical in a letter to his wife, Sarah. Hill had their daughter, who was perhaps 11 or 12 years old, in mind. He wrote:

My Dear –
…I send to you today a paper called ‘The Young Aspirant,’ for Hezediah. It is just got up here, and is intended of course for the benefit of young persons.¹⁶⁷

The new youth periodical was not reviewed in any of the provincial newspapers, but in announcing the release of The Young Aspirant, the editors of The Loyalist and Conservative sarcastically noted that they were “happy” to see it in print. The editors, Thomas Hill and James Doak had originally had the contract to publish the periodical, but two months before it went to press, that arrangement abruptly changed, and James Hogg, editor of the Fredericton newspaper The Reporter was engaged to issue the children’s magazine instead.¹⁶⁸ When Lorimer parted company with Hill and Doak, it was an apparently acrimonious split, which might account for their dismissive comment: “We hope the children understand it - we don’t.”¹⁶⁹

Lorimer’s mission was clear and certainly understandable; he intended to provide children with both “news simplified” and moral instruction. The Young Aspirant fit the profile of 19th-century children’s periodicals, which were designed to entertain, to educate, and to morally guide their readership. Children’s periodicals have been considered socializing agents, which helped shape young citizens by transmitting to them proper codes of conduct, their role in society, and the importance of individual virtue and morality.¹⁷⁰ By providing a judicious selection of reading material for children, editors

¹⁶⁷ George S. Hill to Sarah Hill, 12 February 1846, Hill Fonds, MC 1001, MS 6, PANB.
¹⁶⁸ The Reporter, 27 March 1846, Saturday, “The Prospectus for the Young Aspirant”, p. 3. On this date appeared the first notice that the newspaper would be issued from The Reporter office.
¹⁶⁹ The Loyalist and Conservative, 14 May 1846, Thursday, p. 158.
were convinced that they were properly preparing youth for the future. Some of these periodicals were suggested for use in schools, as the guiding principles reflected teachers’ aims. John G. Lorimer invited teachers, parents, and guardians to “encourage” or support the magazine. He expected that both Common and Sunday School teachers could also make use of The Young Aspirant.

Children were apparently great consumers of juvenile periodicals, but American magazines had a much better survival rate than those produced in British North America. For The Youth’s Preceptor, a magazine produced in Nova Scotia in 1853, insufficient subscriptions spelled great delays in its publication. The editor of that periodical complained that, while American readership could be measured in the thousands if not tens of thousands, his expectations realistically had to be limited to tens and hundreds. To ensure that his periodical was available at more “regular intervals”, between 1,800 and 2,000 subscriptions were required. The Youth’s Preceptor had premiered to tremendous critical acclaim for its promise to excite the mind and to stimulate moral principles,¹⁷¹ but it too eventually surrendered. Too many children’s periodicals published in British North America, though lauded for their content and objectives, folded while still in their infancy. How long The Young Aspirant remained in print is not known, but from the single copy extant, dated 21 July 1846, we know that it survived for at least eleven weekly issues.

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¹⁷¹ The Youth’s Preceptor, 1853, Halifax.
Although Lorimer would abandon teaching for newspaper publishing after more than a decade of keeping school,\textsuperscript{172} it is significant that a children’s magazine bridged the gap between his first and second career. *The Young Aspirant* stands as an expression of his commitment not only to teaching but to those he taught. Lorimer had the needs and interests of both teachers and students in mind when he conceived of the idea for this children’s periodical, and, given his career as a teacher, he was in a position to appreciate both. It is tempting to suggest that Lorimer likely had a remarkable rapport with his pupils, as evidenced by the enlightened and progressive attitudes expressed in his youth periodical. Yet the nature of most teacher-student relationships remains elusive, although the contours of that relationship can be estimated through an examination of their shared instructional environment. The schoolhouse, as the nucleus of their interaction, can provide a window into the roles assigned to each. Teachers were to serve as moral guardians, correcting and directing behaviour whether by rod or reward. Children worked with their teachers not only on their lessons, but in maintaining the schoolhouse, whether through a spirit of cooperation or as a means of punishment, and these interactions shaped the relationship between the two.

If punishments were considered a means of keeping teachers and students at a distance from each other, then certainly rewards revealed a layer of intimacy and compassion not often considered as part of their relationship at this time. The awarding of toys, though relatively rare, suggests that teachers not only expected but encouraged

\textsuperscript{172} The list of teachers printed in the Journal of the Legislative Assembly, 1851, was the last known record of John G. Lorimer keeping school. He became a newspaper editor and publisher, often working in conjunction with his son, William. He launched at least three newspapers in Charlotte County, along with one in Saint John and one in Grand Falls. And finally, he moved to Plymouth, Massachusetts where he continued in the newspaper trade. Before his death in 1897, he also penned a history of Plymouth.
pupils to play, and served as recognition that they saw their scholars as children, not merely as adults in training. The teachers who provided either presents or clothing to pupils usually did so at their own expense. While teachers were, in the main, strict and rigid, there was still room for a compassionate relationship between them and their scholars. The reward incentive was also the mark of the more progressive or enlightened teacher, although these advanced teachers gained no recognition in the 1844-1845 Inspection Report. The inspectors complained that teachers instructed their pupils without requiring them to attend to the meaning of the material. The same was true of the Inspectors; they collected ample data related to teaching, schools, and scholars but did not attend to the significance of the more positive aspects of the instruction being offered. While too many teachers kept school in buildings which were too small, dimly lit, poorly maintained, and bereft of required apparatus, they were not as deficient in their instruction as the Inspectors reported. A number of teachers were industrious enough to supply their own instructional resources when these materials were lacking.

The teachers who took the initiative to write their own textbooks or produce juvenile periodicals did so with their pupils in mind, which is evidence that teaching extended beyond the confines of the schoolhouse. While James Paterson focused the attention of his periodical on youth and the cultivation of their minds, he was also mindful of reaching a wider, or at least older, audience than children. John G. Lorimer also intended that his magazine should appeal to more than just children, and he additionally geared the publication towards teachers. In producing *The Young Aspirant*, John G. Lorimer was providing his fellow teachers with more than useful instructional
material; he was offering a means of connecting them with their pupils and quite possibly with each other.
Chapter 5
“Deserving of encouragement in her profession”¹
Career Aspirations, 1842-1851

I do hereby certify that Mr. George McConnell has been for some months a pupil in my Academy, and for the last year has been rendering me exceedingly valuable service as Assistant. His exemplary conduct during the course of my acquaintance with him, his diligence in pursuit of his duties, and his faithfulness in discharging his duties as teacher, have won for him my unqualified respect, and I regret that in order to obtain a remuneration adequate to his wishes and capabilities, he feels himself obliged to dissolve his connection with this establishment.²

When George McConnell took a position as an assistant in Jarvis William Hartt’s Saint John school in 1842, he did so not only to secure a salary but to advance his teaching career. McConnell had arrived from Ireland in 1833, and in that year he petitioned for licence. At just 17 years of age, he was engaged almost immediately to keep school in Greenwich, Kings County. By the time he turned 20, McConnell had taken a new appointment in Sheffield, Sunbury County, where he taught for the next few years. As he approached his mid-twenties, McConnell made one last move, this time to Saint John. There he would not only teach school but also study under Jarvis William Hartt, who provided the above testimonial in support of McConnell’s 1843 licence renewal.³ Hartt, who became licensed in 1829 at the age of 16, quickly earned a reputation as a skilled educator. He first taught in his home community of Kingsclear, York County before taking a position in 1836 at the newly opened Baptist Seminary in Fredericton. He surrendered that position in 1841 and moved to Saint John where he operated a successful high school.⁴ Evidently in need of an assistant, Hartt hired McConnell to help ease the

¹ Mary H. McFarland, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB. The quote was contained in one of McFarland’s recommendations for licence renewal.
² George McConnell, Teachers’ Petitions, 1843, RS 655, PANB.
³ George McConnell, Teachers’ Petitions, 1833, 1834, 1836, 1837, 1843, RS 655, PANB.
burden. Within a year, their working relationship shifted and the change was indeed to McConnell’s benefit. After having spent almost a decade keeping his own school, McConnell once again assumed the role of student, and this apprenticeship served a dual purpose. Through the arrangement, he acquired not only additional pedagogical skills but also a professional reputation based on his association with the esteemed Jarvis William Hartt. McConnell left Hartt’s school in 1843 to open his own, having been promised an enrolment of at least 25 scholars. For the next 17 years, McConnell conducted a school in Saint John, and, with his death in 1860, ended a career that spanned more than a quarter of a century.

George McConnell’s experience suggests that teachers could direct and shape their own career trajectory, and that decisions to move and to accept particular teaching posts were quite possibly informed by enlightened self-interest rather than desperation. Teachers had learned how to navigate the petitioning process and could negotiate their own fortunes in the midst of an imperfect educational system. Conventional wisdom insists that the low status of teaching, reflected in the poor remuneration and challenging working conditions, could only attract those who had failed at other occupations or who were unfit for any other type of work. Such a perspective paints teachers as victims, without any other employment options. A career in teaching was more often motivated by aspiration and perhaps even ambition than has generally been credited. This chapter will explore intentionality, demonstrating that teachers not only chose teaching as their career but that they made strategic decisions in following their vocation. The early decades of the 19th century were a time of educational experimentation, especially in terms of

teacher preparation and training, and New Brunswick teachers employed their own
unique grassroots approach to self-improvement and professional development.

During the late 18th century, preparatory training programmes were inaugurated in
the United States for the recognized professions, namely medicine and law, to elevate
their status. Teaching would follow suit in the early 19th century with individuals and
organizations implementing their own experimental forays into educational training and
preparatory courses. Drawing inspiration from theological seminaries and ministerial
training, Congregationalist minister, Samuel Read Hall opened the first normal school, or
teacher training institute, in 1823 at Concord, Vermont. Seven years later Hall was
invited to teach in the English Department at Phillips Academy in Andover,
Massachusetts, where he would lead a course in teacher preparation. The Teacher’s
Seminary he helped to establish at Phillips remained in operation from 1830 until 1842,
when the experiment was abandoned. During its short history, the Teacher’s Seminary
attracted approximately 600 scholars, but fewer than 100 of them completed the course of
instruction. Many of the problems associated with student attrition rate, including
duration of the course of study and its stationary location, could be addressed by taking
an alternate approach. By the early 1830s, Hall recognized the benefit in merging teacher
training with an institutional framework already in motion: the lyceum.⁶

Josiah Holbrook, who would build a successful business in the manufacture of
school apparatus, founded the Lyceum Movement in 1826. The lyceum was a form of
community-based adult education that catered to a variety of individuals, groups, and
occupations. Holbrook had created in his native Connecticut a series of community clubs

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and organizations for adult instruction and self-improvement in the early 1820s. Although these pioneering efforts were largely unsuccessful, they helped to shape the structure of the lyceum. Holbrook chose the title of these itinerant adult educational lectures quite deliberately. The precedent had already been set by other educational endeavours, both in and beyond the United States, which had adopted the label lyceum. The term was not only familiar but already associated with instruction, and Holbrook wisely attached it to his cause. Eventually, the Yale-educated Holbrook would filter teacher instruction through the lyceum concept, but first he had to persuade Samuel Hall.

In 1832, Hall established the School Agents’ Society at Andover, and Josiah Holbrook chaired its first meeting. Re-christened the American School Society, the organization would move its centre of operation to Boston two years later. Holbrook had convinced Hall that the lyceum could be adapted to suit a multitude of practical and educational purposes and that it could easily function in any community setting. The American School Society had rather vague aims, but it was committed to teacher training and exposing local communities to its usefulness. Holbrook even had visions of a Lyceum Seminary, which could provide technical education and training, though this never came to fruition. Using the lyceum format, the American School Society instituted a series of school circuits that sent educational lecturers to 150 towns throughout New England in 1833. Both Hall and Holbrook recognized that presentations that made use of the tools of the trade left a lasting impression. Increasingly these particular lyceum

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meetings showcased teaching’s specialized equipment, including globes, maps, and blackboards.\textsuperscript{8}

The American School Society folded by the mid-1830s, but its significance as an organization dedicated to the methods and mechanics of teacher training should not be overlooked.\textsuperscript{9} Scholarly accounts of these early experiments in teacher education do not, unfortunately, provide insight into the reception among their intended audience, the teachers. Whether or not there were any similar New Brunswick initiatives is also difficult to determine, but comments made by the School Inspectors during the 1844-1845 examination of provincial schools suggest that a number of teachers had some exposure to pedagogical methods. Complaints against individual teachers for adhering to antiquated methods serve as evidence that they had either received training or had studied pedagogical precepts. Paul Enery and James DeBourke, both teachers in York County, were castigated by Inspector Sylvester Earle for being wedded to the “Old System of Instruction”\textsuperscript{10}. Where these schoolmasters might have received their education, or instructional inspiration, is uncertain. Both had emigrated from Ireland while in their twenties, and both became licensed teachers shortly after their arrival in the province. They may have simply been teaching as they themselves had been taught, and although their method was once acceptable, by the 1840s it was considered not only defective but possibly damaging to student progress.

The academic background of the corps of New Brunswick teachers proves challenging, if not impossible, to ascertain. If the generalized assessment presented in the

\textsuperscript{8} Mattingly, 34-38.
\textsuperscript{9} Mattingly, 39.
\textsuperscript{10} Paul Enery, James DeBourke, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
final report of the 1844-1845 School Inspection was any indication, then the majority of teachers were undereducated.11 There were a number of notable exceptions. Henry Coulter, who was originally from County Down, Ireland, was a graduate of Glasgow College. He had taught at different schools in Charlotte County after becoming licensed to teach in 1823. Coulter had a spotless teaching record, with the exception of the passing reference made in 1841 to his issues with intemperance.12 Philemon D. Chauvin, who taught in Bathurst, Gloucester County, had “received a good education and produced premiums awarded at an establishment in Quebec.”13 Before leaving Ireland, Michael Walsh had received instruction in a model school. He taught for more than two decades in Westfield, Kings County, with at least 12 years of experience in the same school.14 Timothy Daly, who taught in Kingston, Kings County, following his arrival from Ireland in 1835, had studied at the Kildare Place Society in Dublin.15 The Kildare Place Society was committed to offering instruction to the poorer classes, and provided training to its teachers. After leaving Ireland, Henry L. Dwyer settled first in Nova Scotia where he was licensed to teach in 1824. While in Halifax, Dwyer received training under a “Dr. Twinning”.16 Although his education was considered limited to the ordinary branches of instruction, his teacher training and military background ensured a “pleasing” school conducted with “mild and efficacious discipline”.17

12 Parish School Reports, 1841, Charlotte County, RS 657, PANB.
13 Philemon D. Chauvin, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
14 Michael Walsh, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
15 Timothy Daly, Teachers’ Petitions, 1835, RS 655, PANB.
16 Henry L. Dwyer was likely referring to John Thomas Twining, who served as principal of King’s College School in Windsor, Nova Scotia from 1815 to 1817, and later headmaster of the Halifax Grammar School.
17 Henry L. Dwyer, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
Teacher training had first been made available in Nova Scotia through the combined efforts of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG) and the National Society for the Education of the Poor. The SPG had long insisted that its teachers follow an approved system of instruction, but it is uncertain how many of its New Brunswick teachers possessed those preferred skills. James Berry, who taught for the SPG for two decades, promised in his 21 March 1800 report that “he invariably teaches agreeably to the method prescribed by the Society.” The SPG and the National Society supported the monitorial system and in 1812 established Baldwyn’s Gardens in London to train teachers in this method. The Reverend James Milne, who had attended Baldwyn’s Gardens, was sent to Nova Scotia in 1816 not only to promote the National Society but to offer instruction in the new training methods. In a report to the SPG in February 1816, the Bishop of Nova Scotia noted that Milne’s arrival was met with considerable enthusiasm. A general meeting of schoolmasters was called at Halifax to introduce them to the new and approved system of instruction. The new system held the promise that it would “really be possible to effect an entire change of habit in the old Schoolmasters.”

West, acclaimed as one of the “most successful masters ever trained at Baldwyn’s Gardens”, soon after was sent to Halifax to open a Central Training School. Apparently New Brunswick teachers travelled to Nova Scotia to receive training at the new establishment. A similar institution soon opened in New Brunswick when in 1818 West established a National School in Saint John. He might have been induced to come to New

19 James Berry, Report to SPG, 21 March 1800, MC 230, PANB.
20 Baily, 47-48.
21 Bishop Inglis, Report to SPG, 16 February 1816, MC 230, PANB.
22 Bailey, 48.
Brunswick by Milne who relocated there in 1818. In August of that year West brought Mr. Bragg to the city to operate the school. Bragg had conducted the National School at Halifax and was now offering his services in Saint John. A year later, the National School was recast as a Central School and teacher training was offered to recommended schoolmasters free of charge. Joseph Regan Leggett, and his wife, Mary M. Leggett, both attended the Central School for six weeks in 1819, but without enrolment records, it is impossible to determine the success of this pioneering teacher training venture.

The monitorial system was popularized by two educators, virtually simultaneously, and there was considerable controversy between the originator and imitator. Joseph Lancaster and Alexander Bell each conceived the idea from their work educating the poor. The monitorial system would enable a teacher to instruct large numbers of pupils with the aid of monitors. From Joseph Lancaster’s model would emerge the British and Foreign School Society. Given his work at the Military Male Orphanage Asylum near Madras, India, Bell’s system had been christened “Madras”. Governor Stracey Smyth was a tremendous supporter of the Madras system, and it was largely through his efforts that a Madras charter was established in New Brunswick in 1819. To operate schools with an immense student body required specific methods, and, not surprisingly, “Madras” became synonymous with a particular teaching style. This instructional model offered an avenue to training for teachers employed by the Madras

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23 *The City Gazette*, 19 August 1818, Wednesday, “National School”, p. 3.
25 Joseph Leggett, Petition to the Legislature, 1820, RS 24, PANB.
Board. Women were engaged to teach the female Madras schools, which not only offered schoolmistresses valuable teaching experience but offered them training as well. Both men and women emerged from the Madras system with transportable teaching skills. Given the popularity of the monitorial system, schools not officially governed by the Madras Board offered instruction according to the madras model or alternately to Dr. Bell’s system. As noted in Chapter 3, Robert Douglas of Shediac, Westmorland County, was replaced in 1842 by a teacher “conversant with the Madras system”. William Montgomery, who taught in Carleton County, travelled to Fredericton in 1842 where he spent six weeks at the Collegiate School “acquiring a knowledge of Dr. Bell’s Improved System of Education as practised in that Institution.” Training in the monitorial system was still considered an asset in the 1840s, even though that particular instructional trend was already becoming passé in the United States and England. Lancaster’s model caught the attention of American educators, and in 1845, at least one institution in Saint John offered instruction in Lancaster’s system. Edmund Hilyer Duval had been brought to Saint John that year by the local branch of the British and Foreign School Society and he promptly established a British School in the city. In an advertisement for the school, Duval promised “that agreeably to the original design of its establishment, Young Men who are desirous of studying the system, with the view of becoming Teachers, may now

28 MacNaughton, 66.
29 Robert Douglas, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
30 William Montgomery, Teachers’ Petition, RS 655, PANB.
32 Bailey, 66.
be received.” Duval was a skilled teacher and educator, who would become the master of the Saint John Normal School when it opened in 1848.

According to the Inspectors’ joint report in 1845, teachers required instruction in the Art and Science of Teaching. Yet as discussed in Chapter 1, the actual number of teachers explicitly identified as being in need of training accounted for just 68 out of 489 teachers, or 13.9 percent of the teaching workforce. The current educational crisis, then, was not as dire as the final Inspection Report made it seem. Admittedly, there were defective teachers then employed, but clearly there were more teachers running successful schools than reformers and critics were willing to acknowledge. The greatest issue was that related to teaching method or style. The inspectors criticized the “old method”, which constituted rote memorization and recitation, for its inability to convey meaning or to foster proper understanding. Thus, they complained that while pupils may be able to read without hesitation, they did not necessarily comprehend what they were reading. Andrew Mageeohan, who taught in Douglas, York County, offered no oral instruction in his schoolroom, and Inspector Earle further complained that this teacher was not “at all acquainted with the system.” Without adequate instruction, Mageeohan’s scholars were “not making the progress that might be expected”. When put to the test, these students failed to satisfy the inspector. He noted that “[t]hose in reading have no idea of the subject or could they give any satisfactory answers to questions put to them.” The problems that stemmed from the old method were apparently all too common among the teachers still using it. Neil Bradley, who kept school at

33 The New Brunswick Courier, 1 November 1845, Saturday, “British School, Saint John”, p. 3.
34 Bailey, 66.
35 School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
36 Andrew Mageeohan, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
Waterborough, Queens County, was also in great want of an instructional system. Though a number of his pupils could “read tolerably well”, they possessed “very little idea of the subject, they never being questioned by the Teacher, or their attention drawn to it”.\textsuperscript{37} Clearly the old method of instruction was defective and was not properly teaching pupils to appreciate either the content or context of material.

Oral instruction, sometimes referred to as the Intellectual System, was the preferred method of imparting knowledge at this time. This improved system was grounded in a question and answer format which was considered highly effective, with proponents arguing that it was more engaging, interesting, and pleasant for scholars than studying by rote.\textsuperscript{38} Samuel Buhot was praised by Inspector Gregory for questioning his pupils “in an easy pleasing manner” in his school in Campobello, Charlotte County.\textsuperscript{39} When the inspectors suggested that a teacher could benefit from a course in the “Art of Instruction”, it was intended that they should be taught how to use oral instruction. As noted in Chapter 4, only 5.5 percent of teachers were recorded as employing this improved method of instruction when the 1844-1845 inspection was undertaken. The fact that this new method was in practice at all is significant. Alexander Stevenson, who had been teaching in St. Andrews since becoming licensed in 1827, told Inspector Gregory that he “had been in the habit of questioning the pupils on the meaning of the reading lesson, but had discontinued it.” Stevenson promised that he was “about to resume it from Conviction of the utility of the practice.”\textsuperscript{40} Evidently a number of teachers were well

\textsuperscript{37} Neil Bradley, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
\textsuperscript{39} Samuel Buhot, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
\textsuperscript{40} Alexander Stevenson, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
aware of current pedagogical trends, and they were also implementing the latest instructional methods in their schools.

Emily (Shaw) Beavan, in her 1842 petition for renewal, asserted that she was fully conversant with the Intellectual System of teaching. Emily Beavan, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB. Not only had she studied this improved method of instruction, but she had also familiarized herself with the educational theories of Samuel Wilderspin and Reverend Jacob Abbott among others.

Emily Shaw, a native of Belfast, Ireland, immigrated to New Brunswick in 1836. She began teaching in Norton, Kings County, shortly after her arrival and petitioned for licence in September 1837. She would marry Frederick W.C. Beavan, a teacher and surgeon, and together they lived in Johnston, Queens County. According to Beavan’s renewal petition, her husband was also acquainted with the prevailing educational theories. It is perhaps owing to their combined educational enlightenment that Beavan suggested that she should be permitted to establish a Superior School in her area. Beavan was confident that it could serve as a model school for other communities. The local trustees did not comment upon her potential to operate a model school, but they enthusiastically endorsed her renewal application. Duly impressed by her literary accomplishments, the trustees noted that “[a]s a popular contributor to our Colonial Literature she has become well known and we think the local benefits of the neighbourhood in which she resides will be much increased by her teaching.”

41 Emily Beavan, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
celebrity would, no doubt, have been further increased when, two years after her
departure from the province, her book entitled *Sketches and tales illustrative of life in the
backwoods of New Brunswick* was published in 1845. Although Emily Beavan only
taught for seven years, she clearly demonstrated professional ambition and drive. That
she kept current through her own independent study signifies a commitment to teaching
and a level of professionalism not generally expected in or associated with the pre-
credential period.

While the inspectors did expect that teachers should keep up their own
knowledge, they also recognized that there were certain impediments that might prevent
them from doing so. Inspector John Gregory acknowledged that George Parker, who
taught in Ludlow, Northumberland County, could easily improve his classroom
performance given that he was “anxious for the advancement of his pupils” and further
that he was “not inattentive to the operations of the mind.” However, Parker lacked
access to “any treatise on Education.” While lack of access to materials might have
precluded some teachers from furthering their education, still others complained that their
living situation was a hindrance. The particular evil in this case was the practice of
“boarding ’round”. By mid-century, boarding was relatively common for both men and
women who kept school. J.G. Althouse suggested in his study of Ontario teachers that the
disagreeable practice of boarding deterred women from teaching. Boarding was a
reality in New Brunswick, and women were as prone as men to reside in a stranger’s
home while they kept school. In 1851, 36.7 percent of New Brunswick schoolmistresses

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44 George Parker, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
45 Althouse, 16.
and 34.2 percent of schoolmasters boarded in the community where they taught,\textsuperscript{46} considerably higher rates than those for women boarding in Ontario and Montreal. In 1861, Prentice and Danylewycz found that 14.8 percent of women in Toronto boarded compared to 50.7 percent of men. In Montreal, 20.8 percent of women and 17.6 percent of men boarded out. Prentice and Danylewycz demonstrated that the need to board decreased for men as they married and themselves became heads of household.\textsuperscript{47}

Willard Elsbree noted that the practice of boarding was considered detrimental to “professional study”. Although common in the first half of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century, with 84 percent of teachers in Connecticut boarding out in 1846, by 1860 the practice was considered a “relic of olden times.”\textsuperscript{48} In New Brunswick, the practice not only continued into the 1860s but became a problem which affected public opinion. Because teachers had to “whip the cat”,\textsuperscript{49} the pejorative term for boarding, the image of the occupation suffered. Few in the public would have considered the ramifications that whipping the cat might have had on professional development.\textsuperscript{50} William F. McColla, who taught in St. Patricks, Charlotte County, claimed that the arrangement was so egregious that he had purchased a farm with the intention of cultivating it rather than remain in teaching. He found boarding “inconvenient, disagreeable and destructive of all chance of self improvement.”\textsuperscript{51} Whether or not boarding was actually that much of an obstacle,

\textsuperscript{46} New Brunswick Manuscript Census, 1851.  
\textsuperscript{48} Elsbree, 288-289.  
\textsuperscript{51} William F. McColla, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
McColla continued with the practice. It was a reality for many teachers in pursuit of not just an occupation but also a career. In 1851, he boarded in St. George where he was keeping school.\textsuperscript{52} Although McColla attended the Normal School in 1849, it was perhaps because he had to board in Fredericton that he only earned a 3\textsuperscript{rd} class certificate.\textsuperscript{53} Thomas Haverty of St. Stephen, Charlotte County similarly objected to boarding ’round, stating quite simply that it “deprives him of all opportunity of study.”\textsuperscript{54} Well aware of the currents rippling through the education system, mid-19\textsuperscript{th}-century New Brunswick teachers were interested in the opportunity for study and self-improvement. And, when consulted, teachers proved eager to join the debate about ways to reform the system. When Emily Beavan made suggestions about a model school in her 1842 petition, she was responding to the circular from 1841, which posed the question about a proposed training and model school. Beavan dismissed the notion of a centrally located training school as impractical, but instead suggested that various model schools be scattered throughout the province to encourage attendance.\textsuperscript{55} Samuel Grimshaw, who had also evidently read the 1841 circular, addressed several points in his 1842 petition for renewal. Grimshaw approved of the suggestion that the government provide each school with a few acres of land, noting that the potential income generated would end the practice of teachers “removing so frequently as has hitherto been the case.”\textsuperscript{56} Grimshaw was rather astute in his observations, and he was correct to correlate mobility with economic realities. Teacher mobility has been largely misunderstood, for it was more

\textsuperscript{52} New Brunswick Manuscript Census, Charlotte County, 1851.
\textsuperscript{53} William F. McColla, Training School Certificates, 1848-1850, RS 115, PANB.
\textsuperscript{54} Thomas Haverty, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
\textsuperscript{55} Emily Beavan, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
\textsuperscript{56} Samuel Grimshaw, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
often a deliberate decision made to better a teacher’s circumstances rather than simply a sign of restlessness or a lack of commitment.

The standard contracts engaged teachers for six or twelve months. In 1841, most teachers who taught school in Saint John County were hired on twelve month contracts, whereas in Northumberland and various other counties the six month term prevailed.\(^57\) With no evidence to substantiate the claim, it has generally been assumed that most New Brunswick teachers changed schools or left the occupation entirely after six months. Katherine MacNaughton, in quoting J.H. Fitch, concluded that the poor pay, the practice of boarding ’round, and the lack of training prevented teachers from remaining in a district longer than six months.\(^58\) In January 1842, the Trustees for Wakefield Parish, Carleton County, claimed that “There are but few teachers who remain over six months or a year in one School at one time and then it is very common for the School to remain vacant for Six months or a year So that this circumstance of itself precludes the possibility of the Pupils making any great proficiency in Learning.”\(^59\) There were eight schools in operation in Wakefield in 1841, and seven of those teachers had been keeping school for one year. The eighth teacher, Martin Egan, had returned to the parish to teach after a six-year absence. The number of schools in Wakefield Parish had declined between 1840 and 1841, with three fewer in operation, but more than half the teachers engaged in 1840 had been teaching in 1839.\(^60\) The problem of transiency was not as pronounced in Wakefield as the Trustees had indicated, but this is not to deny that some

\(^{57}\) Parish School Returns, RS 657, PANB.
\(^{58}\) MacNaughton, 72.
\(^{59}\) Trustees’ Report, 11 January 1842, Parish School Returns, RS 657, PANB.
\(^{60}\) Parish School Returns, Wakefield Parish, Carleton County, 1834, 1836, 1837, 1839-1843, RS 657, PANB.
teachers were on the move.

In examining teacher retention rates in late 19th-century British Columbia, Jean Barman elected to survey how long men and women teachers remained in a single school rather than to enumerate total teaching tenure. Barman sliced the pie even more thinly by distinguishing between city and non-city schools. Using this distinction, she found that women who taught in non-city schools remained in the position between one and 1.5 years. Men who taught in non-city schools were slightly more persistent, staying between one and two years. Both men and women were likely to remain at least three or more years in a city school.61 Persistence, then, was associated with urban schools, where graded schools would emerge in the latter decades of the 19th century. New Brunswick in the 1840s was still overwhelmingly rural and there were not enough schools in urban areas to make comparisons or to suggest whether teachers found it more advantageous to work in urban rather than rural schools.62 Testing for longevity in a single school can be carried out using the School Inspection Returns for 1844-1845. The length of current engagement was recorded for each teacher whose school was inspected, and the results suggest a fair degree of stability overall. On average, men had been teaching for 2.3 years in the same school, while women had been in the same position for 2.1 years. The teaching profile for men and women was remarkably similar, both remaining for relatively the same length of time in their particular teaching engagements. A significant portion of teachers had just begun their contracts when the inspection was undertaken;

62 Given the overwhelmingly rural character of the province during the first half of the 19th century, it is not possible to draw comparisons between rural and urban schools during the 1840s. Even by 1861, only 13 percent of New Brunswickers could be considered urban.
36.5 percent of women and 27.2 percent of men had been teaching less than 6 months. At the other end of the spectrum, there was considerable longevity among both schoolmistresses and schoolmasters, with 11.3 percent and 12.5 percent respectively having taught for five or more years in the same school.\textsuperscript{63}

Although teachers might ideally hope to spend their entire career in a single location, mobility was a reality for many. During the 1840s, three in five teachers would change schools, and this mobility proved as common for career teachers as for those who left the profession. About one-quarter of men moved once, while nearly one-third of women did the same. It was not uncommon for teachers to relocate a second time, with 14.2 percent of men and 12.3 percent of women on the move. Nearly one in five men moved more than three times over the course of their careers, while very few women moved more than twice. When teachers moved, whether male or female, they most often took charge of a school in a neighbouring parish. Only two in five teachers moved outside the county limits where they were originally licensed.\textsuperscript{64} Teachers generally changed venues for economic reasons, either because the community could no longer support the school and its teacher or because the teachers could not support themselves or their families given the meager salary. George Smith left his post at Queensbury, York County after a year’s engagement because of the “inability of the inhabitants of said district to continue the school, on account of the pressure of the times.”\textsuperscript{65} Joseph Tahany was in a similar situation when he closed his school in Waterborough, Queens County.

\textsuperscript{63} School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
\textsuperscript{64} The corps of 1842 teachers were traced through a variety of documents between 1842 and 1852 to determine mobility. Teachers’ Petitions, RS 655; School Inspection Returns, RS, 657; Payment Warrants, RS 114, PANB.
\textsuperscript{65} George Smith, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
The local inhabitants wrote a recommendation on his behalf stating that he left “in consequence of some of our proprietors removing from our district, together with the badness of the times which render us at present unable to enter into another engagement.”

When Robert Polley moved from Hampstead, Queens County, the Trustees testified that they “would have been most happy to keep him on their list had the salary been sufficient to have induced him to remain.”

Hugh Moore moved from Douglas to Fredericton, York County “with the expectation of procuring a better maintenance for a large family.”

Bathsheba Nevers, a single young woman, moved from Maugerville to Burton, Sunbury County, and finally to Prince William, York County, to secure a “more lucrative position.”

Although 44.2 percent of teachers who were known to change schools moved outside the county where they became licensed, a greater proportion of the mobile teachers, at 57.7 percent, accepted positions in a different parish within the same county. Whether teachers moved within or beyond the county where they became licensed, they were still teaching largely in rural areas.

For those teachers who surrendered their teaching positions voluntarily, their mobility can be considered strategic or that they were itinerant with a purpose. In profiling the careers of four American teachers, David Larabee found that mobility was one of the means by which these dedicated teachers advanced their careers. In almost all cases, the move was made from a rural to an urban district, where greater opportunities for advancement awaited the teacher.

Houston and Prentice contend that mobility could

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66 Joseph Tahany, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
67 Robert Polley, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
68 Hugh Moore, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
69 Bathsheba Nevers, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
mask longevity in the profession, because a change of location did not mean a change in career.  

Harry Smaller, in his study of early Ontario teachers, noted that mobility was common with many trades in the early 19th century, and that high turnover rates did not mean that teachers had left the occupation. While New Brunswick teachers were not charging towards the towns and cities, their mobility, in many cases, can be considered as positive career moves. Patrick O’Hanlon left his school in Woodstock not only because of the “tardiness of some of the signers in paying him” but also because he had engaged with a “much better school in the parish of Brighton”. Teachers had the freedom to move when conditions were unfavourable, and they could elevate their position and pay by taking a better post elsewhere. Character, a primary consideration for any teaching engagement, undoubtedly helped teachers to secure new teaching appointments in other districts. Along the way, in moving from school to school, teachers not only left an impression but cultivated a reputation. A professional reputation and mutual respect among an informal network of teachers may explain how Francis Gallagher, whose training experience was relayed in the Introduction, and George McConnell were drawn to “apprentice” under teachers hitherto unknown to them. Alexander Machum described a similar arrangement with a senior teacher in his 1893 reminiscences:

In the Autumn of 1842 I went to F’ton to increase my knowledge for teaching. I attended a school for 6 months, taught by a Mr. J. McLaughlan; about 70 years of age, from the County Derry, near where my parents were born. He was said to be as good a mathematician as could be found in the Province of N.B. I assiduously devoted my time to the study of Eng. grammar, Geography, Book-keeping; Plane and spherical Geometry, Land Surveying, Algebra, and Trigonometry with Navigation, much to my own satisfaction…I left F’ton the last day of March and got to fathers that evening…I remained home till May when I

73 Patrick O’Hanlon, Teachers’ Petitions, 1843, RS 655, PANB.
went to the Parish of Springfield, Kings County…where I taught in the same school for 3 years…I came back to Jerusalem and began teaching there again. But I soon thought of changing my way of living.\textsuperscript{74}

Machum’s recollection provides a glimpse into the terms of their agreement, including the duration and the curricular agenda for his course of study. It would appear that Machum had made a sound decision in choosing to study with such an acclaimed mathematician. John McLaughlan’s skills in that department were not disputed, although, when all three Inspectors visited his school in July 1844, their review was mixed. York County was under John Gregory’s jurisdiction, but as this was one of the first schools examined, Gregory, Brown, and Earle performed the inspection together to get a feel for the procedure and the evaluating process.\textsuperscript{75} The school, located on Carleton Street,\textsuperscript{76} was praised for being commodious and well-stocked with books. Inspector Gregory’s own son, a lad not yet 10 years of age, attended this school and he was already excelling at quadratic equations under McLaughlan’s tutelage. Clearly his mathematical prowess had not been exaggerated. The pupils read well and paid proper attention to punctuation, pronunciation, and inflexion. McLaughlan grouped his scholars into classes while also employing the question and answer instructional format currently in vogue. Gregory and the other inspectors were critical of the writing specimens on hand; they were judged to be below mediocrity. Most damning of all, though, was McLaughlan’s age. Gregory noted in his report that “Mr. McLaughlan is an old School Master and enjoys a high reputation on account of his former success.”\textsuperscript{77} James Brown was slightly more generous

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{74} Alexander Machum Reminiscences, 1893, MC 1847, PANB. \textsuperscript{75} James Brown Diary, 17, 18 July 1844, MC 295, PANB; John McLaughlan, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB. \textsuperscript{76} John McLaughlan, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB. \textsuperscript{77} John McLaughlan, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.}
in his assessment when he wrote of McLaughlan’s school in his diary. Brown pointed out that “although the Teacher is a man far advanced in life, he appears (with the exception of writing only) to be an intelligent, competent, and successful instructor.”

John McLaughlan was 67 years of age when his school was inspected in 1844, and not only had he earned a “high reputation” in the decade that he had been teaching in Fredericton, but clearly that reputation preceded him. He had earned considerable respect within teaching circles, and it was this reputation which drew Alexander Machum to his door in 1842. Even given his advanced age, McLaughlan kept abreast of the latest educational theories and improved teaching methods. Alexander Machum made a sound and strategic decision when three years into his own career he decided to seek additional pedagogical instruction from John McLaughlan. More important, though, are the implications of this type of professional relationship or arrangement. Without the benefit of a structured organization or association, New Brunswick teachers were “members” of an informal network based on the twin pillars of character and credentials. Teachers sought professional guidance and instruction from senior members of the teaching workforce, from whom they could acquire additional knowledge and skills to advance their own careers. This informal network was evidently not a trade secret, for it was encouraged by those outside the profession. John Gregory alluded to this apprenticeship practice between junior and senior teachers in his 1844 inspection of John Mitchell’s school in Northesk, Northumberland County, when he stated that Mitchell would be “greatly improved by seeing the operation of a well conducted school for a time. The value of his services would certainly be doubled.” Gregory made the same

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78 James Brown Diary, 18 July 1844, MC 295, PANB.
79 John McLaughlan, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
recommendation regarding Walter McAllister’s performance. He suggested that the
Newcastle teacher “would be greatly benefited by taking a subordinate part for a few
weeks in a well conducted school.”80 J.G. Althouse found a similar pattern of informal
assembly among neighbouring teachers in Ontario. These teachers gathered to discuss
common problems and issues, and the more enterprising of these groups would formally
organize as Teachers’ associations. Such organizational bodies offered teachers not only
a sense of solidarity but also a recognized framework for professionalization.81

That New Brunswick teachers were voluntarily seeking additional instruction and
training before the establishment of the provincial Normal School is significant in what it
suggests about the level of professional commitment in the pre-credential period. This
practice belies the common assumption that the low status of teaching made the
occupation undesirable to both men and women, deterring dedication and long-term
commitment. Before professionalization, few were expected to choose teaching as a
career. The fact that an informal network that emphasized training and education was
actually in operation, suggests that teachers were indeed career-oriented. Though it is
uncertain how expansive or inclusive the network was, its very existence is evidence that
teachers were not only thinking but also acting in a professional manner. Interestingly
enough, both Francis Gallagher and Alexander Machum, already in receipt of their own

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80 John Mitchell, Walter McAllister, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
81 Althouse, 33; Katz argued that organizing was a strategic move for teachers who were conscious about
raising their status in the local community. Michael B. Katz, The Irony of Early School Reform;
Educational Innovation in Mid-Nineteenth Century Massachusetts (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard
University Press, 1968): 154-155. Early teachers’ groups were vocal, with one suggesting that teachers
should sit on the Board of Education, since they knew what was in the best educational interests of the
community. J. Donald Wilson. “The Teacher in Early Ontario,” In Aspects of Nineteenth-Century Ontario:
Essays Presented to James J. Talman, F. H. Armstrong et al., eds. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press,
Educational State, 64-66.
personal training, attended the Normal School and both were awarded first class certificates upon completion. Alexander Machum became a member of the original class when the institution opened in Fredericton in 1848.\(^{82}\) Francis Gallagher would begin his course of study at the Saint John Normal School in 1849, but completed the programme at Fredericton.\(^{83}\) The Saint John Normal School, at least initially, could only offer second and third class certificates to teachers. Those who were intent on a first class licence had to travel to Fredericton.\(^{84}\) Gallagher was determined to compete for a first class certificate and, because he felt “confident that he will be equal to that position”, Edmund H. Duval, master of the Saint John training school, recommended his transfer to the Fredericton school.\(^{85}\)

None of the three senior teachers who trained their junior colleagues attended the Normal School. Jarvis William Hartt left the province in 1846, moving to Nova Scotia where he served first as principal of a grammar school at Wilmot and then held the same post at the Horton Collegiate Academy in Wolfville. Hartt finally returned to Saint John in 1860, whereupon he assumed the principalship of the Girls High School.\(^{86}\) William Bell, about whom so little was known, disappeared from the records after Francis Gallagher completed his individual study with him. The last record for John McLaughlan comes in 1845, when he was paid for teaching his school in Fredericton. Although no obituary or burial record has been found, it is reasonable to assume that McLaughlan died

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\(^{82}\) Alexander Machum, Training School Certificates, 1848, RS 115, PANB.
\(^{83}\) Francis Gallagher, Training School Certificates, 1849, RS 115, PANB.
\(^{84}\) Bailey, 66.
\(^{85}\) Francis Gallagher, Training School Certificates, 1849, RS 115, PANB.
sometime in 1845. Even if these senior teachers had been able to attend the Normal School, it is unlikely that they would have done so. There was a certain resistance, especially on the part of older teachers, towards enrollment in the training school. Of the 538 male teachers who kept school in 1842, only 17.4 percent were known to attend the institution within its first three years in operation. Those most inclined to attend were generally between the ages of 20 and 29. Nearly one-third of teachers in this youthful age category attended the Normal School. About one-quarter of schoolmasters aged 30 to 49, who represented nearly one third of all schoolmasters, completed the course of study. Senior teachers, or those over the age of 50, were the least likely to attend the institution. Their resistance undoubtedly stemmed from the same reasons that prevented many younger teachers from enrolling, including the distance, the duration, familial obligations, the need to surrender their school, and the fear that they would be replaced during their absence. The Normal School conferred upon its graduates a graduated licence, categorizing teachers by first, second, or third class. The new licence classification system not only ranked teachers but also determined their rate of pay. Although Normal School graduates now had credentials, this classification system did not guarantee that the best and brightest teachers would be hired by a community. Third class teachers might be most in demand given their low rate of pay.

Teachers did not flock to the Normal School in great numbers in its first year of operation. Indeed the total enrollment of 109 in 1848 was a rather poor showing given

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87 McLaughlan was paid in 1845, but disappeared from the records after that. In December 1845, Thomas O’Kane advertised that he was opening a school in the room formerly occupied by John McLaughlan on Carleton Street. See Payment Warrants, 1845, RS 114, PANB, *The Reporter*, 12 December 1845, Friday, “Notice”, p. 4.

88 Journal of the Legislative Assembly, 1849, RS 24; Training School Certificates, 1848, RS 115, PANB.
that there were 971 licensed teachers in the province at that time.\textsuperscript{89} Attendance was voluntary the year the institution opened, but in reaction to the low enrollments the provincial Board of Education passed a resolution that cancelled the licences of those teachers who refused to attend the training school. Teachers so stripped of their licences were entitled to draw the usual provincial allowance for a maximum of three years. After that period, the only way to remain eligible for the provincial allowance was to become “re-licensed” by completing the required course of study at the Normal School.\textsuperscript{90}

Cain Spillane penned a caustic teacher’s petition in 1857, bitterly complaining about the provincial payment system which was dependent upon attendance at the Training School.\textsuperscript{91} Spillane, who had kept school for 17 years in Richibucto, Kent County, decided against attending the Training School. Fears that his position would have been filled by another teacher kept him from enrolling in the institution. More importantly, Spillane believed that his students’ achievements reflected his skills as a teacher, and he argued that he should be compensated on the basis of their accomplishments. As reinforcement for his argument, he reported that two of his former students, currently attending the Training School, were both expected to receive first class licences. Without attending the Normal School himself, Spillane clearly expected that his salary should be raised to a level commensurate with his obvious talents and abilities. In essence, the achievements of his students approximated his worth as a teacher. He complained that as an unlicensed teacher he was paid a “miserable pittance”,

\textsuperscript{89} The Royal Gazette, 5 January 1848, Wednesday, p. 3593-3598. There were 989 licences listed in the newspaper, but some of the licensed teachers appeared more than once. Deleting these double entries left a total of 971 licensed teachers in 1848.

\textsuperscript{90} Bailey, 68.

\textsuperscript{91} Cain Spillane, Teachers’ Petitions, 1857, RS 655, PANB.
making less than a teacher of the third class. Spillane, who had been licensed first in 1838 and renewed in 1842, was one of the countless numbers of teachers who lost their licences because of the new licensing regulations. By remaining in his school, Spillane enjoyed a level of stability that came at the expense of financial security. He continued to teach in the same school without the benefit of training until his death in 1867 at the age of 65.

Older teachers were not necessarily expected to attend the training school. Inspector Gregory suggested that Letitia Knilans, at 45 years of age, was “perhaps too far advanced in life to attempt improvement.” Inspector Earle was pessimistic about John Reed’s chances for improvement when he commented that his “education is defective and his Teaching without method. It is impossible for him to succeed.” Earle did not even bother to recommend that the 50-year-old teacher who had taught school in Hampstead, Queens County, for the past 17 years could benefit from a course in the art of instruction. Though Earle did not explicitly state it, Reed’s age apparently rendered him beyond redemption.

The Normal School was perhaps considered a streaming agency by which younger trained teachers could replace the older, undisciplined ones. Danylewycz and Prentice noted that even if reformers were anticipating a shift in the composition of the workforce to one staffed by young Normal School graduates rather than older teachers, attendance at training institutions was still not yet customary even by the 1860s. The age bias was

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92 Cain Spillane, Regular Licences, 1816-1842, RS 115; Teachers’ Petitions, RS 655, PANB. Spillane was licensed on 22 January 1838.
93 The Morning Freeman, 7 January 1868, p. 3.
94 Letitia Knilans, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
95 John Reed, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
clearly illustrated in the case of Thomas O’Corcoran who completed the course of study at the Fredericton Normal School in 1848. O’Corcoran, who was from Ireland, was first licensed to teach school in 1826. He taught in Kings County for nearly two decades before transferring to Moncton, Westmorland County.\textsuperscript{97} In 1844, he taught English in a French school, while an usher, as his assistant, instructed the pupils in their own language. Inspector Brown was impressed with the way this school functioned, stating that all the pupils “appeared to be making progress.”\textsuperscript{98} When the Normal School opened in 1848, the 61-year-old O’Corcoran enrolled and caught the attention of Training Master d’Avray. Although O’Corcoran had the skills and qualifications to merit a first class certificate, d’Avray refused to award it on the basis of his age. d’Avray appended an explanation for his decision on O’Corcoran’s teaching certificate:

Mr. O’Corcoran is upwards of sixty years old and has taught for twenty five years in this Province – he possesses a very good knowledge of Mathematics and is as far as attainments go, well qualified for a First or Highest Class Certificate - but he is too old and too infirm to be a good and efficient teacher and therefore I cannot conscientiously do more for him than certify him as to his ability to teach the system as imparted to him during his attendance at the Training School as a Second Class teacher, trusting that his age abilities and long service will entitle him to the favourable consideration of His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor and Honble Board of Education.\textsuperscript{99}

Apparently satisfied with d’Avray’s ruling, Thomas O’Corcoran accepted his status and returned to Westmorland County where he continued teaching.\textsuperscript{100}

Other teachers appeared less sanguine regarding their experience at the Normal School. Some returned to the Training School a second time to improve their standing.

\textsuperscript{97} Thomas O’Corcoran, Regular Licences, 1816-1842, RS 115; Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
\textsuperscript{98} Thomas O’Corcoran, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
\textsuperscript{99} Thomas O’Corcoran, Training School Certificates, 1848, RS 115, PANB.
\textsuperscript{100} Journal of the Legislative Assembly, 1851, RS 24, PANB.
Thomas Conner, who was licensed to teach in St. Martins, Saint John County in 1842, enrolled in the Normal School in 1848. Upon completion, he was awarded a second class certificate. Conner returned to the school two years later to compete for a first class certificate, which was endorsed by the Board of Education. Other teachers appealed to the Board of Education seeking classification without attendance, exemption from attendance, or early release from the institution. Career teachers William Mills and Anthony B. Tayte, perhaps emboldened by exemplary inspection reports in 1844, both requested that they be granted first class licences without enrolling in the training school. Both applications were denied. Tayte was awarded a third class certificate without attending the training course, while Mills graduated with a first class licence. Donald Fraser, a licensed teacher since 1828, applied to the Board in 1850 requesting that he be exempt from attending the Normal School. He further asked that he be granted a second class licence. The Board denied both of Fraser’s requests. John G. Lorimer and Edward Whitman both applied to leave the training school early. While Lorimer stated no reason for his premature departure, ill-health forced Whitman to leave early. Lorimer never received any credit for his brief stint at the training school, and his request was denied because he offered no valid reason to be excused. Whitman was

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101 Thomas Conner, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
102 Thomas Conner, Training School Certificates, 1848, 1850, RS 115, PANB.
103 William Mills, 6 May 1848; Anthony B. Tayte, 26 October 1850, Board of Education Minutes, RS 113, PANB. William Mills would succeed E.H. Duval as Master of the Saint John Training School in 1858. See Bailey, 78.
104 Journal of the Legislative Assembly, 1851, RS 24, PANB.
105 William Mills, Training School Certificates, 1848, RS 115, PANB.
106 Donald Fraser, Regular Licences, 1816-1842, RS 115, PANB.
107 Board of Education Minutes, 30 March 1850, RS 113, PANB.
108 John G. Lorimer, Board of Education Minutes, 26 October 1849, RS 113; Edward Whitman, Training School Certificates, 1849, RS 115, PANB.
109 John G. Lorimer, 16 February 1850, Board of Education Minutes, RS 113, PANB.
released after four weeks and was awarded a second class licence.\textsuperscript{110} There were relatively few teachers who left the Normal School early during the first few years the Fredericton and Saint John institutions were open. Alison Prentice found that ill-health was the most common reason why teachers left the Toronto Normal School early. From 1847 to 1871, about one-quarter of all students left that Ontario institution early, with proportionately more men than women abandoning the training course.\textsuperscript{111}

The first woman to attend the provincial training school left the institution early, although her reason for doing so was never revealed. Lieutenant Governor William Colebrooke, long an advocate of the Normal School, made many different attempts to secure its establishment.\textsuperscript{112} Colebrooke was evidently not averse to opening training opportunities for women, and both the government circular of 1841 and his foiled plan that same year confirm his positive position. The 1841 circular posed a question about training women teachers, and, as discussed in Chapter 3, the responses from the County Boards were mixed. Undeterred, Colebrooke went so far as to hire a married couple from England to operate a training school in the province. Mr. and Mrs. Dixon\textsuperscript{113} accepted the post of “Training Master and Mistress”, but, because funds for their salary were not approved, the matter was tabled early in 1842.\textsuperscript{114} The insistence upon a married couple carried with it the implication that the Mistress would head the female training school.

\textsuperscript{110} Edward Whitman, Training School Certificates, 1849, RS 115, PANB.
\textsuperscript{112} Bailey, 54-68.
\textsuperscript{113} MacNaughton, 93-94.
\textsuperscript{114} Bailey, 55-56.
When the Normal School was established in 1848 by virtue of the School Act of 1847, Joseph Marshall, Baron d’Avray, was hired as Training Master, with no duties assigned to Mrs. d’Avray. Colebrooke approved the admittance of the first female student to the Provincial Normal School in 1848, and he probably agreed to her admittance on the basis of her teaching reputation. Among that first class was a determined woman in her early sixties, Rachel Martin. A teacher of considerable experience, Martin commenced but did not complete the required 10 week course of study. A.W. Bailey suggested in his dissertation on the professional preparation of New Brunswick’s teachers that Martin was strategically selected as the first female student of the Normal School, perhaps to fill a role beyond that of student. Martin began teaching in 1807, and she undoubtedly received training during her tenure at the female Madras School at Fredericton, where she taught in the early 1820s. Given her long experience, Martin would have been an ideal candidate to serve as d’Avray’s assistant or even as the Training Mistress for the Normal School.

Indeed, whether these were promises made to Martin which were later broken, or possibly there was no meeting of the minds between Colebrooke and d’Avray regarding her role at the Normal School, Martin was under the impression that she would be rewarded for her sojourn at the institution. In 1848 she applied to the Board of Education “to be appointed as a Training School Teacher for females in the County of York under the direction of Mr. d’Avray.” The matter was deferred and Martin made no further

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115 MacNaughton, 117.
116 Bailey, 63-64.
117 Bailey, 64.
118 Rachel Martin, Petition to the Legislature, 1824, RS 24; Regular Licences, 1816-1842, RS 115, PANB. Rachel Martin was licensed in 1821.
119 Board of Education Minutes, 6 May 1848, RS 113, PANB.
application. It is possible that she had indeed been groomed to take on an instructional role at the Normal School, and her admittance was perhaps an attempt to pave the way for future female enrollment. The real snag appeared to be the recalcitrance of the provincial Board of Education, which blocked all of her attempts to rectify the situation. While Martin surrendered rather quickly on the matter of a teaching position at the Normal School, she was more determined about her classification. After her early departure from the training school, Martin insisted that she had been promised a first class certificate. She petitioned the Board of Education regarding her certificate level, but her application, deferred twice, was ultimately denied.\(^\text{120}\) She took her case to the Legislature and in her 1849 petition Martin noted not only that she had attended the Training School but that she was to have been awarded a first class licence.\(^\text{121}\) Certificate level determined the rate of pay, and a schoolmistress of the first class received £20, while second and third class were paid £18 and £14 respectively. Clearly Martin was only demanding what she considered was her due, or what she had been promised. Nonetheless, her efforts were unsuccessful. Martin was no stranger to the petition process, but although she continued to petition for proper remuneration over the next few years, there is no evidence that she was ever awarded a first class teaching certificate. In 1850, the legislature granted her £20 for her services as a teacher, noting that though she had been judged fit for a first class licence, she could not be awarded it under the existing school act.\(^\text{122}\) The next year, Martin claimed in her petition to the Legislature that it had been upon the request of Sir William Colebrooke that she resigned her school at Portland

\(^{120}\) Board of Education Minutes, 20 December 1848, 5 March 1849, 21 December 1849, RS 113, PANB.

\(^{121}\) Rachel Martin, Petition to the Legislature, 1849, RS 24, PANB.

\(^{122}\) The Royal Gazette, 8 May 1850, Wednesday, p. 5068.
in 1848 to attend the Training School. She asserted that she had agreed to the proposal in exchange for a first class licence. Because she had surrendered her original licence in the 1848 arrangement with Colebrooke, she had been deprived of the provincial allowance since that time.\textsuperscript{123}

The Board of Education, the ultimate authority in conferring licence classification, was discriminatory in its treatment of women. In 1849, this body asserted its authority to overrule d’Avray’s licensing recommendation for Margaret (Connor) Jagoe, the second woman to enroll in the provincial Normal School. Licensed since 1840,\textsuperscript{124} Jagoe was considered an “excellent teacher” by the Trustees for Westfield, Kings County. She left that post after a year because of insufficient salary. She taught briefly in Saint John County before once again returning to Kings County.\textsuperscript{125} When Inspector James Brown examined her school in Upham, Kings County, in 1844, he judged her to be a “successful Teacher.”\textsuperscript{126} In his diary, Brown also noted that she “writes a very good hand and appears somewhat tainted with the accent of the West of Ireland.”\textsuperscript{127} Brown correctly identified her place of birth, and while that remark might have held a hint of prejudice in it, he was nonetheless satisfied with her teaching performance. In 1849, Jagoe was permitted to enrol in the Normal School under what the Board described as “special conditions”.\textsuperscript{128} Margaret Jagoe, at age 44, was the first woman to complete the course of instruction at the provincial Normal School. She excelled at her studies and d’Avray felt confident in recommending her for a first class licence.

\textsuperscript{123} Rachel Martin, Teachers’ Petitions, 1851, RS 655, PANB.  
\textsuperscript{124} Margaret Connor, Regular Licences, 1816-1842, RS 115, PANB.  
\textsuperscript{125} Margaret Connor, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.  
\textsuperscript{126} Margaret Connor, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.  
\textsuperscript{127} James Brown Diary, 8 August 1844, MC 295, PANB.  
\textsuperscript{128} Board of Education Minutes, 7 July 1849, RS 113, PANB.
licensure. The Training Master noted on the certificate that “in consideration of her general intelligence, and ability to impart thorough Elementary Instruction I recommend that the said Margaret Jagoe be classed as a First or Highest Class Teacher.” Two months later, d’Avray would have to defend his decision, having been asked by the Board to comment on Jagoe’s proficiency in the various branches of instruction. In his return volley, d’Avray stated: “I have no means of judging of Mrs. Jagoe’s proficiency in any of the Branches required for First Class Teacher and that my certificate to Mrs. Jagoe in which I recommended her for a first or highest class, was delivered notably in respect to her great ability as an Imparter of Instruction.” Margaret Jagoe was awarded a second class certificate by the Board of Education.129

After the early resistance began to fade, women enrolled at the Normal Schools in greater numbers each year.130 Edmund H. Duval had initially been resistant to admitting women to the Saint John institution, but after visiting Normal Schools in the United States and Upper Canada, he was much more open to their attendance. Duval recommended to the Board of Education in 1851 that as many women as could be conveniently accommodated should be admitted to the training school, on the condition that strict propriety be observed.131 The following year, the number of women admitted to

129 Margaret Jagoe, Training School Certificates, 1849, RS 115, PANB.
130 The experience of both Rachel Martin and Margaret Jagoe would suggest that while the Board of Education was open to their admittance to the Normal School, they were not yet ready to confer first class certificates upon them. The precise year that a female graduate of the Normal School received a first class licence in New Brunswick was not explored in the course of this study, but Janet Guildford noted that the first woman to receive a first class certificate from the Nova Scotia Normal School graduated in 1869, an institution which had opened in Truro in 1855. See: Janet Guildford, “‘Separate Spheres’: The Feminization of Public School Teaching in Nova Scotia, 1838-1880,” Acadiensis XXII, 1 (Autumn 1992): 60.
131 Board of Education Minutes, E.H. Duval, Letter to Board of Education, 23 October 1851, RS 113, PANB. Martha Hamm Lewis, who was not a member of the 1842 corps of teachers, had been admitted to the Saint John Normal School in 1849. As family legend asserts, she was required to wear a veil and to enter and exit the room before her male classmates. Although the intermingling of male and female students was discouraged at Normal Schools, there is no evidence to suggest that the story about her
the Saint John Normal School rivaled that of men.\textsuperscript{132} With the establishment of the training school, not only had the old system of licensing finally been dispensed with, but a new teaching uniformity, or perhaps conformity, was introduced. Training school students graduated with credentials, which no generation of teacher before them possessed. The introduction of professional training could only help to elevate the status of teachers both in the public mind and amongst teachers themselves. The Normal School also had the power to usher in a new age of professionalism and commitment. As Patrick J. Harrigan has argued, Egerton Ryerson envisioned that the establishment of a Normal School in Ontario would improve efficiency, increase teaching wages, and encourage permanence.\textsuperscript{133} Although New Brunswick teachers may have enjoyed greater instructional efficiency and better pay after attending the Normal School, they had been committed to teaching long before the advent of training.

Scholarship related to career has rarely focused its lens on the pre-credential period, because logic dictates that teaching tenure was abbreviated by necessity. Most studies have offered impressions rather than hard statistics when it comes to estimating teaching tenure. J.G. Althouse noted that Ontario teachers were “not prone to remain long at their posts.”\textsuperscript{134} Willard Elsbree blamed the low esteem in which teaching was held as a deterrent to longevity among the American teaching workforce, stating that “it could

donning a veil was true. Had such a garment been required, Rachel Martin probably would have noted it in at least one of her petitions about her attendance at the Normal School. For a brief description of the Martha Hamm Lewis story, see Katherine MacNaughton. \textit{The Development of the Theory and Practice of Education in New Brunswick, 1784-1900}. Fredericton, 1947: 140. For a discussion of Normal School social interactions, see Alison Prentice, “‘Friendly Atoms in Chemistry’: Women and Men at Normal School in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Toronto,” in David Keane and Colin Read, Eds. \textit{Old Ontario} (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1990): 285-317.
\textsuperscript{132} Bailey, 72.
\textsuperscript{134} Althouse, 17
scarcely be expected that talented individuals would look toward education as their life
career.” 135 David Larabee suggested that “most people, especially women, passed
through the occupation quickly”. 136 When teaching persistence has been measured, it is
usually in the context of feminization, and most of those studies are confined to the
credential or professional period. Maris A. Vinovskis and Richard M. Bernard present a
notable exception in the historiography with their examination of schoolmistresses in
ante-bellum Massachusetts. They found that the average period that women remained in
teaching was 2.1 years. 137 Studies which use the census to examine the demographics of
teaching focus on the second half of the 19th century. Danylewycz, Light, and Prentice
found few cases of women who had “avoided the typical pattern of only three or four
years of school teaching”. 138 Susan B. Carter and Elizabeth Savoca challenged the
vagueness associated with the impressionistic approach to career in their examination of
the “teaching procession” in the United States. They determined that teachers remained in
the profession longer than earlier studies had claimed. Their figures, though scattered
across time and geographic space, show that even as early as 1845 teachers had careers of
at least 4.5 years. Carter and Savoca also indicated that persistence increased later in the
century, especially in urban areas. 139 In her study of bureaucratization, Victoria-Maria
MacDonald demonstrated that women had considerable longevity in the public schools of
urban Rhode Island in the 1880s, with careers lasting 24 years on average. MacDonald

135 Elsbree, 271.
136 Larabee, 159.
138 Marta Danylewycz, Beth Light, and Alison Prentice, “The Evolution of the Sexual Division of Labour
in Teaching: A Nineteenth-Century Ontario and Quebec Study,” Histoire Sociale – Social History, XVI, 31
139 Susan B. Carter and Elizabeth Savoca, “The ‘Teaching Procession’? Another Look at Teaching Tenure,
notes that the Rhode Island commissioner of public schools indicated in his 1896 report that urban women were staying in the profession “six times longer” than they had in the 1850s.\textsuperscript{140}

The historiography would suggest that careers in teaching were rare before mid-century. However, the professional profile in New Brunswick challenges that assumption. Three in five teachers, or 61.6 percent of the 1842 workforce, had careers of 10 years or more. Males were more persistent than their female colleagues, as 65.6 percent of schoolmasters and 47.2 percent of schoolmistresses taught for a decade or more. Even more remarkable, though, is the fact that one-quarter of these experienced teachers already had 10 year careers by 1842. Not surprisingly, proportionately more men than women had careers by 1842, with 47.8 percent of schoolmasters and 8.5 percent of schoolmistresses having taught for at least a decade. William Milroy was fairly typical of these early professionals, in that he was married and of immigrant birth. Licensed in 1820,\textsuperscript{141} the newly-arrived Scottish immigrant kept school in Waterborough, Queens County, for at least the next 40 years. Milroy received the usual testimonials about his conduct and character from school trustees,\textsuperscript{142} but the 1844 examination of his school was less than stellar. While Milroy’s moral character and attention to his pupils were unquestioned, Inspector Earle complained that the children were not making progress even after more than a year under Milroy’s instruction. Earle recommended that he would require “a more improved method before he can excel as a teacher.”\textsuperscript{143} Five years later, at

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\textsuperscript{141} William Milroy, Regular Licences, 1816-1842, RS 115, PANB.
\textsuperscript{142} William Milroy, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
\textsuperscript{143} William Milroy, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
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the age of 51, William Milroy enrolled in the Fredericton Normal School. After completing the 10 week training course, he emerged with a second class certificate.\textsuperscript{144} Milroy returned to Waterborough where he continued to teach school until at least 1861.\textsuperscript{145} His commitment to teaching was expressed not only in longevity but in his pursuit of higher learning.

Even though most people teaching in 1842 did not attend the training school, it is important to note that those who did were drawn almost exclusively from the group of persistent teachers. Experienced teachers did not shy away from attending the Normal School. Thomas E. Carter, licensed since 1834, enrolled at the Fredericton Normal School in 1848. D’Avray was so impressed with Carter’s performance that he considered it an injustice to award Carter anything other than a first class certificate, and even asserted that Carter could be “valuable as Master of a County Training School.”\textsuperscript{146} Although, 10.8 percent of experienced teachers attended the training school, it was more likely that teachers just beginning their careers in 1842 would take the course of instruction. Fully one-quarter of these beginning teachers enrolled in the training school sometime between 1848 and 1850. The novice teacher was typically young, single, and New Brunswick born. Benjamin Goodwin, for example, petitioned for licence in 1842 when he was 23 years of age.\textsuperscript{147} Over the course of his 10 year career, he would teach in various schools throughout Queens, Kings, and Saint John Counties. He spent a number of years in Springfield, Kings County, where his school was inspected by James Brown in 1844. Goodwin received a favourable review, proving himself competent to teach the

\textsuperscript{144} William Milroy, Training School Certificates, 1849, RS 115, PANB.  
\textsuperscript{145} New Brunswick Manuscript Census, Queens County, 1861.  
\textsuperscript{146} Thomas E. Carter, Training School Certificates, 1848, RS 115, PANB.  
\textsuperscript{147} Benjamin Goodwin, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
useful branches of education. He was praised for having a fine teaching method and for being a good scholar. Both served him well when he attended the Training school in 1850, from which he emerged with a second class licence.  

Career teachers generally out-performed their non-persistent colleagues in the classroom, but among the career teachers men fared slightly better than women. Among those whose schools were inspected in 1844, 65.1 percent of men and 57.1 percent of women passed the test. Career profiles for men and women were not mirror reflections. While 44.2 percent of schoolmistresses were single, 43.9 percent of schoolmasters were married. Even given their single status, women were far more stable than their male counterparts. More than half of the female teachers never moved at any time during the 1840s, whereas only 36.8 percent of men remained in one place. Career teachers did change schools, of course, and while nearly one-third of women moved once, more than one-third of men moved at least twice. Given that women, on average, began their careers at later dates than men, it is not surprising that they were younger than their male colleagues. There were very few women who had lengthy careers by 1842, but aged schoolmistresses Rachel Martin and Sarah Cyphers were notable exceptions, and they were among the 8.5 percent of women whose careers had begun at least by the 1820s and 

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148 Benjamin Goodwin, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.  
149 Benjamin Goodwin, Training School Certificates, 1850, RS 115, PANB.  
150 Sarah Cyphers, Regular Licences, 1816-1842, RS 115; Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655; School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB. Mrs. Cyphers had become licensed on 29 April 1829 and the School Inspector judged her as a competent teacher. Inspector Gregory asserted in 1844 that her advanced age of 74 years infringed on her teaching efficiency. Although it was uncommon to find positive accounts of teachers and their service in the provincial newspapers, there was at least one exception. In response to an article in The Head Quarters praising Mrs. Akerley’s teaching skills, The Reporter printed an article acknowledging the efforts of other Fredericton schoolmistresses. Mrs. Cyphers was one of the women noted. In all, five schoolmistresses were commended. Only Mrs. Cyphers and Miss Catherine McLaughlan were members of the 1842 pre-credential workforce. Catherine McLaughlan, daughter of acclaimed teacher, John McLaughlan, was very highly esteemed. The reporter noted that there was no one better “calculated to forward the interests of the young persons who have been consigned to her charge”. See: The Reporter, 5 June 1846, Friday, p. 3.
1830s. As noted in Chapter 3, the number of women becoming licensed was on the rise during the 1830s, which would help explain why half of the female teachers had only just started their careers in 1842, whereas 47.8 percent of men had already been teaching 10 or more years by 1842.

Those who did not remain in teaching accounted for 38.3 percent of the 1842 workforce. These teachers were primarily single, male immigrants, most of whom had become licensed between 1838 and 1842. Though these teachers did not make a career of teaching, a great many of them lasted at least five years before abandoning the profession. Nearly one in five of these teachers, both male and female, persisted long enough to have their schools inspected. While 50 percent of men and 45.4 percent of women passed the inspection in 1844, their classroom performance was below the standard of the career teachers. It is possible, then, that the teachers who left the profession were simply not as skilled, educated, or as committed as their more career-minded colleagues. There are too many unanswered questions regarding the non-persistent teachers to draw any accurate conclusions about the motives behind their decisions to leave the profession. Death and out-migration can certainly explain why some disappeared from teaching, but there are not enough confirmed cases to assert this claim. Augustin Johnson, who had become licensed in 1842, taught a French school in a remote part of Carleton, Kent County. Given the rather inaccessible location of the school, John Gregory was unable to inspect it. Shortly thereafter, the 28-year-old Johnson died. Emily (Shaw) Beavan, who had been teaching in Kings and Queens Counties since becoming licensed in 1837, left the province with her husband in 1843. They went

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151 Augustin Johnson, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655; School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
to England, Ireland, and ultimately Australia. There is no record of Beavan continuing to teach in any of these places, but she had definite career aspirations while she lived in New Brunswick, which she did not abandon upon marriage. How many women left teaching to be married cannot be determined, but teaching and marriage were not incompatible during the 1840s. Margaret Connor, who became licensed in 1840, continued to teach after she wed Edward Jagoe. Both would disappear from all teaching records after they completed the training school course. Edward Jagoe had earned a first class certificate while Margaret Jagoe held a contested second class licence. They may have left the province, seeking opportunity elsewhere with their newly minted credentials.

The 1842 teaching workforce did not act in a manner consistent with prevailing attitudes and assumptions regarding teachers. Only the least able should have been drawn to teaching, and, even once engaged in the occupation, they would be expected to beat a hasty retreat in the face of poor remuneration, challenging working conditions, and a dearth of advancement opportunities. The low status of teaching not only denied it classification as a profession in public esteem but definitely should have deterred individuals from making it a career. New Brunswick teachers defied the stereotypes in their clear commitment to the occupation. Not only were careers the rule during the pre-credential period, but they were rather eagerly pursued by ambitious teachers. The very factors which tarnished the image of the profession were, to a certain extent, within the power of teachers to change. Transiency was a strategy employed to improve their position or situation, especially if better pay or a more suitable post could be procured.

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153 Edward Jagoe, Training School Certificates, 1849, RS 115, PANB.
elsewhere. In many cases, then, mobility was one means by which teachers could advance their careers. Teachers also actively shaped their careers by remaining current with educational trends and theories. Some kept up their knowledge through individual study while others participated in an informal teaching network. This network, which connected teachers for mutual benefit, offered aspiring career teachers opportunities for self-improvement. The existence of such a network demonstrates that teachers knew each other by reputation, and that there was respect for and within the profession. While the public held teaching in low regard, the teachers within the system clearly did not. Teachers were committed to the profession in spite of negative public attitudes and an often challenging work environment, and their persistence in the occupation speaks for itself. Although longevity is certainly one measure of career, intentionality is equally important. Patrick Howlett’s intention was evident early in his career. He had embarked on that career after becoming licensed to teach in Weldford, Kent County at the age of 18. At the school examination two years later, Inspector Gregory summed it up nicely when he remarked that Howlett had “deliberately chosen the profession”.  

154 Patrick Howlett, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
Considerable excitement prevailed here last week in regard to the remains found at Corn Ridge, many believing they were those of a former resident of this vicinity. About 30 years ago a school teacher named James Cusack, who resided at Corn Ridge, taught school at Lower Ridge. One morning in the month of May he started to walk home, taking a short cut through the woods, and was never heard of again, although searching parties scoured the woods for weeks. When the remains were found last week by Mr. Elliott, many believed the mystery concerning his disappearance was at an end, but the coin found, which bears a later date, dispels that idea.\(^1\)

The facts in this cold case were simple. A man in his early seventies vanished on his way home from work. He was likely well familiar with these woods given that he had been teaching in the area for the previous 40 years.\(^2\) His wife and children, along with members of the community, mourned him, their grief made more poignant by the peculiar circumstances of his disappearance. The discovery of this unidentified body revived hope that questions about how or why he went missing would finally be answered, but resolution and closure were not in the offing. Whether he was the victim of foul play or misadventure, the mystery of James Cusack’s disappearance was never solved.

Cusack’s case was not typical; neither was it unique. In 1874, veteran teacher Charles Lindsay also went missing. In November of that year, he had left his house in Archibald Settlement in Durham, Restigouche County, intending to walk along the shore. It was presumed that on his return walk he had become lost on account of his failing eyesight. This infirmity had caused Lindsay to discontinue teaching four years earlier,

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\(^1\) Journals of the House of Assembly, Petition category, RS 24, PANB.  
\(^3\) James Cusack, Regular Licences, 1816-1842, RS 115, PANB. Cusack became licensed 8 March 1820.
after more than three decades of keeping school. The remains of this well-respected teacher were never found.

Given that a career in teaching has been assumed to have been rare in the 19th century, analysis of the plight of the aged teacher has focused on a later period and has been confined to the scant scholarship devoted to pensions. As the experience of both Cusack and Lindsay demonstrate, not only did career teachers “grow old and gray in the profession”, but also many continued to teach until death or infirmity drew their careers to a close. Not all of these aged teachers wanted to work that long; nor did reformers and social critics wish them to do so. The School Inspection of 1844-1845 revealed negative attitudes towards aged teachers. Rather than being equated with experience and wisdom, age was instead perceived as a reflection of outdated and unenlightened approaches to teaching and a signal of declining capacity in a classroom setting. The elderly teacher, then, could be considered potentially detrimental to the progress of education in the province. This chapter will explore not only the experience of aged career teachers but also their claims for compensation as vital and valued public servants.

Age was not but a number in the pre-credential period; it was considered the dividing line between modern and antiquated. In the quest to improve standards, and to introduce uniform methods of instruction, only the young would survive, or at least that

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4 *Union Advocate*, 13 January 1875, Wednesday, “Teacher Missing”, p. 2; Charles Lindsay, Regular Licences, 1816-1842, RS 115, PANB. Lindsay had become licensed 29 September 1834.
6 William Quinn, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
was the intention. Even the Inspectors, who were themselves not young men, often appeared to bring to their task the assumption that old methods were pursued by old teachers; and depending upon the teacher, old could be as young as 45. Patrick Flanagan, who had taught at the same school in Chatham, Northumberland County, since 1832, was 45 years of age when his school was inspected in 1844. Inspector John Gregory was surprised that “so old a teacher” still spoke with an Irish accent. Gregory evidently expected that Flanagan should have shed such “national peculiarities” after nearly 15 years in the province.7 Inspector Sylvester Earle was not impressed with George Knox’s performance when his Gagetown, Queens County, school was examined. The 58-year-old teacher, who had kept school since becoming licensed in 1827, was described as “an Old Man”, who, though “many years as a school teacher…has not profited by long experience [sic], as he appears to be weded [sic] to Old customs, and is a disciple of the old school, no oral instruction.”8 Earle was likewise dismissive of James Gilchrist, who, at age 61, had been keeping the same school for nearly 25 years in Prince William, York County. Earle pessimistically reported that Gilchrist was “too far advanced in life, and his want of proper education disqualifies him for teaching a reputable school.”9

The mark of an old teacher could be found not only in chronological age but in appearance. William Wier, who became licensed in 1837, had been keeping his school at Kingston, Kings County, for two years when Inspector James Brown examined it. Brown noted that the 50-year-old teacher was a “decent looking elderly man”, who because of his nerves, was “for the time being incapable of imparting instruction in any way.”

7 Patrick Flanagan, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB. Flanagan petitioned for licence renewal in 1842.
8 George Knox, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
9 James Gilchrist, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
Francis Gotrot, who taught a French school in Botsford, Westmorland County, had become licensed late in life, at age 63. Brown noted that Gotrot, who was 66 when the 1844 inspection was undertaken, was “a smart looking old man”. Although judged to be competent to teach reading, Gotrot was found to be “very imperfect in Writing and Arithmetic.” Inspector Brown described Thomas Wood, also of Botsford, as “old, lame, and infirm”. Although Brown acknowledged that the 60-year-old teacher had “no doubt been a good teacher in his day”, he could not help but note one particular challenge which undoubtedly affected his teaching. Wood’s “articulation” was “injured by the loss of some of his teeth”.

Career teachers apparently did not grow old gracefully in the occupation, and some teachers blamed failing health on the demanding nature of the job. In 1857, John Baird explained how his exertion in the profession had compromised his well-being. He outlined his long experience as a teacher in the province, beginning in 1818 when he taught a military school located in Fredericton. He later took charge of the Madras school there, which he had earlier described as a “large troublesome School of all casts and colours”. He taught the Madras School for 20 years with the assistance of his wife, but then his health began to fail due to the “labours of so large a school.” After the death of his wife, Baird quit the Madras School, unable to attend to the duties alone. He moved to Tobique, where he operated a much smaller school. There he taught until 1852 when ill-health forced him to resign his post. In his petition, Baird complained that he had been

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10 Francis Gotrot, Regular Licences, 1816-1842, RS 115, PANB. Gotrot was licensed on 22 March 1841.
11 Francis Gotrot, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
12 Thomas Wood, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
13 John Baird, Teachers’ Petitions, 1857, RS 655, PANB.
14 John Baird, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
reduced to a state of indigence. He had wearied not only of the occupation but of the province. Baird indicated that he preferred to return to his native country, Ireland. He found that his constitution could no longer survive the harsh New Brunswick climate, especially in winter when he could not “leave the room he sleeps in.” Baird argued that he had “a strong claim on this province Having laboured incessantly for the period of thirty-two years exhausting himself of health and strength, and everything else, being necessitated, to give up his property to satisfy his creditors”. Baird did not return to Ireland. A year after filing this petition, John Baird died in Andover, Victoria County at the age of 67.15

Thomas Bowser, who had become licensed in 1831,16 would periodically suspend teaching when his health failed him. That he might have been on such a sabbatical would explain why there is no record of Bowser teaching in 1842. He taught more regularly between 1845 and 1852, but encroaching blindness endangered his teaching career. At the 1844 Inspection, John Gregory observed a “defect” in Bowser’s eyesight which prevented him from “reading any print smaller than pica Capitals.” By that time, Bowser already relied rather heavily on his wife for assistance in the classroom. Although Mrs. Bowser was not present during the inspection, Gregory had it on good authority that she was well-qualified for the position. Bowser, who had earned the respect of his fellow Milltown residents, was considered a valuable teacher. Gregory apparently agreed, praising Bowser for his competence in teaching arithmetic, geography, and grammar,

15 Carleton Sentinel, 26 June 1858, Saturday, p. 3.
16 Thomas Bowser School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB. Bowser listed his licence date as 31 March 1831. Although Bowser’s licence was not recorded among the Regular Licences (RS 115), his 1831 petition for validates his licence date.
while also noting that he had “a quick and an attentive ear.”\textsuperscript{17} By 1846 he was “wholly deprived” of his sight, and only managed to keep teaching school with the able assistance of his wife. When Bowser finally abandoned teaching, it was not on account of his blindness, but because his increasing infirmities made it impossible for him to continue working. In his 1853 petition, Bowser sought pecuniary aid to relieve his current distress. He described his devotion to the occupation, stating that he had “prepared himself early in life for a Teacher of Youth… intending to make that his occupation.” A year after he left teaching, Bowser found himself not only financially but physically bankrupt. He blamed teaching for his current state. He insisted that “his health was good when he began to teach, and that he has no doubt but that his present feeble state as well as his loss of vision, is owing mainly if not wholly to the confinement and labor of that employment.”\textsuperscript{18}

While John S.P. Gibb did not blame teaching for afflicting him with a severe case of rheumatism, his condition nonetheless kept him from making a living. In 1857, Gibb requested that his case be taken into consideration and that he be awarded a sum that the Legislature considered just and right. Gibb signed his petition with a very shaky hand, undoubtedly crippled with arthritis. When the 84-year-old teacher was not granted assistance that year, William End, Gibb’s representative in the Legislative Assembly, wrote an impassioned letter of support. After visiting Gibb at his home, End promised him that he would bring his case to the attention of the Legislature. He was deeply concerned for Gibb’s health and well-being, especially given his advanced age and miserable living conditions. End was apparently incensed that a once valued and vital

\textsuperscript{17} Thomas Bowser, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
\textsuperscript{18} Thomas Bowser, Teachers’ Petitions, 1853, RS 655, PANB.
A teacher must live in such destitute circumstances especially as he was on the verge of “tottering into the grave.” End documented the sad case of John S.P. Gibb:

...a superannuated teacher – the poor old gentleman has been a devoted teacher of Youth for more, I believe, than Fifty Years, he is now a cripple, bed ridden and I think upwards of Eighty. He lives, where he has always lived, up the Big Nepisiquit in a remote and very poor settlement. He has had a bonus of twenty pounds, the last of which was in '56. If ever there was a claim on the public funds, supported by every consideration of justice as well as humanity this is one. I do not object to the grant to Rachel Martin, or to any grants of that nature, but really there is no comparing this poor old mans case with any other that I know of. Happily for Miss Martin and for others who are under allowance, they live at the Sunny Side of the Province, where there are people in affluence, and who, I well know, to their honor, take pains to find out and generously supply the wants of the poor.19

William End, Irish-born lawyer and politician, represented Gloucester County in the Legislature from 1830 until 1850, and again from 1854 to 1861. End sympathized with the plight of the aged, particularly the aged teacher, and along with his colleagues, voted to approve a number of petitions for superannuation during the mid-1850s.

The Legislature had not always been so welcoming of such applications. In 1840, the government sent a clear message to teachers with a statement made in the House that it would “reject all Petitions of Persons not licensed, or not recommended by the Trustees of Schools; and all applications for compensation in addition to that which the Petitioners received under the existing Law; and all applications for pensions.”20 During the 1840s, very few aged teachers applied to the Legislature seeking assistance in consideration of their long service, perhaps in compliance with the order or quite possibly because they were well aware of the government’s position and attitude. What politicians and education reformers failed to recognize was that the age structure of the profession was

19 John S.P. Gibb, Teachers’ Petitions, 1858, RS 655, PANB.
20 Journal of the Legislative Assembly, 1840, RS 24, PANB. My emphasis.
shifting. The erroneous assumption that high turnover rates sifted out the aged teacher in favour of the young clouded public opinion, concealing the true identity of teachers and the reality of their situation. The New Brunswick teaching workforce was not staffed primarily by the young, but by the more experienced and mature teacher. In 1842, 44 percent of teachers were between the ages of 30 and 49, while 12.1 percent were 50 years of age or older. With so many schoolmasters and schoolmistresses making a career of teaching, the profession was aging. Mature and senior teachers who kept school in 1842 were remarkably persistent, with 57.6 percent of those aged 30 to 49 and 68.5 percent over the age of 50 remaining in the profession until mid-century. Of the 1842 teaching workforce, aged men were more inclined than aged women to continue teaching into their old age, with 70.2 percent of men and 57.1 percent of women still teaching at mid-century. According to the census, there were fewer teachers in the middle age brackets, in both the 20 to 29 and the 30 to 49 age cohorts, than there had been in 1842. The proportion of older teachers had grown significantly, representing 21 percent of the workforce at mid-century. It is not surprising, then, that aged teachers defied the ruling of the Legislature and began to petition for superannuation by 1851. Though the claims for superannuation were relatively few in number, most of those filed between 1851 and 1853 were rejected, but the mood in the House was far more sympathetic once William End was returned to his Seat in 1854.

As Chairman of the Finance Committee in the Legislature, William End should not have entertained any petitions from teachers, since they should have been funnelled through the provincial Board of Education, which had been established in 1847. Teachers were expected to submit all salary claims, other related grievances, and requests for
pensions to that administrative body. Although teachers did petition the Board, most applications concerned attendance at the training school or adjustment of licence class. Teachers were accustomed to petitioning the Legislature for pecuniary aid and the fact that they continued to turn directly to the government years after the Board was founded demonstrates how hard a habit it was to break. In 1853, the Board of Education instituted a petition classification system for those seeking different types of remuneration, sorted into A, B, or C classes. Class A petitions included those teachers who sought “allowances or grants on account of unforeseen circumstances”. In Class B petitions, teachers requested grants or allowances because either the petitioners themselves or the trustees had not followed proper procedure. Class B petitions were automatically rejected. Teachers who sought pensions were separated into Class C. In 1853, there were nine pension requests submitted to the Board of Education, and although the fate of these applications was never noted in the minutes, the Board intended to discourage the practice in future. The Board contended that “it is absolutely necessary to treat this class of petitions as one which will not admit of increase after the present sessions but the Board are not prepared to advise that such petitions should be entirely rejected.” In the Board’s estimation, the Legislature had for far too long “taught” teachers and pensioners to “rely on its liberality.” Consideration for pension requests would be individually assessed, rather than being awarded to teachers as a matter of course.21

The Legislature had been increasingly inundated with petitions from teachers during the 1840s, and by 1854, the government drew a line in the sand. In 1841, 27 teachers submitted petitions to the Legislature, representing 10.5 percent of all petitions

21 Board of Education Minutes, 10 March 1853, RS 113, PANB.
filed that year. In 1842, teachers accounted for 9.4 percent of all petitioners. Their numbers were on the rise by 1845, with teachers’ petitions representing 16.5 percent of all applications submitted to the Legislature. In 1851, the Legislature received 103 requests from teachers, representing about 20 percent of all petitions. The following year, the 104 applications received from teachers represented one-quarter of petitions filed. Teachers had indeed been “taught” to rely on the benevolence of the Legislature, and that situation was about to change. Given the sheer volume of teachers’ petitions, the Legislature announced in 1854 that it would no longer entertain requests for pecuniary aid from teachers. Though the announcement did curb the custom, it did not eradicate it entirely. Teachers had imprinted the petition process within the Legislative milieu, and given how ingrained that process was, it should not have been a surprise that a limited number of teachers continued to direct their petitions to that body. Twenty teachers petitioned the Legislature during 1854 and again during the 1854-1855 session.

Although the total number of teachers petitioning had declined, the number requesting consideration for their longevity of service in teaching remained about the same. Throughout the 1840s, only one or two teachers submitted such requests annually, but by the 1850s, anywhere from four to six requests were made each year. In 1851, six teachers submitted requests for aid on the basis of long service, while four teachers did so in 1852. Most of these were rejected. During the 1854-1855 sitting of the Legislature, when four teachers sought aid as aged instructors, all four requests were granted, with each teacher being awarded a £20 annuity. Finance Committee Chairman William End explained his favourable recommendation, stating that “these claims are based on the

22 Head Quarters, March 1854, Wednesday, “Teacher’s Petitions”, p. 2.
23 Journal of the Legislative Assembly, 1851, 1852, RS 24, PANB.
same grounds, that of old age, and comparative destitution, inability to further exertion, after having devoted long lives to the public services in labourious, and then ill paid office of teaching the youth of the Country.”

Alexander McRae, Angus McPhee, Joseph Leggett, and Rachel Martin were the recipients of the Legislative “liberality” that year. Each teacher was more than 60 years of age and had been teaching for at least three or more decades. Joseph Leggett, Rachel Martin’s brother-in-law, was the only one of the group not known to have previously complained in a petition about his failing health. In 1852, Alexander McRae indicated that he had stopped teaching that year because “advanced years and old age incapacitated him”. He was so impaired that he was “unable to leave home in order to prosecute his calling.” That having been said, McRae claimed that he would still be willing to teach if he could find a position. Angus McPhee, who taught in seven different counties over the course of his 30 year career, had suffered poor health for a number of years prior to receiving the annuity in 1854-1855. That year when he petitioned the Legislature, McPhee complained that “in the month of October 1852…he was taken ill with Fits, to which he has ever since been subject, and thereby rendered incapable of following the only occupation upon which he was depending for subsistence.” The petition Rachel Martin submitted to the Legislature in 1854-1855 has not survived, but she had a long history of petitioning for pecuniary aid on account of her advanced age and encroaching infirmity. Martin had a strong conviction that the aged were entitled to retirement, that it

24 Journal of the Legislative Assembly, 1854-1855, RS 24, PANB.
25 Alexander McRae, Teachers’ Petitions, 1852, RS 655, PANB.
26 Angus McPhee, Teachers’ Petitions, 1853, RS 655, PANB.
27 Angus McPhee, Petition to the Legislature, 1854-1855, RS 24, PANB.
was a stage of life that “required rest”, and she actively petitioned for a pension for more than two decades.

Rachel Martin, as noted in Chapter 5, had begun teaching in 1807, at what she described as an “unusual early, period of life”. Martin generally shied away from identifying her actual age, but in one of her petitions from 1834, she indicated that she was over 45.²⁸ Accepting that as her age at the time, Martin would have been 18 years old when she started teaching. Where she taught before 1820 is not known, but in that year she taught at the Norton Madras School located in Kings County.²⁹ The following year she kept school in Hampton, and after that 12-month engagement ended, she moved to Fredericton in 1822 where she began teaching at the Female Madras School.³⁰ Martin was praised by the Madras Board for conducting “the school with great perseverance”, but she resigned her position in 1825 because of a reduction in her salary.³¹ Martin had been astute and strategic enough to petition the Legislature for the provincial school allowance while she taught at the Madras school. She had become licensed the year before she accepted the post in Fredericton,³² and her decision to become licensed might have been motivated by the opportunity to tap into an auxiliary funding source. In the three petitions she submitted between 1823 and 1825, Martin sought additional remuneration, given the size of her schools. She taught upwards of 30 to 50 pupils at the school she kept in Hampton,³³ and as many as 176 female scholars at the Fredericton Madras School.³⁴ Later in her career, Martin would offer the large number of pupils she

²⁸ Rachel Martin, Petition, 1834, Public Record Office: Colonial Office, MC 416, PANB.
²⁹ Minute Books of the Madras Board Meetings, Madras School Collection, 1820, MC 374, PANB.
³⁰ Rachel Martin, Petition to the Legislature, 1823, RS 24, PANB.
³¹ Minute Books of the Madras Board Meetings, Madras School Collection, 1824, 1825, MC 374, PANB.
³² Rachel Martin, Regular Licences, 1816-1842, RS 115, PANB. Martin was licensed on 7 February 1821.
³³ Rachel Martin, Petition to the Legislature, 1823, RS 24, PANB.
³⁴ Rachel Martin, Petition to the Legislature, 1824, RS 24, PANB.
had taught as proof of her value as a teacher, a public servant worthy of compensation. In her 1842 petition, she indicated that she had taught as many as 4,000 individuals during the course of her career.\textsuperscript{35} By 1851, she noted that the number was nearing 5,000.\textsuperscript{36}

Between 1825 and 1834, Martin kept school in Saint John. She would suffer tremendous personal losses in that period with the death of her mother in 1829 and of her father in 1832.\textsuperscript{37} Her life was forever changed with the death of her father; she had lost not only her remaining parent, but also her sense of security. She was now an orphan, and she abruptly became incredibly conscious of her both her age and her own mortality. The fear of her own impending demise became a regular theme in her petitions and ran as a common thread throughout most of her future appeals. In 1833, she petitioned the Legislature seeking aid in compensation for 26 years of “faithful services” as an instructress, but her claim was denied.\textsuperscript{38} Perhaps the rejection that year, coupled with her orphaned status, made her more determined to provide for her own uncertain future.

From that point forward, Martin was intent on securing a pension for herself, and she decided to take her case to a higher authority. Not content to post her petitions from New Brunswick, she travelled to England to petition the Colonial Office in person.

How the “destitute, orphan Daughter”\textsuperscript{39} managed to finance the transatlantic voyage is a mystery indeed, but she arrived in London in July 1834.\textsuperscript{40} There Martin

\textsuperscript{35} Rachel Martin, Petition to the Legislature, 1842, RS 24, PANB. Martin repeated this figure in her 1844 petition to the Legislature.
\textsuperscript{36} Rachel Martin, Petition to the Legislature, 1851, RS 24, PANB.
\textsuperscript{37} Rachel Martin, Petition to the Colonial Office, 13 December 1834, Public Record Office: Colonial Office, MC 416, PANB.
\textsuperscript{38} Journals of the Legislative Assembly, 1833, RS 24, PANB.
\textsuperscript{39} Rachel Martin, Petition to the Colonial Office, 5 August 1834, Public Record Office: Colonial Office, MC 416, PANB.
\textsuperscript{40} Rachel Martin, Petition to the Colonial Office, 11 October 1834, Public Record Office, Colonial Office, MC 416, PANB.
submitted four petitions over the course of five months, seeking a pension on the basis of her father’s undeniable loyalty to “His Brittanic Majesty” during the American Revolution. Her father, the late Reverend Dr. John Martin, served as a surgeon with the North Carolina Volunteers in the Royal Navy. The privations he suffered during that conflict, including imprisonment in Connecticut and loss of property, warranted compensation, however belatedly. The consequences of this “cause of Loyalty” had left John Martin permanently indigent, after he moved to Nova Scotia at the conclusion of the conflict. Rachel Martin argued that, as his daughter, she deserved aid and assistance because of his service to the Crown. Whether Martin was successful in her claim is not known, but she remained in London for the next four years. It is significant to note that it was in these petitions to the Colonial Office that Rachel Martin first revealed her declining physical condition.41

Returning to New Brunswick in 1838, Martin resumed teaching and, the following year, began petitioning the Legislature with renewed vigour. Convinced that her “loss of health” would soon deprive her of all means of maintaining her livelihood, she requested assistance. Although her request was honoured by the Legislature, it was rejected by the Council. In 1840 Martin begged the House to reconsider, which it did, in her favour. In 1841, the twentieth anniversary of her having become licensed, Martin pleaded that “the duty required of Teachers in County Schools to obtain the provincial allowance is too hard for your humble Petitioner being out of health, and unable to endure the fatigue of superintending a large school.” Her request was complied with, but she returned the

41 Rachel Martin, Petition to the Colonial Office, 22 September 1834, Public Record Office: Colonial Office, MC 416, PANB.
following year insisting that she required more aid given her age and increasing infirmity.

She implored:

That your Petitioner’s constitution is so much impaired from the constant application to the laborious Profession of Teaching, that it is with much difficulty that your Petitioner can now, conduct a school, especially through the severe season of winter, which affords but a small mean of support from the irregular attendance of pupils, occasioned by sickness in families, and failures in business.

Your Petitioner most respectfully begs further, to state to your Honorable House, that it is most probable, that your Petitioner will be unable, in a short time, to support herself by Teaching, or by any other business, that may require much exertion, either of body or mind.

That two alarming attacks, of Illness since the commencement of winter, have threatened to deprive your unfortunate Petitioner of the Power of writing or of attending to the other duties of Tuition…

Your Petitioner, has now arrived to that Period of life that requires rest - and is emboldened by the approbation of Heaven, and a good Conscience, to send up the request, contained in this Prayer, first to the eternal Throne of grace and mercy, and then to the consideration of your Honorable House most humbly praying, that your Honorable House will make some provision for the present necessities of your humble Petitioner and for those of approaching age and infirmity; either by an annual Grant sufficient to secure your humble Petitioner from want, during the remainder of a Life nearly spent, or by some other form, if consistent with the wisdom of your Honorable House.

Martin’s 1842 petition is the most important one she ever wrote. Not only did she reveal her personal views about age and retirement, but she included other aged teachers in her quest for a pension. In doing so, Martin recognized that she was not alone, that other teachers were in the same position, and that all were deserving of compassion and compensation for their commitment to teaching. Martin’s request for aid was granted that year, but it did not extend to other teachers and only applied to that year.

Although Martin did not name any particular teachers in her petition, it is reasonable to assume that she was either known by other aged teachers or that they were familiar to her. In 1828, when Eleanor Dunn appealed to the Legislature for remuneration

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42 My emphasis.
43 Rachel Martin, Petition to the Legislature, 1842, RS 24, PANB.
as an aged teacher, she specifically mentioned the “liberality” which the Legislature had shown both Margaret Gill and Rachel Martin. Eleanor Dunn, wife of John Dunn, had taken up teaching soon after their arrival in New Brunswick around 1800. She insisted in her petition that on account of her “advanced age it renders her unable to exert herself in any other employment”. She was not licensed, but she sought a grant equal to the amount of the provincial allowance. Whether Dunn knew Martin and Gill personally or by reputation is unknown, and their proximity to each other was not close given that all three taught in different counties. Dunn resided in Westmorland County, whereas Gill lived in York County and Martin in Saint John. The fact that Dunn mentioned these other schoolmistresses in her petition suggests that the informal network among teachers stretched at least as far back as the 1820s.

Granted support for only one year, Rachel Martin reluctantly returned to teaching in 1843, even as she again took up her pen to draft another petition. In spite of her “declining health” from the “Toil of Tuition”, she reported that she had also commenced an Evening School for those young scholars who could not attend her school during the day. She undoubtedly undertook the additional duties to secure a larger income, but at great cost to her health. In 1844, she contended that she was “much impaired, by reason of mental exertions, and bodily fatigue during so many years, of close application to the

44 Eleanor Dunn, Petition to the Legislature, 1828, RS 24, PANB. Eleanor Dunn only identified Margaret Gill by her last name, but supplied Rachel Martin’s full name. Margaret Gill petitioned the Legislature in 1825 seeking remuneration for teaching a large school at St. Mary’s, York County. Rachel Martin had also applied to the Legislature for assistance in 1825. Dunn must have been aware of both these applications from 1825, using them as inspiration for her own.
45 Margaret Gill, Petition to the Legislature, 1825, RS 24, PANB. Rachel Martin, Petition to the Legislature, 1832, RS 24, PANB. Martin apparently left Fredericton after she quit the Madras School in 1825. Although her 1832 petition is missing, she had been teaching in Saint John for some time. See Journal of the Legislative Assembly, 1832, RS 24, PANB.
46 Rachel Martin, Petition to the Legislature, 1843, RS 24, PANB.
laborious duties of instruction.” 47 Four years later, she expressed fears about how she would survive on half the regular salary, since she was “no longer able to fulfill the arduous duties of a teacher thro’ the winter season”. Given the poor state of her health, Martin did not expect that she had long to live, and, as a result, she promised the Legislature that she would not require support for much longer. 48 When her hopes for an annual grant were not realized, she petitioned again in 1849, insisting that her life was “drawing to a close”. 49 Four petitions and nearly a decade later, Martin mentioned with resignation her “troubled…worn Soul” after so many years of devotion to the profession. 50 In 1860, she claimed that she was “too far advanced in years and too much out of health, to procure a living from her former occupation.” She requested that she be awarded £20, and asked the Legislature to “take into consideration Petitioner’s usual sum of Twenty Pounds from Government, as being insufficient, for Petitioner’s comfortable support”. 51 This “usual sum” to which Martin referred was that which had been awarded to her and three other teachers in 1854-1855 under the influence of William End.

In light of her insurmountable infirmities and with a £20 annuity in hand, Martin quit teaching in 1854, but just two years later she found that the meager amount she had been awarded was insufficient to “procure Petitioner a comfortable living”. In her 1854 petition, which has not survived, Martin included the signatures of 156 “respectable Inhabitants of Fredericton” in support of her application. 52 According to William End, Martin definitely had more access to support than John S.P. Gibb, who, alone, bed-

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47 Rachel Martin, Petition to the Legislature, 1844, RS 24, PANB.
48 Rachel Martin, Petition to the Legislature, 1848, RS 24, PANB.
49 Rachel Martin, Petition to the Legislature, 1849, RS 24, PANB.
50 Rachel Martin, Petition to the Legislature, 1858, RS 24, PANB.
51 Rachel Martin, Teachers’ Petitions, 1860, RS 655, PANB.
52 Rachel Martin, Petition to the Legislature, 1856, RS 24, PANB.
ridden, and crippled, clearly did not live on the “Sunny Side of the Province”. Because Gibb, as well as many other aged teachers, had few options open to them, it is no wonder that so many of them appealed to the “liberality” of the Legislature. This was a decidedly more appealing prospect than falling upon the mercy of the Almshouse.

By mid-century, three almshouses were in operation in New Brunswick, located at St. Andrews, Fredericton, and Saint John. Such institutional care would come to replace the practice of boarding the destitute in private homes, which had been managed at the parish level by the Overseers of the Poor. Care for the aged and infirm would not be offered until late in the 19th century, first with the establishment of the Home for Aged Females in Saint John in 1871, and later with the opening of the Mater Misericordiae Home for aged men and women in the same city in 1888.53 Those forced by circumstances to enter an almshouse were unfortunate indeed. The Saint John Almshouse was often filled to capacity, and, in desperate times, became dangerously overcrowded. The health of all Almshouse residents was compromised by poor ventilation, indiscriminate intermingling of sick and sound, and generally unhygienic conditions, as well as overcrowding. Residents were not only expected to work for the upkeep of the institution, but had to observe strict rules and maintain orderly conduct or risk being turned out. Residents performed chores, cultivated the garden, and tended the livestock. They were to refrain from wasting food, stealing from other inmates, using foul language, and intemperance.54 Even though the typical aged teacher was a destitute teacher, only one schoolmaster from the 1842 workforce was known to take up residence in the

Almshouse. The schoolmaster in question reportedly conducted the elementary school when it was first established at the Almshouse two decades before becoming a recurring resident of the institution himself. That teacher was Patrick Bennett.\textsuperscript{55}

An Irish immigrant, Patrick Bennett had settled in St. Andrews, Charlotte County, by 1831. At that time he was teaching shorthand,\textsuperscript{56} which is not surprising given his background as a reporter in Ireland.\textsuperscript{57} Between 1836 and 1850, Bennett combined a career in journalism\textsuperscript{58} with a career in teaching, but it would be the latter vocation with which he more strongly identified. Licensed as a parish school teacher in 1839\textsuperscript{59} when he was about 40 years of age, Bennett would continue to teach, perhaps episodically, until the late 1870s.\textsuperscript{60} He moved to the United States for a few years around mid-century, reportedly joining the staff of a daily newspaper, but later returned to New Brunswick and resumed his duties as a teacher.\textsuperscript{61}

Bennett had earned a reputation as a gifted teacher, having taught in Charlotte, Kings, and finally Saint John Counties. When he applied for renewal of his licence in 1842, he received the usual praise in relation to his character. The Trustees for Norton, Kings County, testified that he was “very useful in his present situation”. The Catholic clergyman stated that he was a “fit person” to teach school. While Bennett used the priest’s character reference, he noted that he had renounced his Catholicism and

\textsuperscript{56} Macdougall, 21.
\textsuperscript{57} The \textit{St. Andrews Standard}, 23 November 1870, Wednesday, p. 2.
\textsuperscript{59} Patrick Bennett, Regular Licences, 1816-1842, RS 115, PANB. Bennet was licensed on 7 May 1839.
\textsuperscript{60} Patrick Bennett, Petition to the Executive Council, 1878, RS 9, PANB. Bennett indicated in his petition dated 16 October 1878, that he was “two months over Eighty years of age”.
\textsuperscript{61} The \textit{St. Andrews Standard}, 23 November 1870, Wednesday, p. 2.
converted to Protestantism. Later in life, Bennett would revert to Catholicism. His religious duality was but one expression of his complex personality. Though Bennett could be caustic, exacting, and exasperating, he won the admiration of many, including those who stood in judgement of him.

By the mid-1850s, Patrick Bennett had become quite familiar with the local constabulary, on account of his weakness for alcohol. Although he was repeatedly arrested for drunkenness between 1856 and 1866, the Police Magistrate showed remarkable leniency, regularly paying, reducing, or even cancelling Bennett’s fine. This generosity reflected the Magistrate’s affection for the fallen man, whose reputation as a skilled teacher persisted despite his bouts of intemperance. For his part, during his appearances before the Magistrate, Bennett regularly invoked his role as teacher. In 1859, he eloquently pleaded his case: “I have contributed not a little to the good of the Country, enlightening the public mind and stimulating the energy of the people. Still I am a most industrious and attentive teacher, unless when on rare occasions I yield to temptation, and then my money soon leaves me.” Bennett avoided a fine during that particular hearing, by earnestly stating that “to impose a penalty on me now while I am unable to pay, will be to ruin me completely. I am sure you have no wish to injure me; but if I am now detained, and so lose my employment on the approach of winter, I will be completely ruined.” Incarceration would certainly have deprived him of a winter contract in a school. While teaching and intemperance were not incompatible at this time, as there were many

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62 Patrick Bennett, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
cases of school officials forgiving the vice, a protracted jail term would undoubtedly have ended any teacher’s career.

So frequently reduced to destitution from his fondness for the drink, it was perhaps inevitable that Bennett would end up at the Almshouse rather than with an annuity from the government. First admitted in January 1865, Bennett returned to the Saint John Almshouse 22 times between 1865 and 1882.\(^{65}\) And although he had, in the early years, taught in the institution,\(^{66}\) his description of his experience when he found himself an inmate no doubt reflected the views of other near destitute aging teachers who feared falling victim to the same fate.

The Poor House is to me more intolerable than the precincts of oblivion in a world whose geography or climate has never been taught in our schools. Solitary confinement I could bear with fortitude…but to be constrained to eat at the same table with rogues and vagabonds, the greater part of whom have spent large portions of their lives in the penitentiary, constitutes a condition of life or a phase of existence into which adversity has driven me to sicken the heart with her most tormenting blows.\(^{67}\)

Of course, the perception of almshouse inmates likely had little more substance than the popular perception of teachers.

Having grown “weary of this place”,\(^{68}\) by the late 1870s, Patrick Bennett devised a plan to secure a pension by petitioning as an aged teacher. His 1878 petition was written as if guided by the hand of Rachel Martin herself.

Many of the ladies now teaching in this province have passed through the petitioner’s hands on their way to the Training School, when that institution was under the control of Mr. Mills. As the general debility of petitioner’s constitution has greatly damaged his powers of vision, he is no longer able to discharge the

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\(^{65}\) Saint John Almshouse Records, 1865-1882, MC 249, PANB.

\(^{66}\) Macdougal, 21; Whalen, “The Nineteenth-Century Almshouse System,” 13. Whalen did not name the licensed teacher who kept school during the early 1840s, and while Bennett has been given credit for it, he did not keep the position for too long. In 1846, John McCurt, who had become licensed in 1834, taught at the Almshouse until late 1847. See: John McCurt, Teachers’ Petitions, 1847, RS 655, PANB.

\(^{67}\) Patrick Bennett, Petition to the Executive Council, 1878, RS 9, PANB.

\(^{68}\) *The Daily Telegraph*, 18 November 1870, Friday, “A Lament from the Alms House”, p. 3.
duties of a public instructor in a satisfactory manner. He feels it a humiliating and unpleasant pressure of destiny to be compelled to appeal to your honorable house for sympathy, but the dim eye, the shaking hand and faltering step of eighty years pilgrimage, are circumstances from whose despotic influence there is no door of escape save in the direction of the grave. Petitioner’s school room has always been to him a scene of happiness and he feels the necessity of retiring from it a great diminution of social enjoyment… Food and raiment for a very few years are all that a person of my advanced years can expect, and having wasted body and mind among the rocks and stumps of this educational field, petitioner hopes that your honorable House will make some such a provision for feeble years, verging on the precincts of eternity, as the dictates of an enlightened humanity will suggest, and petitioner as in duty bound will ever pray.\textsuperscript{69}

When he wrote this petition, Bennett had been engaged as a licensed teacher for nearly 40 years, with the exception of his years spent in the United States. Nearing his 80\textsuperscript{th} year, his constitution was failing him, and while he did not blame his frailty on his exertion in the arduous office of teaching, he felt entitled to a pension in recognition of his long years of service.

When his first attempt at securing a pension proved unsuccessful, Bennett made another application, this one addressed to the Executive Council. Bennett was encouraged by unidentified officials to submit this second plea, and he promptly complied especially since he had suspicions that his petition had either not been discussed or possibly not even read. Bennett directed his plea to “the Honorable Mr. William Wedderburn”,\textsuperscript{70} presuming that said gentleman’s influence could no doubt “induce the Legislature to grant a moderate superannuating allowance for a worn out constitution suffering privation in the lonely wilderness of long life.”\textsuperscript{71} Bennett was not successful in either of his bids for a pension, and he would return to the Almshouse on four more occasions.

\textsuperscript{69} The Saint John Herald, 30 March 1878, “A Schoolmaster Pleads for Support in His Old Age”, p. 2.
\textsuperscript{70} William Wedderburn held a seat in the Legislature from 1875-1878.
\textsuperscript{71} Patrick Bennett, Petition to the Executive Council, 1878, RS 9, PANB.
before dying in that institution on 14 October 1882.72 Spared one final indignity, he was buried not in the Almshouse cemetery, but in a Catholic cemetery, and, by the benevolence of one of his friends, a handsome marble tombstone was erected to mark his final resting place.73

New Brunswick teachers grew old in the profession, and the aged teacher actually comprised a larger proportion of the workforce in 1851 than had been the case in 1842. Clearly older teachers were committed to the profession, and they had chosen to make teaching a career despite the low remuneration and poor working conditions. Aged teachers were not passive in their old age, and many of them petitioned for additional remuneration and even superannuation on the basis of their age and long experience in the arduous office of teaching. That the pension lobby found even limited success during the mid-1850s is startling given the negative attitude toward the aged teacher, and the preference to unseat them from the profession. Aged teachers were imagined to be defective and inept, and their efficiency in the classroom highly suspect. There was no denying that the usual teaching duties became all the more labourious and daunting as teachers grew older and had less capacity, and aged teachers even suggested that their close communion with the profession prematurely aged them and irrevocably impaired their health. Those who lodged such complaints generally kept teaching school until they were no longer physically able to do so. Their longevity reflects not only a commitment to the profession, but also the realities of 19th-century society. The limited availability of social safety nets kept teachers in the classroom actively earning their meager living. To fall upon the mercy of the Almshouse was evidently not even considered by the vast

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72 The Daily Telegraph, 16 October 1882, Monday, p. 3.
73 The Daily Sun, 7 February 1883, Wednesday, p. 3.
majority of teachers who, no doubt, shared Patrick Bennett’s views of that institution. Debilitating working conditions were clearly preferable to the demoralizing effect of the almshouse. Teachers understood the pitfalls of the profession and could have switched occupations if that had been their choice. John Baird insisted in 1842 that his dedication to teaching had “prevented himself of embracing many other situations that offered a more permanent as well as Lucrative nature”. Teachers generally remained in the profession not because they had no other options, but because it was the only option they wished to pursue.

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74 John Baird, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
Conclusion
“Sustaining the important office of a teacher of youth”¹

That in June 1830, Your Petitioner, then an Emigrant from the City of Armagh, was on his own application and through the recommendations of the Rev. Dr. Gray, and the Rev. F. Coster, licenced to teach in this province in which profession he has ever since continued and served in various districts of the parishes Lancaster, Hampton, Portland, and Simonds, in Kings and Saint John Counties.

That during the above period he has never been reprimanded by any of the trustees of schools for the above parishes nor has there ever been any charge of misconduct preferred against him by any of the Subscribers to the schools in which he laboured.

That your petitioner in the year ending 1842 taught in the Frogpond district of the Parish of Simonds and returned his licence to the Secretary’s Office through Mr. Creighton the acting Trustee and still continuing to teach in the same school; That he sends herewith a certificate of character from Rev. Doctor Gray of the Episcopal Church to which communion Petitioner belongs one from the Trustees of schools for his parish and one from the people among whom he teaches, and there for most humbly hopes for a renewal of his licence. He begs leave to your Excellency that the People among whom he is placed are all Irish Emigrants most of them on leased farms and with one or two exceptions all poor; and that his Salary which is only Twenty Pounds per annum is considerably reduced by his having to take a principal part of it in Store trade. On this he has a wife and three children to support and being upwards of fifty years of age and having spent twelve years of the best part of his life in endeavouring to benefit the youth of this province he humbly prays that Your Excellency will not allow Petitioner’s little family be plunged into want and misery which must be the event if the Provincial allowance is withdrawn and his licence is not renewed.

And your petitioner and his family will ever pray.²

Adam Dobbin was the typical pre-credential schoolmaster; he was a mature Irish immigrant who had a family to support by the underpaid office of teaching. Dobbin had deliberately and exclusively chosen a career in teaching, and this commitment was expressed not only in his words but in his deeds. Dobbin was considered a fit teacher, and

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¹ Peter McSweeney, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB. The quote was excerpted from one of McSweeney’s certificates.
² Adam Dobbin, Teachers’ Petitions, 1843, RS 655, PANB.
when his school was examined in 1844, James Brown observed that he taught his pupils with “a good deal of care and success.” Brown further concluded that Dobbin’s school was in a “prosperous state.” Although Inspector Brown did not recommend him for a course in the art of instruction, Dobbin enrolled in the Saint John Training School of his own volition in 1849. After receiving a second class certificate, he continued to teach in Simonds Parish, Saint John County. How long Dobbin remained in teaching is unclear, as he disappeared from all education records after 1852. At that point he had been teaching school in New Brunswick for two decades. Although an examination of the individual inspection reports for the 489 teachers inspected in 1844 demonstrates that Adam Dobbin was by no means exceptional, his experience stands in stark contrast to many commonly held contemporary and lingering assumptions about early 19th-century teachers.

Among 19th-century American commentators, the general consensus maintained that teachers were an “odd eccentric lot”.\(^3\) In New Brunswick, teachers – particularly aging teachers – were often described in similar terms. John S.P. Gibb, the wretched, elderly teacher who caught William End’s attention, was described as “somewhat eccentric” when his school was examined in 1844.\(^4\) Inspector John Gregory observed that William Caulfield’s pupils were “acquiring his distinct manner”,\(^5\) but did not indicate what that meant. James Mulholland read to his students with a “strange intonation”. Charles William Henry Macdonnell, at the age of 67, was described by Inspector James Brown as “an energetic old gentleman with something very extraordinary in his manner.

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\(^4\) John S.P. Gibb, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
\(^5\) William Caulfield, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
and conversation.”\(^6\) And in the case of Rachel Martin, the most prolific petitioner of the period, the author of her obituary speculated that her “extreme eccentricity” was exaggerated in her later years as a result of her increasing infirmity.\(^7\)

Prevailing stereotypes further insisted that teachers, no matter what their age were primarily itinerant, indigent, infirm, inept, and intoxicated.\(^8\) Although such negative images emerged from the observation of a very small minority, unfortunately, extremes informed the mainstream, and neither politicians nor the public always saw teachers as they really were. Moreover, while a teacher like Patrick Bennett might appear to confirm public misperceptions, this would be to ignore his commitment to the profession, which did not go unrecognized. Bennett was highly esteemed despite his faults, and was described at the end of his life as a “man of original genius”, and who might “under more favorable auspices, have taken place in any walk of life,”\(^9\) though this last statement may well have reflected a certain disdain for teaching with its oblique suggestion that Bennett could have done better than keep school. Nor, as acknowledged in Chapter 1, was Bennett the only career teacher possessed of this moral “disease of the will”,\(^10\) so deplored in school teachers. Matthew Barrett was absent on the day his school at Lincoln, Sunbury County was to be inspected. When Inspector Sylvester Earle asked around the neighbourhood to find where Barrett might be, he was informed that Barrett was of “dissipated habits” and that he was probably “drinking in Fredericton”. Barrett later sent

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\(^6\) Charles William Henry Macdonnell, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB. In his diary, James Brown described Macdonnell as “eccentric”, but without explanation or elaboration. See: James Brown Diary, 26 July 1844, MC 295, PANB.

\(^7\) Saint John Globe, 29 August 1867, Thursday, p. 2.


\(^9\) The Reporter, 18 October 1882, Wednesday, p.3.

a letter of explanation to Inspector Earle, offering a number of “excuses” for his absence, none of which Earle considered “satisfactory.” Barrett, who had been teaching in New Brunswick since 1835, had earlier been described as a “polished scholar” and a man of “undeniable character and sober habits.”11 His intemperance was, apparently, not a significant detriment to his career, as he continued to teach until at least 1852, and graduated from the Fredericton Normal School in 1849 with a first class licence. Teachers were definitely flawed, and a few like Bennett and Barrett harboured undesirable vices. Perhaps because the eccentric and dissipated teachers were more colourful characters, they tended to capture not only the attention of contemporary observers but also the imagination of popular writers of the day. Overshadowed and obscured, the more typical career teacher became virtually invisible against depictions of teachers on the stage12 or in fiction.13

Ichabod Crane awkwardly stumbled into popular culture in 1820 and in creating such a character Washington Irving set the standard for regarding teachers as objects of “ridicule and contempt.”14 Mozelle Duncan, in her study of teachers in 19th-century American fiction, argued that their minor role in fiction mirrored their place in society. Only 10 percent of 19th-century novels and short stories included teachers as characters, and it was very rare for a teacher to be central to the plot or to be a main character. Duncan isolated four types of teacher conceived in the literary imagination. They were: the ambitious teacher, the poor orphan girl teacher, the backwoods teacher, and finally

11 Matthew Barrett, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB; Matthew Barrett, Teachers’ Petitions, 1842, RS 655, PANB.
12 Elsbree, 295.
13 Duncan, 18.
14 Duncan, 20.
the professional teacher. All four archetypes were nearly equally represented in fiction, but the professional teacher had a slightly poorer showing than the other three categories. In most cases, teachers were portrayed as physically unattractive and personally unhappy.\textsuperscript{15}

Because the ambitious teacher aspired to a different occupation or position, he or she did not remain in the occupation long, nor did he enjoy the office. The “ambitious male teacher” usually had his eye on a career in law, medicine, or the ministry, and used teaching as a stepping-stone en route to a more lucrative permanent occupation. For “ambitious women teachers”, teaching bridged the gap between the end of schooling and marriage. But both men and women remained in teaching only until they reached another, more preferred, goal.\textsuperscript{16} Few New Brunswick schoolmasters were known to undertake any other occupation than farming, with 43, or 7.9 percent, of the pre-credential male teachers recorded as farmers in the 1851 census. A further two percent were pursuing other occupations by mid-century, among them former career teacher Thomas Finn, who had become a merchant.\textsuperscript{17} Of the teachers examined for this study, John G. Lorimer might best fit the ambitious male category given that he moved from teaching into publishing. Yet he taught school for 13 years, and even went so far as to enroll in the Normal School in 1848. He withdrew from the training institution and received no credit for his time there. Moreover, although Lorimer considered teaching his “vocation”, he clearly harboured notions about a career in the newspaper business. He had conceived of \textit{The

\textsuperscript{15} Duncan, iv, 8.  
\textsuperscript{16} Duncan, 41, 64.  
\textsuperscript{17} New Brunswick Manuscript Census, 1851. Thomas Finn had become licensed in 1828, and remained in teaching until 1845. See: Regular Licences, 1816-1841, RS 115, and Payment Schedules, 1845, RS 114, PANB.
Young Aspirant, a children’s magazine, as early as 1842, never relinquishing the dream. The Young Aspirant went into print in 1846, and though the publication did not last long, Lorimer had, by the early 1850s, become a full-time newspaper publisher. He would establish seven newspapers intended for an adult audience between 1849 and 1884. Lorimer eventually surrendered his role as teacher in favour of editing and publishing newspapers, but, at least for a time, he followed two careers.

Most women who took up teaching in New Brunswick during the pre-credential period were unmarried, and generally remained single throughout the term of their careers. Yet marriage and teaching were not always incompatible. Margaret Connor continued to teach after she married fellow teacher Edward Jagoe. Together they attended the Training School in 1849. The majority of women who married fit the ambitious female teacher category in deciding not to combine work and family. Frances Jemima Earls, who began teaching in 1835, left teaching shortly before getting married in 1849. She married Charles Morehouse and by 1851, was the mother of a one-year-old child. Although she abandoned teaching for wedlock, much as fictional schoolmistresses did, she had a career of at least 10 years before embracing her roles as wife and mother.

The “poor orphan girl” teacher was forced to take up teaching to support herself and members of her family. Usually the daughter of a minister, upon his death, she was duty bound to take on the arduous and thankless task of teaching. She was typically “afflicted with poor health, poor spirits, poor looks.”

The remote possibility of marriage or her own demise were the only means of escape from this enforced servitude. Rachel Martin is the best fit for this category of teacher. Although Martin entered the profession

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18 Duncan, 66.
long before becoming orphaned, the loss of her father shook her sense of security. She identified herself as an orphan and her fears about the future became especially acute after this disruption in her life. Martin did not have to support any of her siblings with her meager earnings. One of Martin’s sisters, Mary M. Leggett, also became a teacher, and although she taught school with her husband, Joseph Regan Leggett, their combined incomes also brought them to the brink of destitution. The poor orphan girl of fiction might have had grim prospects, but the same teacher in reality had more options for self-sufficiency. Although Martin was always on the verge of insolvency, she actively campaigned on her own behalf, and even managed to retire from a career in teaching, thanks to the “liberality” of the Legislature.

The “backwoods teacher” kept school either on the frontier or in a remote rural community, and his experience was the one most commonly depicted in 19th-century fiction. This mature teacher reluctantly kept school, and his dissatisfaction with the post was made all the more galling because debt and poverty precluded him from quitting. This “unhappy” teacher did not attend closely to his duties, was often too severe in his punishment of pupils, and generally only made an effort for the benefit of the inspector.19 The inhabitants of Howard Settlement, Parish of Dumfries in York County were most appreciative of George Taylor Latham’s services as a teacher, but given their own poverty could only afford to pay him in farm produce or by performing labour on his son’s farm. Latham can be considered a backwoods teacher, but perhaps without the resentment attributed to his literary equivalent. Latham began teaching sporadically in 1842, and although his background was in the Army, by 1844, he was clearly invested in

19 Duncan, 89-91.
the occupation and sought licence at that time,\textsuperscript{20} which was granted by 1845.\textsuperscript{21} Having a large family to support, Latham could, indeed, put the provincial allowance to good use. His additional duties teaching a Sunday school kept him from being with his “motherless children” on the Sabbath. Latham was not a widower, but, as he indicated in his 1844 petition for licence, his wife was “an inmate in the lunatic asylum”. Although Latham would not be remembered as a skilled or gifted teacher, he was reliable and dedicated. When his school was inspected, John Gregory noted that Latham’s pupils had made “but little progress” under his tuition, but without this school, the community would have been “wholly destitute of instruction.”\textsuperscript{22} This backwoods New Brunswick teacher remained in the profession for at least a decade,\textsuperscript{23} but when he died in 1855, he was remembered for being a Captain in the Army rather than for his career as a teacher.\textsuperscript{24}

The “professional teacher” of literary imagination not only aspired to teaching, but even spent time in the Normal School seeking additional training and credentials. This type of teacher employed progressive methods in his or her classroom, recognized the importance of teaching, and intended to make it a career.\textsuperscript{25} While this teaching trope was the least common in 19\textsuperscript{th}-century fiction, life in New Brunswick, at least, did not imitate art. The “professional teacher” was most common in the pre-credential period. Despite the odds and despite sometimes being considered odd, most teachers aspired to careers in the profession. The 1842 New Brunswick teaching workforce was largely

\textsuperscript{20} George Taylor Latham, Teachers’ Petitions, 1844, RS 655, PANB.
\textsuperscript{21} George Taylor Latham, Payment Schedules, 1845, RS 114, PANB.
\textsuperscript{22} George Latham Taylor, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
\textsuperscript{23} 1851 New Brunswick Manuscript Census; George Taylor Latham, Payment Schedules, 1852, RS 114, PANB.
\textsuperscript{24} The Carleton Sentinel, 27 October 1855, “Deaths”, p.6.
\textsuperscript{25} Duncan, 111.
staffed by such career teachers, with 61.6 percent, or 423 of 686 teachers, keeping school for 10 years or more.

The ordinary career teacher who lived an unremarkable life remained largely invisible to reformers, politicians, and the general public alike. Most careers in teaching were unmarked by strife or controversy. The career of Irish-born John McGarrigle is one such example. McGarrigle began teaching at Pennfield, Charlotte County, in 1841 when he was 23. He quickly earned the respect and esteem of the local inhabitants. Describing his highly satisfactory working relationship, McGarrigle noted that he and “his employers latterly became mutually attached to each other; in consequence of which petitioner determined to remain where he was”. However, the community was poor and McGarrigle already knew from experience that the inhabitants could not pay him a living wage. It was perhaps for this reason that he moved to St. Andrews a few years later. By mid-century, he was married with a small family and still living in the shiretown. He had attended the Normal School the year it opened and was awarded a first class certificate. McGarrigle efficiently kept school for more than a decade, but his otherwise uneventful career went unnoticed.

George Stewart, whose family had emigrated from Ireland in 1830, began teaching in 1835 at the age of 20. He received the usual recommendations regarding his moral character and conduct, and taught for more than two decades in Sunbury County. He was praised by Inspector Earle for incorporating oral instruction in his classroom. His

26 John McGarrigle, Teachers’ Petitions, 1843, RS 655, PANB.
27 1851 New Brunswick Manuscript Census.
28 John McGarrigle, Training School Certificates, 1848, RS 115, PANB.
29 George Stewart, Teachers’ Petitions, 1835, RS 655; School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB; 1851 New Brunswick Manuscript Census.
only method of punishment was to detain his pupils after school. Although his teaching methodology was not found wanting during the 1844 inspection, Stewart entered the Training School in 1849 and emerged with a first class certificate.\textsuperscript{30} He later moved to Fredericton, York County where he spent the remainder of his career. When Stewart died in 1882, there was tremendous regret in the passing of this “old and useful man”, who was “much admired by all who knew him as a man devoted to goodness and right doing.” The bachelor teacher was survived by a brother and a sister, who lived in nearby Sunbury County. After more than 40 years of keeping school, Stewart had given up teaching by 1880 on account of his failing health. During that long career, Stewart petitioned only when required to do so, in applying for licence, transfer, and renewal, and in none of those petitions did he mention his life-long infirmity. Described as a “cripple” in his obituary, Stewart had relied on crutches since boyhood,\textsuperscript{31} but his physical challenge had never prevented him from prosecuting his duty as a teacher. Moreover, despite his failing health, he never sought special compensation for his long years of service.

While Stewart’s quiet, steady career unfolded without much notice or recognition, this “old and useful man” had weathered many transitions in pursuit of that career complying without complaint, with the shifting licensing requirements demanded of those who sought to teach in the province between 1816 and 1842. Early in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century, and before the bureaucratization of education, the character reference counted more than qualifications. Teachers were expected to train up youth, and their own moral character would guide and influence the children under their tuition. Moral instruction was a prized part of the process of creating good citizens. Educational reform demanded

\textsuperscript{30} George Stewart, Training School Certificates, RS 115, PANB.
\textsuperscript{31} The Capital, 26 December 1882, Tuesday, “Obituary”, p. 2.
that teachers embrace modern pedagogical methods to improve the delivery of instruction. The personal recommendation alone, promising that the candidate was “fit to teach”, would no longer guarantee a teacher a licence to keep school. With the creation of County Boards of Education in 1837, New Brunswick’s teachers were expected to prove their qualifications and demonstrate the level of their literary attainments. Character remained a vital attribute in any teacher, but the character ideology had shifted slightly to include intellectual as well as moral fortitude. In the collision of the old and new licensing systems, the teachers became collateral damage. The only way to resolve the incompatibility between the old and the new systems and to ensure that all teachers adhered to the same standards was to level the playing field. In 1842, all teaching licenses, whether granted under the old or new system, were cancelled. The renewal process, required of teachers who wished to remain eligible for the provincial allowance, did not go as smoothly as might have been expected. That the Lieutenant Governor or the Provincial Secretary expressed exasperation during the slow renewal process suggests that he and other educational reformers who initiated the process were disconnected from the teaching workforce, and that they did not understand how the system routinely operated. The complex petitioning process which involved inclusion of documentation that could be difficult to compile, was, of necessity, a forgiving one, and teachers had long found it convenient to ignore the rules of procedure rather than risk disruption in routine payments. To them, the 1842 renewal was no different. Teachers had deftly navigated a flawed system, and would continue to do so whether it was old or new.

Efforts to assess and evaluate the education system served to reinforce the current political agenda rather than to reveal the nature and composition of the teaching
workforce. The School Inspection of 1844-1845 assured the public and the government that teachers required training. Inspectors squandered a prime opportunity to truly familiarize themselves with the corps of school teachers then at work shaping young minds. The inspectors were in a position to test or challenge prevailing stereotypes and to properly educate the public, but their final report reflecting their misperceptions rather than their actual findings, confirmed the Legislature’s worst fear: teachers were inept. Clearly such an assessment came as no surprise to anyone who ascribed to the negative image of teachers and teaching. Yet although the inspectors complained that too many teachers adhered to old methods, overall, they recommended that just 68 of the 489 teachers whose performance they assessed should be schooled in the art of instruction, and only two teachers were judged unfit for pedagogical training. If the inspectors had taken the time to review their own returns, they might have been shocked at how competent the workforce was. They also might have realized how many teachers already had well-established careers by that time. Since extremes catch attention, and are often to blame for creating stereotypes, it is surprising that the longevity of a number of teachers went completely unnoticed in the final report. John Smith of Chatham, Northumberland County had been teaching in the same school for 19 years, while James Henderson, of the same place, had kept school continuously for 14 years in one school. Inspector John Gregory judged both Smith and Henderson competent to teach school. But support was needed to guarantee the establishment of a training school, and the Inspection Report revealed precisely what it was intended to find.

Even if inspectors, trustees, politicians, and reformers had been paying proper attention, they likely would not have believed that most teachers were committed and
competent. They were products of their time, and this entire era was not kind to teachers. There was discrimination against teachers in general, and against schoolmistresses in particular. Although women had kept school in New Brunswick from the earliest period, considerable reluctance to fully accept them persisted throughout the pre-credential period. Their inclusion in the School Acts of 1833 and 1837 represented a step forward, even though their numbers were limited by both pieces of legislation. The pre-credential teacher was primarily a schoolmaster, but, emboldened by the Act of 1833, women began to apply for teaching licences in greater numbers. Feminization, though in its infancy, was beginning. Women comprised 21.5 percent of the 1842 workforce, already making great strides over that first decade. Though training women had been a topic of discussion in 1841, their admittance to the Normal School was initially by special arrangement. The licence classification controversies which the first two female attendees encountered suggests a certain level of discrimination against awarding women first class certificates. Rachel Martin was promised a first class licence for her brief stint at the institution, which was never awarded. In Marshall d’Avray’s estimation, Margaret Jagoe had earned a first class certificate, but the Board of Education overruled him, insisting that she be awarded a second class licence instead. Part of this reluctance might have stemmed from the notion that it was incomprehensible for women to be intellectually equal to men. To the school inspectors’ credit, they did not wage a battle of the sexes in their final report, and their individual assessments contained very little overt bias against women, though there were occasional hints of underlying bias. Thus, Inspector John Gregory noted,
perhaps with considerable surprise, that Sarah Good, of Dalhousie, Restigouche County had a fair knowledge of arithmetic “particularly for a female Teacher.”

Although school officials and politicians did not know the teachers, their own public servants, teachers knew each other. The evidence suggests that an informal teaching network had long been in operation in the province. When Eleanor Dunn included reference to two other female teachers in her 1828 petition for assistance, she was acknowledging that she knew these schoolmistresses either by reputation or by personal acquaintance. Dunn was clearly familiar with their earlier appeals to the Legislature for pecuniary aid. The workforce would have been small enough then that teachers could have known each other personally. Teacher mobility could also facilitate the extension of the teaching network. By the 1840s, teachers were tapping into this network to access higher education and training opportunities. The network, then, connected teachers for mutual benefit, filling the same role as the teachers’ associations would late in the 19th century. The formation of such associations is one of the earmarks of a profession, and teachers in the pre-credential period were showing signs of acting in a professional manner. Their participation in this informal network suggests a commitment to teaching that is not generally recognized in this period. The Inspectors knew of such arrangements between teachers, even suggesting that certain unskilled instructors observe better conducted schools to improve their own teaching methods.

The training imperative was intended not only to introduce uniform standards but to weed out old methods, and especially old teachers. The pre-credential teacher was

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32 Sarah Good, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB. Sarah Good, who began teaching in 1839, remained in the profession until at least 1852. See Regular Licences, 1816-1842, RS 115; Payment Schedules, 1852, RS 114, PANB.
older than has been recognized by historians. New Brunswick’s teachers actually aged in the profession, and at least the Inspectors seemed to be somewhat aware of the age profile in 1844, given their comments regarding the elderly. The inspectors did not automatically dismiss the aged teacher as inept or inefficient, and the 63-year-old James Donaldson, who taught at Blackville, Northumberland County, was judged to have “respectable” qualifications. The older teacher was not rendered extinct with the advent of teacher training, and some of these veteran teachers even enrolled at the Normal School. Trained or not, older teachers continued to keep school into advanced ages, but the ravages of time and the arduous duties of the classroom had some crying out for help. The “liberality” of the Legislature only extended so far, and members of the House did not always approve teachers’ petitions for compensation for long service. While most elderly teachers saw their only option as teaching until they were no longer able, not many wanted to do that. However, they were more inclined to keep working than they were to enter institutional care. Only one teacher from the 1842 workforce was known to enter the Almshouse, and his was an extreme case of recurring indigence. Patrick Bennett’s alcoholism precluded him from independent living, and though he detested the Almshouse he returned time and again in a state of destitution.

The odd and eccentric teacher, at least in the case of New Brunswick, was the aged teacher. Whether they came by their eccentricity honestly or as a result of years spent instructing the youth of the province, some aging teachers definitely had colourful personalities. Rachel Martin and Patrick Bennett, two such teachers, had much in

33 James Donaldson, School Inspection Returns, 1844-1845, RS 657, PANB.
common. Both had long careers in the profession, petitioned for pensions, and presented their personal activism in verse.

Although Patrick Bennett inserted a poem in his 1878 petition for a pension, it was in his “Lament from the Alms House” that he explored his role as a teacher. This particular stanza was written in 1870 while Bennett resided at the dreaded Poor House:

A Pedagoge by choice or fate,
Or some rash oath that fortune swore;
I show that little golden gate,
That opens to the fields of lore.
The [soft] retentive mind of youth,
With lofty principle I line;
Connecting tender thoughts with truth,
This noble ill paid task is mine.34

Martin was well-known for her “poetical effusions”, and it was noted in her obituary that her particular style of petitioning would long be remembered in both Houses. Her 1847 petition to the Legislature for an increase in her annual annuity has preserved one of her verses:

The Resurrection of an old dead Poet
May it please the Honbl House
Behold -! Behold! A Resurrection!
The Old Poet comes forth on a new Election
See - from the grave of oblivion arise -
The long sleeping Poet, the world to surprise
To “ask - and receive” to seek - and to find”
To Knock “at the entrance of each noble mind
In faith, that, the House, will open the door
As it has for Twenty six years, before
That the great Key of hearts will unlock the new
with old members, the “good old way” to pursue
May it please your Honours - ‘Tis no harm to pray
In mercy, O grant that the old Bounty may
On this season of change, be truly converted
And twice Twenty pounds, in your Book be inserted

34 The Daily Telegraph, 18 November 1870, Friday, p. 3 “A Lament from the Alms House”.
Let nught, still be nught, but twice two be four
Oh let two, remain - but make it Two score
O! With Forty pounds, on your good journal pages,
And let me not pray - thro’ eternal Ages
Except for your Hon. House, I may
“As in duty bound will ever pray.”

As this poem demonstrates, if Rachel Martin was eccentric, she was also witty and extraordinarily clever.

The 19th-century pre-credential teaching workforce was misunderstood. Far from being the objects of “ridicule and contempt”, teachers were resilient, strategic, and dedicated. Stereotypes distorted the image and perception of teachers, blinding politicians, reformers, and contemporary social critics to the steady, sober habits of the vast majority of members of the province’s corps of committed career teachers. Although teachers lacked formal credentials in this period, they nonetheless acted in a professional manner, seeking counsel, guidance, and instruction from respected and reputable professionals. Teachers were astute and strategic, and diligently pursued their careers by whatever means necessary. If that meant petitioning, moving, or seeking training, then they did so. It is rather unfortunate that reformers and politicians had filtered the image of the teacher through the foggy lens of extremes, because this distortion had reduced the true character of teachers to caricatures.

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