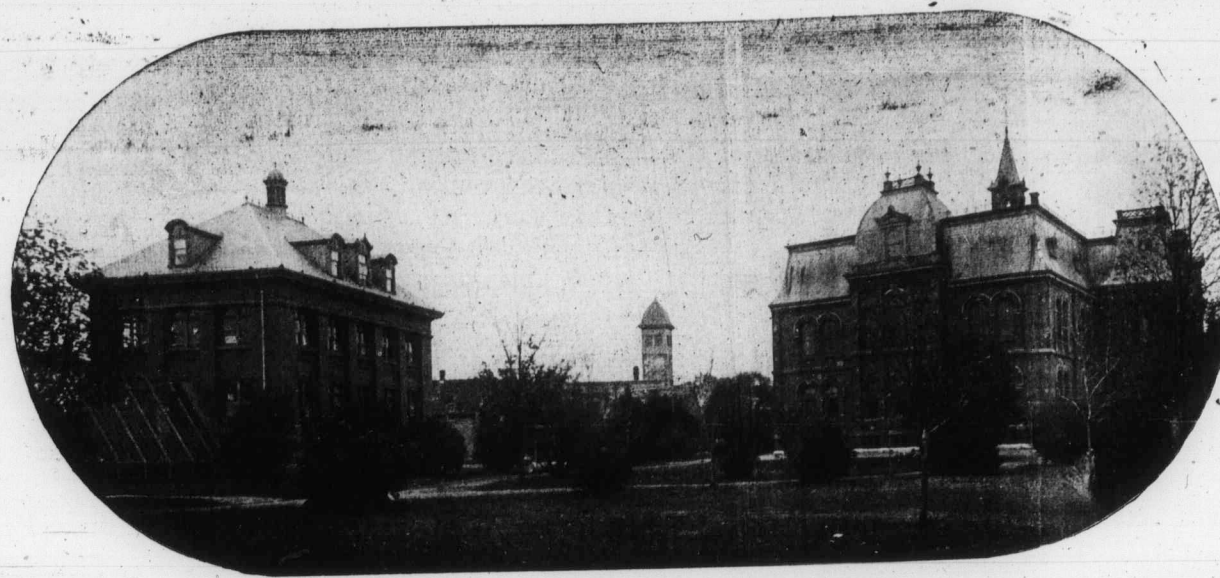


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## Concise History Provincial Normal College

(By Dr. Solon)

Normal Schools trace their origin to France, where the foundation of institutions for the training of teachers was made the subject of a report by M. Lakanal to the Revolutionary government of 1794. "In being the first to decree Normal Schools," the report goes on to say, "you have resolved to create in advance a large number of teachers capable of giving execution to a plan for the regeneration of the human understanding in a republic of twenty-five millions of men, all of whom demonstrate equal capacity." Lakanal uses for the first time the term "Normal" Schools, from the Latin word norma, a type or standard, the Normal School being designed as a standard for all schools.

The Nova Scotia Normal School was created by an Act of the Provincial Legislature of 1854. Such schools already existed in America; the first one being three provided by an Act of the Massachusetts Legislature of 1838. One of these, the famous Bridgewater School, also organized as a teaching faculty in 1840, had no building of its own until 1846, just nine years before the opening at Truro of the quaint old building on Victoria Street now used as a normal-training room, but devoted from the time of its completion in 1855, until 1877, to the training of teachers. The striking architectural resemblance between this edifice and the original Bridgewater Normal School building gives point to the presumption that the designer of the Truro temple of learning drew his inspiration from Massachusetts and more particularly from the Bridgewater town-hall, where the first sessions of the State Normal School were held.

When, in the course of twenty years, the little wooden structure ceased to supply adequate facilities for the accommodation of a largely increased number of students, and for the enlarged equipment demanded in modern educational work, it was "moved away back and set down" in its present locality. In its stead and almost over its foundations was erected the handsome brick building which faces Prince Street, opened in 1877 as the Provincial Normal School. Thirteen years later, in 1900, the Science Building, on Young Street, was added to the equipment, providing material facilities for science teaching unsurpassed in any Normal School in Canada.

The initial enrolment of students in 1855 was sixty-four. Over these were three instructors, Rev. Alexander Forrester, D.D., the principal, and Messrs. Mulholland and Randall, his associates. By 1900, the attendance had reached 223 and the regular staff of instructors increased seven instructors, in addition to the affiliated personnel of the Kindergarten, Mechanic Science, Agriculture, and Domestic Science departments, which raise the total teaching staff to fourteen.

By an Order-in-Council of 1909, the name Normal School was changed to Provincial Normal College, thus harmonizing the title of the three provincial institutions, the Normal Agricultural, and Technical Colleges. Affiliation with the College of Agriculture is one of the important features of the Normal College. During the winter months there is a reciprocity of instruction between the two institutions, and during the summer the faculties unite to provide instruction in rural science leading to a diploma which entitles the teacher holding it to a special government subsidy.

The Normal College issues diplomas of Academic and lower ranks to candidates preparing for licenses to teach in the public schools. It also issues diplomas to

candidates for license as Kindergarten and as teachers of mechanic science. Its affiliation with the civic school organization of Truro is effected on the basis of a special subsidy of \$250 paid annually to the Truro School Board, in consideration of which the latter provides facilities for the instruction of the students of the Normal College in manual training, in kindergarten, and in domestic science, and opens its schools for visitation and for practising-teaching to the faculty and students of the college.

The principal of the town schools and the heads of the departments of mechanic science, domestic science, and kindergarten are appointed by the School Board, subject to the ratification of the Council of Public Instruction of Nova Scotia; and the privileges of visitation and practising-teaching are defined by agreement made in 1900. Intercourse between the schools of the town and the Normal College has had a stimulating effect upon both institutions. To the experienced teacher as well as to the tyro it is of no slight value to be permitted to observe the working of a well kept school; while to the mistress of the department concerned the weekly visit from the Normal College provides an incentive to maintaining the acme of efficiency in the conduct of the work. Absolute harmony prevails, and the student-teachers value highly the helpful disposition of their experienced fellow-teachers in the Truro schools.

Of all the manifold functions of the authorities of the Normal College probably none awakens in the student a sentiment of heartier approval than the provision for paying his travelling expenses at the rate of five cents per mile. It takes some thousands of dollars a year to do it, but neither faculty nor public nor students consider the money ill-spent. For it is well known that the student, in preparing himself for the public service of teaching, goes to considerable expense. Tuition is, indeed, free; but not so are board, laundry and clothing. Board averages now at least three dollars a week, and there are forty weeks in the term. Averaging the expense of each full-term pupil at \$150, this year's students will leave in Truro over \$28,000. Salaries and up-keep of buildings, grounds and laboratories will cost \$14,000. Add to these the special government subsidy of \$2,500 and the thousand odd dollars left by the summer school for rural science and physical exercises, and the total amount of money expended in Truro by the Provincial Normal College is at least \$45,000. Quite an asset, this privilege of having a Normal College; for it brings into town over a thousand dollars a week, all of which ultimately finds its way to the shops in which our estimable dealers see to it that the student gets the most for his money and the landlady the choicest commodities for her student-guests. Some day, perhaps, the Mayor and corporation may discover ways and means of providing annually a little hospitality for the student visitors to their pretty town—say a railway trip to Folly Lake or South Maitland. To the mercenary-minded objector let it be softly whispered: "It would pay."

Of course the town does much, indirectly, for the sojourners within its gates. It keeps up a beautiful park for stranger and citizen alike; so does the Normal College. The town sees to it that the street approaches to the school buildings are measurably well kept; the Normal College throws open some hundreds of yards of well kept walks between Prince and Victoria Streets as a thoroughfare for pedestrians whether students or townsmen.

## Early Railroading In Nova Scotia

(By C. W. Lunn.)

Fifty-one years ago this month, some say last Wednesday, the 15th, the first passenger and freight train (combined) arrived in Truro from Halifax. That, though, was not the beginning of passenger and freight train service in Nova Scotia. A through-train from the capital of the province had a short time previous to that pulled into Windsor. But there was an earlier effort than these, that between Albion (now Stellarton) and the Loading Ground some nine or ten miles along the banks of the East River. The writer is one of those who holds that that was the first steam road ever operated in British North America, though some years ago the Montreal Herald claimed that the first British American road was operated in the Province of Quebec, and that the rails were simply wooden poles. The road in Pictou County above referred to, from Albion to the Loading Ground, was the property of the General Mining Association, that then owned the coal mines of Pictou County, as well as those at Sydney Mines, now the property of the Nova Scotia Steel and Coal Company.

We stand to be corrected when we say that it was about 1833 when the road from Albion to the Loading Ground was opened, but it was not then operated by steam, but the rather by horses. Over it the coal was conveyed to The Loading Ground, where it was loaded into sailing vessels for shipment abroad. It was a year or two later

that the quaint steam horse, the "Sampson", and its equally quaint passenger car came. The engine was so constructed that the driver worked at one end and the fireman at the other, the former seated in an iron chair. The passenger car was built after the pattern of the body of the old style stage coach. There were two seats, capable of holding three persons each, who sat facing each other. The locomotive and car were combined.

The bed of this road, including the masonry, was first class, and it is worthy of note that it was surveyed by and built on plans made by a Mr. Carew, whose only training in that connection was land surveying. When the plans were prepared and sent to England for approval they were pronounced first class by competent engineers. The mason work and road bed can yet be seen, or at least parts of the road bed.

By the way, the yet presence of this old road lying side by side with the modern I. R. C. and the Egerton Electric Tram Road, affords three practical illustrations in the progress of transportation in Nova Scotia during the last half century.

It is a pity that first old locomotive, the "Sampson", was permitted to be taken out of the province. It is now, we believe, in a dime museum in Philadelphia. The company offered it for sale for \$500, but no person in Nova Scotia had enterprise enough to buy it. The government of the province should

make an effort to get it back.

The arrival of the first, through train in Truro was the final opening up of the Nova Scotia Railway, Halifax to Truro, and Windsor Junction to Windsor, some ninety-four or ninety-five miles in all. This was the work of Howe and his associates, but by no means a realization of the aims and objects of the great Nova Scotian in that respect. His ambitions were continental-wide, ocean to ocean across British soil. The object has been accomplished, but he did not live to see it, yet he did see its consummation by that eye of faith born of that great belief he had in British North America, the greater part of which is now the great Dominion of Canada. It was either in 1850 or 1853, on his return from England, where he had been seeking to interest the home government in railway building in this country and had received assurance of financial support for his Intercolonial railway scheme, that speaking in the old Masonic hall in Halifax on the result of his mission he said: "I am not a prophet nor the son of a prophet; but there are those within sound of my voice to night who will live to hear the whistle of the locomotive amid the passes of the Rocky Mountains as it speeds on its way from ocean to ocean."

His words have come true. On some future occasion we may again in these columns return to the early days of railroading in this province.

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