

A Century of Educational Progress in New Brunswick

From 1800 to 1900

The history of education in New Brunswick falls conveniently into three periods. The first period, from 1800 to 1846, was a time when the schools were being established, and a system of education was developed with a minimum of administrative machinery. From 1847 to 1870 was a period of reorganization. When it came to an end, so also did the effort to support schools by voluntary assessment. The third period, from 1871 to 1900, deals with the development under the free school system.

An effort is made to show in each of the three periods the progress made in education generally, and the origin of New Brunswick's different types of schools. For the sake of continuity, each type of school is treated separately.

When New Brunswick was founded in 1784, the Royal Instructions to Governor Thomas Carleton commanded that the Province be divided into counties, and the latter into parishes. The parish was a civil unit from the first, and the name was used in the same sense as township. The Instructions also provided a plot of land in each parish for the support of the school master, and another section stated that school masters from England must be licensed by the Lord Bishop of London, and native teachers by the Governor. Before 1800 there were very few schools, and fewer good teachers. The best teachers were those sent out from England by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, which gave a small grant to maintain them. There were a few private schools in St. John, and an occasional one elsewhere.