



Title: Victoria; South Park School.

G-04973

## EDUCATION HISTORY RESEARCH GUIDE

### **British Columbia Archives**

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*Preserving and Providing Access to the Recorded Evidence of British Columbia's Past*

## EDUCATION HISTORY RESEARCH GUIDE

This guide is intended to help you locate material relating to the history of education in British Columbia held at the BC Archives, whether you are looking for general information or for specific information about schools, events or people. This material includes government records, private manuscript collections, books, reports, periodicals, newspapers, photographs, sound and video recordings. The guide is not meant to be a general research guide on the subject, although references may be made to records held elsewhere.

### GETTING STARTED

If you have not already done so, you should do some preparatory work by looking at the following. Call numbers have been provided where applicable.

Dunae, Patrick. *The school record: a guide to government archives relating to public education in British Columbia 1852-1946*. Victoria, BC: British Columbia Archives and Records Service, 1992. "a thematic guide to the B.C. Archives ... holdings of *government* records pertaining to public education from 1852(when the first "colonial" school opened in Victoria) to 1946." Includes an historical overview for the period, a chronology, administrative history of various operations (e.g. school inspectors), lists of schools and school districts with dates, and selected non-government records. [NW016.37 B862s]

Giles, Valerie M. E. Giles (comp. and ed.) *Annotated bibliography of education history in British Columbia*. Victoria, BC: Royal British Columbia Museum, 1992. "A Royal British Columbia Museum Technical Report." Includes books, theses and articles dealing with the public and private education from 1849 to 1989. [NW016.37 G472]

Dunae, Patrick (ed.). *The Homeroom: British Columbia's history of education web site*. <http://www.mala.bc.ca/homeroom/>. Includes a thematic bibliography, chronology from 1849 to 1999, and links to various web resources. (**Note:** this site is not accessible at the BC Archives - search it at home or at a library).

*British Columbia Research Orientation Guide*. For a general orientation on how to use the Archives and access its collections. Available in PDF format on the BC Archives web site at [http://www.royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/Content\\_Files/Files/Guides/orientation\\_guide\\_200507.pdf](http://www.royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/Content_Files/Files/Guides/orientation_guide_200507.pdf).

### PUBLISHED SOURCES

The BC Archives has a large collection of published material. It consists of books, pamphlets, journal articles and sometimes theses (which may also be treated as manuscripts – see below). These sources are useful in gaining an understanding of historical developments and overall context, as well as often providing leads to further material.

Search the library catalogue (both cards and online) under subjects, names, authors or titles that you have identified as being of interest to your research. The online library catalogue can be searched by keyword as well. Note that too general a word (e.g. education, schools) can yield a large number of references, many of which will not be relevant for your purposes. It is a good idea to start with the most specific terms and broaden your search if necessary. If you have found relevant citations in an online search look at the subject headings for those references. They may be useful in looking for further material. If you are looking for information about a particular school or area, check for local histories about the area as schools often played an important role in the community.

**IMPORTANT:** Doing a paper for school and have limited time? Look for a book, scholarly article or thesis on your topic and check the bibliography, especially for journal articles and unpublished material.

### **Government publications**

As government played a large role in education, especially public education, there are a number of government publications which are a useful source of information for topics ranging from policy and legislation, to individual schools.

*Curriculum guides.* 1914-1980. [NW971.58 B863] A collection of curriculum guides, examination papers, textbook lists and catalogues, teacher certification and summer school programmes issued by the BC Department of Education. Also includes Vancouver School Board research reports, 1971-1980. Use the Inventory [NW971.58 B863 no. 0] to identify the individual items to be located. Curriculum guides to 1949 are available on self-serve microfilm [D30].

*Public schools report.* 1871/72-1977/78. Although a separate Department of Education was not created until 1922, a Superintendent of Education was appointed under the Public School Act of 1872. These reports, especially the earlier ones (1871/72 to 1949/50) are a rich source of information about schools, curriculum, activities, etc. [Microfilm D31]. Also available in the *BC Sessional Papers* [Microfilm D25].

*Public schools of the province of British Columbia: special historical supplement to the one hundredth annual report, 1970-71.* Victoria: Queen's Printer, 1972. A useful overview but contains some inaccuracies. [NW971.58 B862p 1970/71]

*A century of education in British Columbia: statistical perspectives 1871-1971.* Ottawa: Information Canada, 1971. Introduction includes historical overview. [NW370.9711 C212c]

*Statutes of British Columbia.* 1871-. [NW348.711 B862]. Use the *Index to the Journals of the Legislative Assembly* [NW328.71 F791] to locate specific acts between 1872 and 1971.

*Manual of the school law and school regulations of the province of British Columbia.* Victoria: Queen's Printer, 1897. Issued by the Council of Public Instruction for teachers and trustees. Includes rules and regulations, establishment of school districts and listing of districts with creation date and boundaries, selection of school sites, course outlines and textbooks, and teachers examinations. [NW344.07 B862 1962]

*Report of the Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works.* 1873-1907/1908 and *Report of the Minister of Public Works* 1908/09-1944/45. The department was responsible for the design and construction of many of the early school buildings and references can often be found in the annual reports. Available in the *Sessional Papers* [Microfilm D25].

Fox, Christina. *Index to the Journals of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of British Columbia, 1<sup>st</sup> session of the first Parliament, 1872 to the 2<sup>nd</sup> session of the twenty-ninth Parliament, 1971, inclusive.* Victoria, B.C.: Provincial Library, 1974. Useful to locate references to legislation and issues discussed in the Legislature. [NW328.71 F791]

Hendrickson, James E. (ed.) *Journals of the colonial legislatures of the colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia, 1851-1871.* Victoria, B.C.: Provincial Archives of British Columbia,

1980. 5 vols. A good source for legislative deliberations during the colonial period.  
[NW328.71101 J86]

Holmes, Marjorie C. *Publications of the government of British Columbia 1871-1947*. Victoria: Provincial Library, 1950. Revision of *Publications of the government of British Columbia 1871-1937* by Sydney Weston. Chapter V (pp. 96-117) includes a brief administrative history and a list of publications by the various education departments and branches. [NW016.9711 H752p]

### **Royal commissions and commissions of inquiry, etc.**

Whether a formal commission appointed under the Public Inquiries Act, or appointed by the Minister of Education, the reports which resulted from these investigations often contain useful information, both in terms of the situation at the time (and sometimes an historical background) as well as the recommendations put forward. The briefs, exhibits, transcripts of hearings and other unpublished documents, sometimes referred to as the papers of the commission, are often rich sources of information but papers do not necessarily exist for all of the commissions. For an annotated list of commissions and government commissioned reports dealing with education issues see the Appendix.

### **Published histories of education in British Columbia**

These are some of the standard works available at the BC Archives. See the *Annotated bibliography of education history in British Columbia* cited above for a more complete listing. Search the library catalogue for histories of specific schools and school districts.

Cottingham, Mollie Esther. *A century of public education in British Columbia*. Paper given at the first annual meeting of the Canadian College of Teachers. Vancouver: British Columbia Teachers' Federation, 1958. [NWp971.58 C848c]

Johnson, Francis Henry. *A history of public education in British Columbia*. Vancouver: Publications Centre, University of British Columbia, 1964. A comprehensive work, covering the evolution and development of public schools from the colonial period to 1960. NW971.58 J67 The author subsequently revised the book, retitling it "The development of public and higher education in British Columbia 1849 to 1975". A copy of the unpublished manuscript is available as MS-1486 [Microfilm reel A0860].

Johnson, Francis Henry. *John Jessop: goldseeker and educator: founder of the British Columbia school system*. Vancouver: Mitchell Press, 1971. Covers colonial period to 1901. [NW971.58 J58]

Jones, David C., Nancy M. Sheehan and Robert M. Stamp (eds.) *Shaping the schools of the Canadian West*. Calgary: Detselig Enterprises, 1979. Includes three chapters on British Columbia. [NW370.9712 S529]

Sheehan, Nancy M., J. Donald Wilson and David C. Jones (eds.) *Schools in the west*. Calgary: Detselig Enterprises, 1986. Articles on British Columbia. [NW370.9712 S372]

Wilson, J. Donald, Robert M. Stamp and Louis-Philippe Audet. *Canadian education: a history*. Scarborough: Prentice-Hall, 1970. Articles on British Columbia as well as a national perspective. [Not held by BC Archives].

Wilson, J. Donald. *Schooling and society in twentieth century British Columbia*. Calgary: Detselig Enterprises, 1980. [NW370.9711 W749]

Adams, Joan and Becky Thomas. *Floating schools and frozen inkwells: the one-room schools of British Columbia*. Madeira Park: Harbour Publishing, 1985. [NW370.19346 A214]

### **Books and articles dealing with native education and residential schools**

Education and schooling of the aboriginal population of British Columbia was, as elsewhere in Canada, the responsibility of the federal government, although often undertaken by church organizations. The most well-known aspect is, of course, the residential school.

A useful starting point is *Native Residential Schools in Canada: A Selective Bibliography*, compiled by Amy Fisher and Deborah Lee April 2002 available on the Library and Archives Canada web site <http://www.collectionscanada.ca/native-residential/index-e.html>. It includes "books, scholarly articles, school histories, personal accounts, theses, videos, and Internet resources." A search of the library catalogue on the BC Archives web site using the search phrase "residential school?" will yield titles held in our collection. One useful publication, not in our collection, is *A national crime: the Canadian government and the residential school system, 1879-1986*, by John S. Milloy (University of Manitoba Press, 1999). A comprehensive study, based on his extensive research for the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, it also contains a lengthy bibliography.

### **MANUSCRIPT MATERIAL**

Manuscript materials are **unpublished, textual** records, (e.g. correspondence files or Royal Commission transcripts of hearings). They can be private records or government records and can be typed as well as handwritten. These are considered primary sources, and you will need to analyse and interpret them in order to make them useful to your research.

**Note:** A number of theses have been catalogued as manuscripts, others as library material. Search both the library and textual record catalogues if you are looking for a particular thesis.

As with published sources, there is both a card and an online index to records. The card index (Government Records & Historical Manuscripts Catalogue – Old System) uses the old cataloguing classification (e.g. A/AE/Su8) and can be searched by subject, title and creator of the record. Some of these records have been described as *fonds* and can be searched online using the Fonds Descriptions search option on our web site or through the BC Archival Union List (BCAUL) (<http://aabc.bc.ca/aabc/bcaul.html>).

Textual records indexed online are catalogued as either a government record accession (GR) or a private record accession (MS), but both are searched on the Textual Records Index. Many have Finding Aids attached. Finding Aids can be box lists, file lists, volume lists, microfilm reel lists or indexes and should be consulted to help identify the items you require. A card index also exists for the colonial correspondence collection (GR-1372).

Newer record descriptions are organized by the creator or collector and are termed *fonds*. These are available online using the Fonds Descriptions search option or through the BC Archival Union List (BCAUL) (<http://aabc.bc.ca/aabc/bcaul.html>). Note that a *fonds*, e.g. the Ministry of Education *fonds*, usually comprises several call numbers. Check the black duotang binders in the Reference Room, using the AAAA number, to obtain a list of call or accession numbers. Both our online catalogue and BCAUL can be searched by keyword.

**Note:** Our catalogue headings describe material by beginning with the general and working down to a more specific sub-heading. If you are interested in an individual or a particular school or organization, always check under the name first.

### GOVERNMENT RECORDS

Because of the way they were accessioned prior to *fonds* descriptions, records, especially government records, by a particular creator may be found in several different accessions. Binders organized by government department describe the various accessions associated with each department and are located on top of the card catalogue. Binder no. 18 deals with Education. In addition, an administrative history together with a list of government records created by the Ministry of Education, its branches and its predecessors can be found in a black duotang binder, no. AAAA0597, in the collection of *fonds* descriptions. In addition, there are *fonds* descriptions for the Council of Public Instruction and other educational records. See the black duotang index binder for a listing. *The School Record* (see p. 1) provides a thematic approach. For Royal Commission and Commission of Inquiry records see the Appendix.

### SCHOOL AND SCHOOL DISTRICT RECORDS

School district records held by the British Columbia Archives all predate the 1946 implementation of the Cameron Report (see p.3), are not complete, and “generally consist of local school trustee meetings, financial records, visitors’ books, and school registers.” (*The School Record*, p. 99) After the 1946 reorganization, records were retained at the local level and are to be found at regional school board offices or archives. (**Note:** For a listing of current school districts and links to their web sites see the Ministry of Education web site at <http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/schools/bcmap.htm>.) A list of school district records to be found at the BC Archives, a brief historical overview and a list of city school districts and of rural and assisted schools and school districts are contained in Appendix B and C of *The School Record*. Fonds descriptions exist for several school districts. Search by name using the Fonds Descriptions search option on our web site or consult the black duotang index binder (at the beginning of the *fonds* descriptions). Private school records are treated as non-government records.

### NON-GOVERNMENT RECORDS

Many private records also exist. Records were created by organizations and schools (e.g. MS-0737: British Columbia Home and School Federation records, MS-1924: St. Margaret’s School records, and MS-1267: Kuper Island Indian Industrial School records 1889 – 1938) and by various individuals (e.g. MS-1245: Olive Wilson Heritage correspondence and MS-2894: O’Reilly family fonds). The BC Archives has records for selected independent, or private schools, but many are not included in our holdings. Church school records are generally retained by the respective church archives or administrative offices.

**Access restrictions** may exist on both government and non-government records. Provincial government records are subject to the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIPPA) as well as the federal *Youth Criminal Justice Act*. Private records are subject to restrictions placed by the donor. Researchers are advised to verify the current access status of records they wish to consult, **PRIOR** to visiting the Archives, by contacting the Reference Desk (250-387-1952).

## **MAPS, PHOTOGRAPHS AND OTHER IMAGES, SOUND RECORDINGS, MOVING IMAGES, NEWSPAPERS, VERTICAL FILES, VITAL EVENTS RECORDS**

A general description of and access tools for these resources can be found in the *Research Orientation Guide*.

**Maps and plans:** A search of the cartographic indexes will yield references to maps showing school districts and sites. School plans are included in such Public Works accessions as GR-0054, GR-0070, GR-0071 and GR-0080. See also *The School Record*, pp. 33-34.

**Photographs and other images.** Look for photographs in the Photo Reference Room collection organized by place name and in the portrait files, organized by surname. Search online by school, place or personal name for photographs, paintings, drawings and prints. Try variant names and spellings, truncation and wild cards (e.g. school?). Photograph collections are listed in *The School Record* in each subject chapter and in Appendix A. A description of the photographic image collection of the Department of Education, ca. 1947-1978, can be found in the black duotang binder AAAA0833 (Provincial Education Media Centre). An item list is available in the Photo Reference Room.

**Sound recordings.** These include school radio broadcasts as well as oral history. Only a card index currently exists and subject coverage is not complete. Search by name, title or subject. There is a list of the major collections on pp. 97-98 of *The School Record*. Please note that there may be access and/or copying restrictions.

**Moving images.** Some films date back to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Search the online database by keyword or subject. If a specific term does not yield anything, or anything relevant, try broadening your search and checking the description and subject headings of likely citations for more useful search terms. A truncated subject search on "school?" yields almost 70 hits. Two useful guides to films produced in British Columbia are *Motion picture production in British Columbia, 1898-1940* [NW791.43 B882] and *Camera west: British Columbia on film, 1941-1965* [NW791.43 D858].

**Newspapers:** Newspapers can be a useful source of local information as well as a source for public response to events and issues. If you know the date of an event, check the newspaper for that time period. Depending on the time period, and the newspaper, there may be a subject index. See the *Research Orientation Guide* for more details.

**Vertical files:** These are collections of newspaper and magazine clippings and other material prior to 1984. Both the index and files are on microfilm. A four volume hardcopy file list, arranged alphabetically, is also available. Search by last names of individuals, names of schools, and subjects.

## **APPENDIX**

### **Royal commissions and commissions of inquiry**

The following includes a selection of reports and surveys commissioned by the provincial government and commissions appointed under the *Public Inquiries Act*. For additional records search the textual records index or consult *The School Record*. Some of the published reports cited below are also, or only, to be found in the Library collection as well as with the papers of the commissions. Call numbers have been provided. In some instances, only a published report exists.

Putnam, J. H. and George Weir. *Survey of the school system*. Victoria: King's Printer, 1925. Commissioned by the Minister of Education. Survey of the situation at the time and several recommendations for improvement. Most of the recommendations were eventually adopted. [NW971.581 P988 or GR-1116].

*Report of the committee appointed by the government to investigate the finances of British Columbia*. Victoria: King's Printer, 1932. Known as the Kidd report, for the chairman, George Kidd, this report by a committee of businessmen included drastic recommendations for education. [NW971.53 B857] (**Note:** This edition includes an appendix containing comments by the government.)

King, Herbert Baxter. *School finance in British Columbia*. Victoria: King's Printer, 1935. King was Technical Advisor to the BC Commission on School Finance. (**Note:** Not held by BC Archives - copy available at Legislative Library).

*Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Educational Finance*. Victoria: King's Printer, 1945. Maxwell A. Cameron, commissioner. It recommended that local school boards retain their administrative responsibilities for education, that school districts be created where none existed and a grant system requiring equal property tax rates. Based upon the recommendations, the *Public Schools Act* was amended in 1946, leading to the consolidation of and province-wide coverage by school districts, as well as changes in the financing of public education [NW 971.58 B862rf]. For correspondence, administrative records, submissions and the commission report, see GR-0916. For a copy of the report, as well as of "Reorganization of school districts as proposed in Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Educational Finance" by Cameron, see GR-1116.

[*Report*] *Commission on School Taxation*. 1947. H. Allan Maclean, Assistant Deputy Attorney General (chairman). The commissioners were appointed to inquire into the assessment of real property and improvements for school taxation purposes within school districts of British Columbia. Commission records include copy of Letters Patent appointing the commissioners, commission correspondences files, transcripts of evidence presented at the hearings, commissioners' notes, briefs, and reports. GR-0920.

*Report of the Royal Commission on Education*. Victoria: Queen's Printer, 1960. S.N.F. Chant, chair. The commission's mandate was to inquire into the provincial education system, especially the programs of study and student achievement. The associated research and reports provide an excellent survey of educational practices and schools of the period as well as of the situation of teachers and principals. [NW 370.971 B862 1960] For transcripts of proceedings, exhibits, correspondence, newspaper clippings, abstracts of briefs and hearings, and research studies see GR-0683.

British Columbia. Commission on School District Administrative Costs. Mark William Sager, chair. Established by Minister of Education, Bill Vander Zalm, in 1983, to examine school district operations and costs. Suspended when the provincial election was called. Collection includes interim report, submissions and administrative files. GR-2949.

*A legacy for learners: the report of the Royal Commission on Education*. Victoria: The Commission, 1988. Barry M. Sullivan, commissioner. Among the outcomes of the recommendations were the educational objectives and policies known as *Year 2000*, and legislation regarding independent schools and home schooling. [NW 379.711 B862] For written



submissions, taped public hearings, student interviews, clipping scrapbooks, research papers and some administrative files, see GR-1917.