



INFORMATION DIVISION

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

OTTAWA - CANADA

CANADIAN UNIVERSITIESHISTORICAL

The beginnings of education in Canada are found in the educational services offered, in an ancient tradition, by the Christian Churches. The first permanent school for French pupils was established in Quebec in 1635 by the Jesuits, and by the time control of the colony by the chartered fur trading companies gave way to Crown administration in 1663, primary education was available as well in Montreal and Three Rivers.

By 1655 classes in grammar, the humanities, rhetoric and philosophy were held in the Quebec school and instruction in mathematics and theology was added early in the 1660's. The faculty was held in considerable esteem overseas as is evident from the fact that the Jesuits sent students from France to study theology in Quebec. Attention was given at the outset to the demands made by an undeveloped frontier environment on its people, and applied science has long been prominent in North American educational developments. The most successful of various early technical schools in Canada was a school of hydrography created by the Jesuits and adapted to their college at Quebec about 1664. Here training was given in navigation and, recognizing the need for capable pilots and captains who could guide ships safely through the tricky waters of the St. Lawrence, the Intendant raised the teacher to the rank of Professor of Hydrography in 1671. Here is at least the symbol, if not the source, of that continuing response to the challenge offered to Canadian educators by geography and natural resources; and it is interesting to note that the provincial university of Newfoundland today has a Navigation School. From these early beginnings developed the widespread and flourishing system of higher education which serves French-speaking Canadians today. This system remains under the control of the Roman Catholic Church but certain of its units receive state aid. It contains four universities, St. Joseph's University in New Brunswick, l'Université Laval and l'Université de Montréal in Quebec Province, and the University of Ottawa in Ontario.

Early English educational institutions were similarly established by religious organizations. The history of the higher education of English-speaking Canada begins with the establishment of King's College at Windsor, Nova Scotia, in 1789, under the auspices of the Church of England. Two periods may be distinguished in this history: 1) from the coming of the Loyalists until the end of the Nineteenth Century; and 2) from the beginning of the Twentieth Century until the present time. The first period was one in which the influences of the English, Scottish and Irish universities were not only dominant but direct. For more than half a century nearly all the professors, except in two or three colleges, came from the British Isles. The Church of England next founded King's Colleges at Fredericton (1800) and at Toronto (1827). Dalhousie University, later to receive Presbyterian support, was founded in 1818 at Halifax, Nova Scotia, and Queen's University was founded at Kingston, Ontario, in 1841, on the model of the University of Edinburgh. McGill University at Montreal is privately endowed and has been non-denominational since its establishment in 1821. This first period was thus one of fruitful rivalry. When King's College in Toronto was removed from Anglican control in 1850,