

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY  
MUSIC EDUCATION IN ALBERTA, 1884-1945:  
HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT

by  
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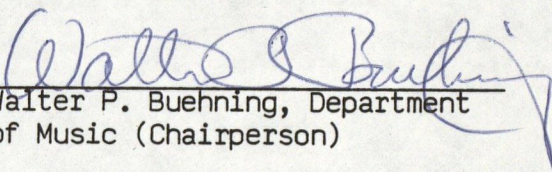
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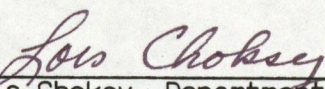
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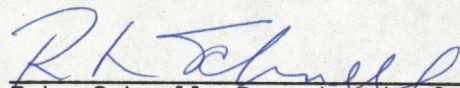


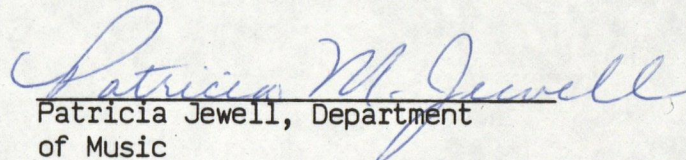
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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to chronicle and discuss the history and development of music education in Alberta from 1884 to 1945. The principal topics researched were the prescribed elementary and high school courses in music, the quality of music education in the schools, the musical training of teachers, and the influence on music education of provincial and school festivals. Information for this study was compiled mostly from primary sources, including Department of Education reports, curriculum guides, and miscellaneous archival materials.

This study has determined that music education in Alberta showed continuous growth during this period, but that the most significant developments occurred during the 1930s and 1940s. During the earlier period, music courses had been prescribed for elementary schools only. City and town schools developed high quality music programmes, but rural schools often neglected the subject, possibly because of poor educational conditions, and also because of inadequately trained teachers. However, the development of school festivals during the 1920s and 1930s provided some enrichment to rural school music.

During the 1930s, major educational reforms were initiated to modernize the curriculum, and to improve the quality of

rural education. Music was accorded a higher priority than before. This was manifested by its inclusion as a course of study at all grade levels, by a greater willingness on the part of administrators to provide specialists and equipment for music instruction, and by an improvement in the musical training of teachers. Together with a more enlightened curriculum which recognized both the importance of music at all stages of education, and the relation of the curriculum to stages of child development, these educational reforms ensured that music would be less neglected than in former years.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to trace the history and development of music education in Alberta from 1884, when the first educational system was organized in the North West Territories, of which Alberta was a part; to 1945, when major educational reforms had been in place for several years. The following topics will be discussed:

- 1) The music curriculum prescribed by the Department of Education for Alberta schools. This will include an examination of curriculum content, and some discussion of textbooks and other prescribed materials.
- 2) The quality of music education in Alberta schools.
- 3) The musical training of teachers at the normal schools in Alberta.
- 4) The development of music festivals in Alberta, and their effect on music education.
- 5) Other developments which affected music education, i.e., the establishment of educational radio, and of the Western Board of Music.

### Design of the Study

This study is chronological in structure. Changes and developments have been recorded and discussed within the time frame of each chapter. An exception to this is the final chapter, "Summary and Conclusions", in which each topic has been summarized according to its development throughout the time frame of the entire study.

### Sources

As far as possible, primary sources have been used in compiling the information contained in this study. Important primary sources included the following:

- 1) The programmes of studies for the North West Territories, 1885-1905, and for Alberta, 1906-1945.
- 2) Reports of the various educational bodies of the North West Territories, 1885-1905, and annual reports of the Province of Alberta Department of Education, 1906-1945.
- 3) School music textbooks in use during the period covered in this study. Collections of these materials are available at the library of the Glenbow-Alberta Institute, Calgary, and in the historical collection of the Educational Materials Centre, Faculty of Education, The University of Calgary.

- 4) Alberta Department of Education correspondence; in particular, regarding the development of school music festivals, and the establishment of the Western Board of Music. This correspondence is available in the Provincial Archives of Alberta, Edmonton.
- 5) Miscellaneous unpublished materials, including minutes of the Alberta Musical Festival Association committee meetings, reports of Western Festival delegates' meetings, and programmes of provincial music festivals. These materials are available at the Provincial Archives of Alberta, Edmonton, and at the archives of the Glenbow-Alberta Institute, Calgary.

#### Definition of Terms

Curriculum: the prescribed courses of study for Alberta schools. The word "curriculum" was not used in the titles of the course of study for this time period; the usual titles were "Course of studies" and "Programme of studies". However, in order to avoid confusion, the more modern word "curriculum" has been used in the sub-headings of the discussions of programmes or courses of study throughout this thesis.

Tonic Solfa: a system of sight singing popularized by John Curwen (1816-1880) in England, and based on a set of syllables which represented relative pitches of notes. Although the term "tonic solfa" is sometimes used to define the alternative system of musical



notation which Curwen also devised, in this study "tonic solfa" refers exclusively to the method in sight singing. Any references to Curwen's alternative musical notation have been made separately.

Festival: an event at which choral and instrumental groups, and vocal and instrumental soloists, gather together to perform for each other, and, in some cases, to compete for awards.<sup>1</sup> In many festivals, both competitive and non-competitive, the participants' standard of performance is evaluated by an adjudicator. In this study, two main types of festival have been discussed; namely, the provincial festival, and the school festival. The provincial festival was an annual competitive event which was organized by the Alberta Musical Festival Association. The first such event was held in 1908. School groups, e.g., choirs and orchestras, participated in the provincial festival beginning in 1911. The exact origins of the school festival are obscure. Available evidence indicates that they were organized in rural areas, and provided an opportunity for local school musical ensembles to perform for each other. These events were both competitive and non-competitive. The Department of Education sponsored them with financial aid. Local school inspectors also helped in the organization of school festivals, in some cases also acting as adjudicators. However, most of the administrative work was carried out by local festival committees.

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<sup>1</sup> Helmut Kallmann, Gilles Potvin, Kenneth Winters, eds., Encyclopedia of Music in Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981), s.v. "Festivals".

Schools: the public and separate schools of Alberta. Privately funded schools and colleges have not been included for discussion in this study.

Music Education: the instruction in music which was given in Alberta schools. Private music instruction has not been discussed in this study, except for brief references to the availability of high school credit for such instruction.

#### Significance of the Study

Little has been documented on the history and development of music education in Alberta. This study is an attempt to gather the scattered facts about music education, and present them in accessible form. It is important that present day music educators know about developments of the past, so that they may better understand current trends, and be able to perceive whether these trends are reactions against, or continuations of, policies of previous music educators. It is hoped that this study will be a useful contribution to the growing body of knowledge about music education in Canada. Today, many parents and teachers take it for granted that music should be included in the school curriculum at all levels. This study provides an insight into the attitudes of previous generations towards music education, and the changing status of that subject from 1884 to 1945.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Information on the history and development of music education in Alberta has been difficult to obtain. Whereas the development of music education in other Canadian provinces has been documented, namely, by Trowsdale<sup>1</sup> and Brault<sup>2</sup> in Ontario, by Vogan<sup>3</sup> in New Brunswick, and by Rex<sup>4</sup> in Newfoundland, Alberta has been largely neglected. Although references to music education in Alberta can be found in literature on educational development in the province, and in writings on the history of music in Canada, they are often brief and fragmentary.

In his survey of education in Alberta from its beginnings in the nineteenth century to the nineteen sixties, Chalmers includes

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<sup>1</sup> George Campbell Trowsdale, "A history of public school music in Ontario" (Ed.D. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1962).

<sup>2</sup> Diana Brault, "A history of the Ontario Music Educators' Association" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Rochester, 1977).

<sup>3</sup> Nancy Vogan, "The history of public school music in the province of New Brunswick (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Rochester, 1979).

<sup>4</sup> Sister Kathleen Rex, "A history of music education in Newfoundland" (M.Ed. thesis, Catholic University of America, 1975).

short references to music education. Using reports of the Department of Education as his source, the author briefly draws attention to the relative insignificance of music education during the early years of territorial and provincial government. There is a brief discussion on the rise of school festivals in Alberta and some implication that they had an advantageous effect on rural education.<sup>1</sup> However, the brevity of the discussion on music education makes this book somewhat unsatisfactory as a source of information.

In Pulse of the Community, Charyk gives a valuable insight into rural education in Western Canada during the first half of the twentieth century. Using information gathered mainly from interviews and personal memoirs of people who attended rural schools, Charyk suggests that some schools had excellent music programmes, because they were staffed by musically talented teachers. However, most rural schools had little or no music, because there was a shortage of teachers with musical training.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> J.W. Chalmers, Schools of the Foothills Province (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967), pp. 87-88.

<sup>2</sup> John C. Charyk, Pulse of the Community (Saskatoon: The Western Producer, Prairie Books, 1970), pp. 132-134.

Charyk also discusses the school music festival and its beneficial effect on rural education.<sup>1</sup>

Music as a school subject is given some attention in theses on the development of the Alberta curriculum. Sheane's thesis on the elementary curriculum contains references to music education drawn from Annual Reports of the Department of Education. Although the information is scattered throughout the thesis, it is possible to infer that music attained greater importance as a school subject in the process of curriculum changes. Sheane discusses in detail the 'Enterprise' curriculum of 1936, in which there was a major educational reform, with a new emphasis on music clearly shown.<sup>2</sup>

Walker's thesis on secondary education contains a reference to the neglect of aesthetic elements in the North West Territories programme of studies, which was in use when Alberta was granted provincial status in 1905. However, there is little further mention of music education in the secondary schools, except for a few words about its official introduction into the curriculum in

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., pp. 135-148.

<sup>2</sup> G.K. Sheane, "The history and development of the curriculum of the elementary school in Alberta (D. Paed. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1948).

1918, and about the availability of grants to encourage music in larger centres.<sup>1</sup>

Valuable information about music education can be found in theses which deal with more specialized aspects of education. In her work on the development of the school festival in Alberta, Fisher traces the growth of this musical genre during the 1930s. Of particular interest are quotations from Department of Education correspondence, which are evidence of official support for school festivals. In addition, results of a questionnaire which was sent out to teachers and parents about the time the thesis was written (1942), provide useful insight into local opinion of music festivals. Fisher concludes that school festivals were of great educational benefit to those who participated in them.<sup>2</sup>

Lyseng's history of educational radio in Alberta<sup>3</sup> is an examination of the development of educational broadcasting, from experimental beginnings in 1929 to the 1970s. Sample broadcast

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<sup>1</sup> B.E. Walker, "Public secondary education in Alberta; organization and curriculum, 1889 - 1951" (Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University, 1955).

<sup>2</sup> Olive M. Fisher, "The school festival and its contribution to the cultural life of Alberta" (M.A. thesis, Stanford University, 1942).

<sup>3</sup> Mary J. Lyseng, "A history of educational radio in Alberta" (M.A. thesis, University of Alberta, 1978).



schedules from the 1930s and 1940s are included. They show clearly that music was an important part of radio programming from the official commencement of educational broadcasting in 1936.

Hochstein's thesis on Roman Catholic education in Alberta<sup>1</sup> focuses on the contribution of the religious teaching orders during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Numerous quotations from convent annals provide clear evidence that nuns played a significant role in establishing music education in many of the settlements where they founded schools.

Some information about music education in the normal schools (i.e. the teacher training establishments) is given by Mann in his thesis on that subject. Of particular interest are the names of those music educators who were responsible for the training of prospective teachers. In addition, mention is made of the music courses offered in the normal schools in Alberta.<sup>2</sup>

In his thesis on the development of teacher education in Western Canada, Black compares the curricula in the normal schools

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<sup>1</sup> Sister Lucille Hochstein, "Roman Catholic separate and public schools in Alberta" (M.Ed. thesis, University of Alberta, 1954).

<sup>2</sup> George Mann, "Alberta normal schools; a descriptive study of their development" (M.Ed. thesis, University of Alberta, 1961).

and universities of the four western provinces, up to 1936. He discusses briefly the deficiency of many prospective normal school students in music, and suggests that some opposition to this subject was preventing it being taught in high schools. Although he provides little detail about the courses being taught in the normal schools, Black suggests that the brevity of the training session did not allow enough time for specialization.<sup>1</sup>

Some local histories of education have been useful in providing information which is not readily accessible, and for which detailed research would be outside the scope of this study. The history of education in Calgary has been researched by Weston<sup>2</sup> and Daniels.<sup>3</sup> In both theses, the principal focus is on the development of the public system, with some discussion of the separate system. Names are given of music teachers and supervisors who were active in public education in Calgary, but no information is given on music curricula.

At this writing, no history of music education in Canada is yet available. However, some books on music in Canada have

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<sup>1</sup> William Griffiths Black, "The development and present status of teacher education in Western Canada, with special reference to the curriculum (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1936).

<sup>2</sup> Phyllis Ellen Weston, "The history of education in Calgary" (M.A. thesis, University of Alberta, 1951).

<sup>3</sup> Leroi Allister Daniels, "The history of education in Calgary" (M.Ed. thesis, Washington University, 1954).

yielded information related to school music in Alberta. The Encyclopedia of Music in Canada is of particular value. Under various subject headings, e.g. "School Music", "Festivals", "Western Board of Music", it contains some facts about music education in Alberta. There are also cross references and bibliographical citations in this volume which have proven useful.<sup>1</sup>

Other books on music in Canada contain very little relating to school music in Alberta. In his historical survey of music in Canada, Clifford Ford describes briefly the development of school music in Ontario, commenting that developments in other provinces followed a similar pattern.<sup>2</sup> A chapter entitled "Music in the Schools" by G. Roy Fenwick in Music in Canada, edited by Ernest MacMillan<sup>3</sup> describes conditions almost exclusively in Eastern Canada. A subsequent chapter on school broadcasting by R.S. Lambert also focuses principally on that region.<sup>4</sup> However, a

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<sup>1</sup> Helmut Kallmann, Gilles Potvin, and Kenneth Winters, eds., Encyclopedia of Music in Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981).

<sup>2</sup> Clifford Ford, Canada's Music; an historical survey (Agincourt: GLC Publishers, 1982).

<sup>3</sup> G. Roy Fenwick, "Music in the Schools", in Music in Canada, ed. Ernest MacMillan (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1955), pp. 146-152.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., pp. 153-157.

chapter on competition festivals by Richard W. Cooke in the same volume does contain a useful description of their development in Canada, with acknowledgements to the pioneering role of Alberta in their establishment.<sup>1</sup>

In "The Growth and Development of Music in Calgary", Kennedy includes some information about the establishment of music programmes in Calgary public schools from 1885 - 1920.<sup>1</sup> He indicates that music specialists and supervisors were employed, thus showing that conditions were favourable for the development of school music in that city. Some biographical details on Madame Ellis Browne, who taught music at the Calgary Normal School for many years, are also included.

#### Summary and Conclusions

From a study of many books and theses on educational development in Alberta and musical development in Canada, it is possible to discover some information about the development of music education in Alberta. However, the details about music education are often very brief, and derived from limited sources, since music

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., pp. 198-207.

<sup>2</sup> Norman J. Kennedy, "The Growth and Development of Music in Calgary" (M.A. thesis, University of Alberta, 1952).

education is, in each case, only one of the many topics under discussion. Emphasis is on statements of brief facts about music education, and there has previously been no attempt either to treat the subject thoroughly, or to draw conclusions about various developments.

It is evident, from the literature presently available on music education, that thorough research is needed in order to present a more complete study of the development of music education in Alberta. Information on this topic should be available in one work, rather than scattered throughout many.

## CHAPTER THREE

### MUSIC EDUCATION IN THE NORTH WEST TERRITORIES, 1884 - 1905

#### Introductory Background

Before Alberta was granted provincial status in 1905, it was part of the North West Territories. This part of Canada also included present-day Saskatchewan. The North West Territories was governed by a Council, which was established in 1875. Its headquarters were in Regina, the Territorial capital. Education became a government responsibility in 1884, when the first ordinance respecting schools was passed by the Territorial Council. A Board of Education was established, on which Catholics and Protestants had equal representation. Each denomination determined its own course of studies, and its own standards of teacher qualification. In addition, the organization into grade levels in the two kinds of schools was different; the Protestants grouped students into Standards I-VIII (the equivalent of present day grades I-XII), while the Catholics used the Quebec system of elementary, intermediate, and superior courses. The curriculum for both denominations comprised nothing more than a list of textbooks. Emphasis was on the so-called basic subjects of English and mathematics.



In 1892 the Board of Education was replaced by a Council of Public Instruction. A new post was created, that of Superintendent of Education. The person chosen for this position was David J. Goggin, who had previously been principal at the Winnipeg Normal School in Manitoba. During his nine years as Superintendent of Education, Goggin refashioned and expanded the Territorial educational system. He replaced the cumbersome dual system of the Board of Education with a common curriculum, common standards of teacher qualification, and a common system of grouping students. (All schools, both public and separate, now had Standards I-V for elementary schools, and Standards VI-VIII for high schools).

Goggin expanded the curriculum to include more practical subjects such as nature study and agriculture. He greatly improved the facilities for teacher training by establishing short courses in Regina, the Territorial capital, and by organizing institutes for the professional development of practising teachers. In addition, he increased the number of school inspectors, who were the principal link between the schools and the Council of Public Instruction. Goggin's reforms ensured that the educational system of the North West Territories would be better equipped to cope with the considerable increase in school population, which resulted from large-scale immigration into Western Canada.

In 1901, the Council of Public Instruction was replaced by a Department of Education. However, the change was in name only; the reforms instituted by Goggin remained, even after 1905, when Alberta became a province, and a provincial Department of Education was established.

### Music Curriculum

The first Territorial curriculum comprised two lists of textbooks; one for Catholics and one for Protestants. No music texts were included in the Catholic list. The Protestant list contained two texts: Campbell's Canadian School Song Book and Mason's National Music Reader, Books I-IV. There was no indication given as to which age groups these texts were prescribed for.<sup>1</sup>

No information about a text called Campbell's Canadian School Song Book has been found by this researcher. However, a volume called Three Part Songs, by Sefton, and published by Campbell in 1869, is mentioned in the Encyclopedia of Music in Canada as the first school music text authorized for use in Canadian schools. The author also indicates that this text included some Canadian songs.<sup>2</sup> Trowsdale also described a text by Sefton called Three

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<sup>1</sup> Report of the Board of Education for the North-West Territories, 1885 - 1886 (Regina: Govt. Printer, 1886), pp. 12-13.

<sup>2</sup> Helmut Kallmann, Gilles Potvin, and Kenneth Winters, eds., Encyclopedia of Music in Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981), s.v. "School Songbooks."

Part Songs, but with a different publisher (The Canada Publishing Co.). He also stated that it was used in Ontario during the 1870s.<sup>1</sup> It is likely that the text called Three Part Songs is identical to the textbook which is called Canadian School Song Book in the Territorial report. Mason's National Music Reader is probably part of the National Music Course, by Luther Whiting Mason. This American series of texts was, according to Keene, a model for many music texts during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>2</sup> The method of instruction was through rote singing, with systematic mastery of music literacy throughout the course.

In 1888, the Board of Education issued a set of regulations, which included programmes of studies for Protestant and Catholic schools. Some brief descriptions of course content for each academic level were included. The Protestant programme was outlined for Standards I-V only. Music was included in the programme for those standards. "Simple songs" were prescribed for Standards I and II. For Standards III and IV, singing was again

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<sup>1</sup> George Campbell Trowsdale, "A history of public school music in Ontario (Ed.D. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1962), pp. 247-248.

<sup>2</sup> James A. Keene, A History of Music Education in the United States (Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 1982), pp. 191 - 194.

recommended, together with "Musical notation where possible." Two per cent was the suggested time allotment per week for music.<sup>1</sup> No music textbook for Protestant schools was listed in the 1888 Regulations, except for the Kindergarten Song Book, which was suggested for teacher reference.<sup>2</sup> The Catholic programme of studies also included vocal music as a subject. The Tonic Solfa method was prescribed for the elementary, intermediate, and superior courses.<sup>3</sup> No further details were given. The tonic solfa method of music education was originally developed by John Curwen in England during the mid nineteenth century, and introduced into Ontario by Alexander Cringan. It caused considerable controversy in music education circles, because it used an alternative form of musical notation.<sup>4</sup> However, no evidence has been found by this researcher that the controversy spread to the North West Territories. Education had been so recently introduced into Western Canada, and music, in particular, was so little taught, that any disputes over methodology would have been unlikely.

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<sup>1</sup> Regulations of the Board of Education for the North-West Territories (Regina: n.p., 1888), p. 28.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 30.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 35.

<sup>4</sup> For a more complete description of the tonic solfa controversy in England and Ontario, see Trowsdale, pp. 269 - 308.

In the Report of the Board of Education for 1889-90, The Canadian Music Course was prescribed for Protestant schools.<sup>1</sup> Although no author was cited, a series of three volumes with the same title was written by Alexander Cringan. This series was a course in sight singing through tonic solfa. No standard musical notation was included. The three volumes contained exercises and songs, sequenced according to rhythmic and melodic difficulty. They progressed from material based on the tonic chord of the major scale, to more difficult exercises and songs, which included chromatic tones and modulation.<sup>2</sup> An example of tonic solfa notation from Book I is reproduced on the next page.

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<sup>1</sup> Report of the Board of Education for the North-West Territories, 1889 - 1890, p. 22.

<sup>2</sup> Alexander Cringan. The Canadian Music Course, complete in 3 books (Toronto: Canada Publishing Co. Ltd., 1888).

Figure 1.

The first part of "God Save the Queen" in tonic solfa notation<sup>1</sup>

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN.

KEY A.

<b>d</b>	<b>:d</b>	<b>:r</b>	<b>t,</b>	<b>:-</b>	<b>.d</b>	<b>:r</b>	<b>m</b>	<b>:m</b>	<b>:f</b>	<b>m</b>	<b>:-</b>	<b>.r</b>
1 God	save	our	gra -	cious	Queen,	Long live	our	no	-	ble		

<b>:d</b>	<b>r</b>	<b>:d</b>	<b>:t,</b>	<b>d</b>	<b>:—</b>	<b>:—</b>
Queen,	God	save	our	Queen.		

No list of textbooks for Catholic students was included in this report. However, it is assumed by this researcher that the tonic solfa course was still the prescribed method for music education. Therefore, for a brief period, tonic solfa was recommended for use in all Territorial schools.

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<sup>1</sup> The Canadian Music Course, Book I, p. 38.



The first Report of the Council of Public Instruction was issued in 1896, when Goggin had been Superintendent of Education for four years. The curriculum was no longer a mere list of textbooks and brief statements; Goggin expounded his personal views on all subjects in the expanded programme of studies. He regarded music as an important part of a rounded education:

Music affords a culture for the soul as well as a training for the voice, and only such songs should be learned as express noble and refining sentiments, for the taste can be educated downwards as well as upwards. Music coming as a recreation after severe mental work takes up practically no time from the traditional studies and, when chosen to suit the feelings and moods of the pupils, has a restful, helpful effect on them.<sup>1</sup>

Goggin was also an ardent imperialist who worked ceaselessly for the Dominion Educational Association. He valued music for its power to inspire patriotic sentiment; in this case, loyalty to the British Empire.<sup>2</sup> Although his views on music education were not unusual for an educated person of the late Victorian era, it is noteworthy that he favoured this subject in a

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<sup>1</sup> Report of the Council of Public Instruction of the North-West Territories of Canada (Regina: John Alexander Reid, Queen's Printer, 1896), p. 28.

<sup>2</sup> Report of the Council of Public Instruction, 1898, p. 28.

part of the Dominion where education was in its infancy, and pioneer conditions prevailed almost everywhere.

Music was prescribed for Standards I-V only; it was not mentioned in the high school course of studies. The course was designated "provisional", which implies that it was a temporary measure. Some brief detail was given of course content:

Singing of rote songs; drill on the scale and intervals.<sup>1</sup>

The new prescribed textbook was The Normal Music Course, First and Second Readers. This music text was widely used in schools throughout North America during the late nineteenth century. It was a carefully sequenced approach to music reading. The course contained very little song material; it consisted mainly of sight singing exercises, which were painstakingly arranged according to rhythmic and melodic difficulty, beginning with patterns based on neighbouring tones of the C major scale, and progressing to more difficult material in other keys, with some part songs included. Instead of tonic solfa, numbers were used to designate degrees of the scale.<sup>2</sup> The Normal Music Course was prescribed until 1912.

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<sup>1</sup> Report of the Council of Public Instruction, 1896, p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> John W. Tufts and H.E. Holt, The Normal Music Course (New York: Silver Burdett and Co., 1883).

In the report for 1898, the word "provisional" was omitted from the course description for music. The programme description also contained more detail than before. For example, "singing of rote songs" was qualified with the words "clearly and sweetly" for Standard I. Singing in two parts was recommended for Standard IV. In addition, the teacher was given more specific directions as to which stage of the textbook and accompanying charts the students would cover in the various standards.<sup>1</sup>

In the report for 1901, the music course was again described as "provisional". The shorter course description of 1896 was also used.<sup>2</sup> This change was included in subsequent Territorial reports. After Goggin's resignation in 1902, no discourses on the value of music education, or, indeed, of any other subject, were included in the programme of studies.

#### Music in the Schools

During the period 1884-1905, there was a large increase in population in the North West Territories because of immigration from Eastern Canada, from the United States, from Great Britain, and from Continental Europe. Consequently, the demands upon the

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<sup>1</sup> Report of the Council of Public Instruction, 1898, p. 41.

<sup>2</sup> Annual Report of the Department of Education of the North-West Territories (Regina: Govt. Printer, 1901), p. 81.

education system were considerable. Many new schools were built, both in the emerging cities of Calgary and Edmonton, and in rural areas. Inspectors' comments, which were included in education reports, reveal the tremendous obstacles against which educators had to battle during those pioneering days. A severe shortage of qualified teachers, and the reluctance of many to teach in rural areas, resulted in shortened academic years, and the employment of ill-qualified or unqualified teachers:

Sixty per cent of all the districts I visited are short term or summer schools, nearly all of which change teachers annually.<sup>1</sup>

There was a great scarcity of teachers at the beginning of the year and a large number of schools were open only a few months . . . In all rural schools the attendance of pupils is very irregular. The majority of those who attend during the summer months are girls and the young boys.<sup>2</sup>

Considering such educational conditions in the rural areas, it is hardly surprising that music education was neglected in many schools. The few comments on music education in the rural schools indicate that the subject was not taught systematically, if indeed it was taught at all. Goggin claimed in 1896 that "there is more or less singing in every school but little systematic

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<sup>1</sup> Annual Report of the Department of Education, 1903, p. 44.

<sup>2</sup> Annual Report, 1903, p. 50.

instruction in music."<sup>1</sup> This comment was repeated, almost word for word, by Inspector Hutcherson in his report for 1903.<sup>2</sup> Inspector Bryan remarked that "the teachers who possess a talent for drawing or music are doing creditable work."<sup>3</sup> Several inspectors' reports contained no mention of music. It is not possible to ascertain whether this was because the subject was not taught, or whether the inspectors did not consider it important enough to comment upon.

Facilities for music education were much better in larger centres. Public and separate (i.e. Catholic) schools were established in Calgary in 1884 and 1885 respectively. The Lacombe Catholic School was founded and staffed by the Sisters Faithful Companions of Jesus. The first report of the Board of Education, in 1885, praised the work of the Sisters:

A glance at the amount of instruction imparted during the last year in History, Geography, Grammar, Writing, Reading, Arithmetic, Drawing, Vocal and Instrumental Music will show that a very intelligent course of teaching is pursued by the Sisters in charge.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Report of the Council of Public Instruction, 1896, p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> Annual Report, 1903, p. 51.

<sup>3</sup> Annual Report, 1903, p. 54.

<sup>4</sup> Report of the Board of Education, 1885 - 1886, p. 32.

Sister Hochstein also mentions the establishment of a Catholic school in Edmonton, and, 'as in Calgary, the Sisters gave music, art and needlework lessons.'<sup>1</sup> Statistics printed in the Board of Education report for 1890 show that, in the majority of schools where the Sisters taught, music was part of the curriculum, including, in some cases, the secondary grades, whereas it was offered in less than twenty per cent of the other schools.<sup>2</sup>

The Calgary Public School Board also offered music education to its students, according to Kennedy, who derived his information from School Board records of 1893, and from the Calgary Herald of that year. A Mr. Fenwick was appointed for one year as a part-time music teacher.<sup>3</sup> However, Kennedy also mentions a Miss Ada Dowling, who taught in the public system in Calgary, and who also taught music privately from 1887 onwards.<sup>4</sup> Although there is no information as to whether she taught music in the schools, it is possible that she did so, because she obviously had musical training. After Mr. Fenwick's resignation in 1893, no music teacher was officially appointed to the Calgary Public School Board until

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<sup>1</sup> Sister L.A. Hochstein, "Roman Catholic Separate and Public Schools in Alberta" (M. Ed. thesis, University of Alberta, 1954), p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> From statistics contained in the Report of the Board of Education, 1890, pp. 65-77.

<sup>3</sup> Norman J. Kennedy, "The growth and development of music in Calgary" (M.A. thesis, University of Alberta, 1952), pp. 142-144.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 130.

1903, when Mrs. Hedik Booth was given this position.<sup>1</sup>

### Teacher Training in Music

The North West Territories Board of Education first established teacher training departments in the fledgling high schools in 1887. No information has been found to suggest that music was included in the teacher training programme throughout the tenure of the Board.

In the report of the Council of Public Instruction for 1898, Goggin expressed concern that teachers lacked training in music:

The chief hindrances to progress lie in a number of teachers now in the schools who have had no training in these phases of art study, and in the continued admission of teachers from provinces where this work is not done.<sup>2</sup>

Goggin recommended that summer schools and teachers' institutes should be organized to remedy the deficiency. In addition, he advocated compulsory study of music and art in the normal training course, in order to gain teacher certification.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 145.

<sup>2</sup> Report of the Council of Public Instruction, 1898, p. 23. (Goggin combined music and art under the umbrella term 'art study').

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 23.

In this same year (1898), normal courses lasting four months were offered in Regina. Examination questions from these courses were included in subsequent educational reports. Music was first offered as part of the normal school course in this same year. From studying the examination questions of that year and subsequent years, it is possible to deduce the probable course content. There appears to have been a focus on both the acquisition of music literacy, and on the practical application of that knowledge in the schools. The difficulty of the theory questions suggests rather unrealistic expectations of those candidates who had no previous musical training. For example, the following questions were included in the examination for 1898:

Write out six measures of each of the following, giving as great variety as possible in each exercise:

(a) Key of A  $\frac{3}{4}$

(b) Key of E flat  $\frac{6}{2}$

Write the Chromatic Scale.<sup>1</sup>

In contrast, the questions relating to teaching music in the schools show a surprising realism; several of them confronted the problems of teaching in one room rural schools, where the majority of candidates would begin their teaching careers:

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 68.



You are appointed teacher in a rural school in which music has never been taught. Outline your work for the first year.

Name five songs you would teach children in a rural school, and state the educational value of each.<sup>1</sup>

Subsequent music examinations for normal school students contained similar types of questions.

Besides improving the training of teachers in the normal school courses, Goggin also had a strong desire to help those who were already teaching. He showed remarkable foresight in organizing teachers' institutes, which were similar to present day workshops and conferences. In the Annual Report for 1902, Goggin mentioned that at one of the teachers' institutes there was an address on music education by the music instructor from the Regina Normal School.<sup>2</sup>

#### Summary and Conclusions

The first curricula of the North West Territories consisted mainly of lists of textbooks with very few details of course content being included. A music text was prescribed for Protestant elementary schools in the first report (1885-86), but not for Catholic schools. However, by 1888 the tonic solfa method was

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 68.

<sup>2</sup> Annual Report, 1902, p. 20.

prescribed for all age levels in Catholic schools, and in 1889 a course in tonic solfa was also prescribed for Protestant schools.

Under Goggin's leadership, Catholics and Protestants had a common educational system. Music was prescribed for the elementary standards only. Few details about course content were included, except that the course consisted of rote singing and drills to enhance musical knowledge. However, Goggin wrote with enthusiasm on the value of music as a refining and relaxing influence, and as a means of inspiring patriotic sentiment.

Schools in the growing cities of Calgary and Edmonton provided music instruction for their students, in some cases, with specialists. In particular, Catholic schools were well provided for by the Sisters, many of whom had musical training. Many inspectors did not include information on music in their reports on rural schools. In the few instances where it was discussed, they indicated that if teachers had training or ability in the subject, they provided some music instruction to their students.

Music was offered as part of the Territorial teacher training programme from 1898. However, the intensity of the course, and the short amount of time in which to cover it, probably resulted in little gain for prospective teachers in musical knowledge.

Although music was offered in Territorial courses, the actual instruction in the subject seems to have been very poor, except in the urban areas, where trained specialists and better facilities in schools were available. The lack of music, or even mention of music, in rural schools, suggests that general educational conditions were so poor that there was little concern on the part of teachers and inspectors as to whether or not the subject was taught.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### MUSIC EDUCATION IN ALBERTA, 1905 - 1921

#### Introductory Background

The Province of Alberta was officially created on September 1, 1905. Under the terms of the British North America Act of 1867, education was now a provincial responsibility. A Department of Education was established immediately, with headquarters in Edmonton, which had been chosen as the provincial capital.

The transition from Territorial Department of Education to Provincial Department of Education appears to have been relatively smooth, because preparations for the changeover had been made prior to 1905. There were references in the Annual Report of 1904 to the forthcoming transition.<sup>1</sup> During the first few years of provincial government, no major changes were made either to the school system or to the programme of studies which had been developed by Goggin for the North West Territories during the 1890s.

The first major reforms took place in 1912. The classification of students in the schools was changed from eight standards to twelve grades, with each grade representing a year of academic work. Standards I-V became Grades I-VIII, which comprised

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<sup>1</sup> Annual Report, 1904, p. 5.

the elementary or public school grades, and Standards VI-VIII became grades IX-XII, which were the high school grades. The curriculum was also revised and expanded. According to Sheane, the new programme of studies was prepared by a committee of educationalists which was drawn from teachers, inspectors, and university professors.<sup>1</sup> Although it was still very academic, greater prominence was given to subjects such as agriculture, manual training, and physical education. All subjects were described in greater depth than before, with statements of objectives, and more detail included of what should be taught at every grade level. Further revisions to the programme of studies were made in 1917 and 1918.

Educational conditions which had been in existence during the Territorial administration, continued during the first years of provincial government. While city schools flourished, because of larger size, better facilities, and consequent attractiveness to well qualified teachers, rural schools continued to be educationally disadvantaged. Many country schools still had shortened school years, and were often staffed by people who had temporary permits to teach, but who had little or no training. Most rural schools were one room facilities, where it was difficult for one teacher to offer a complete educational programme to all grades. The majority of

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<sup>1</sup> George Kennedy Sheane, "The history and development of the curriculum of the elementary school in Alberta" (D. Paed. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1948), p. 33.

rural pupils were unable to obtain a high school education near their homes. Department of Education statistics show that in 1905, the proportion of students in Alberta who progressed beyond the elementary grades was 2.41%.<sup>1</sup> In 1921 the percentage had risen to 6.03%.<sup>2</sup> Although this shows that more students were taking some high school courses, the proportion of the total school population was still very small.

Continued immigration into Alberta also strained the educational services severely, in particular, the arrival of large numbers of non-English speakers. Although immigration virtually ceased when the First World War broke out in 1914, other problems arose. The supply of teachers from the British Isles almost ceased, and many local teachers of both sexes left their schools to volunteer for war work. Nevertheless, the mood of inspectors and other administrators, as expressed through their reports, was surprisingly optimistic. Although war conditions were deplored, they were not used as an excuse to explain away problems which were already in existence, especially in the rural areas.

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<sup>1</sup> Province of Alberta, Department of Education, Annual Report, 1906 (Edmonton: King's Printer, 1907), p. 20.

<sup>2</sup> Annual Report, 1921, p. 123.

### Music Curriculum: Elementary School

From 1905-1911, the course in elementary music was exactly the same as it had been during the Territorial regime. It was now listed as optional, possibly to distinguish it from the compulsory subjects, for which examinations were written at the end of Standard V.<sup>1</sup> The Normal Music Course continued to be the prescribed textbook. However, a curious inconsistency is evident from 1908-1911. In the separate course description for Standard V, The King Edward Music Reader was listed as the authorized textbook, even though The Normal Music Course was prescribed for Standards I-V in another part of each report.<sup>2</sup> No explanation can be found for this apparent contradiction.

In the revised curriculum of 1912, music was no longer designated as "optional". However, it was not considered important enough to be an examination subject. These latter were marked with an asterisk, as shown in Table 1.

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<sup>1</sup> Annual Report, 1906, p. 91, and Annual Reports, 1907-11. Annual Reports of the Alberta Department of Education are hereafter cited as A.R.

<sup>2</sup> A.R., 1908, pp. 79, 83, and A.R., 1909-11.

TABLE I<sup>1</sup>  
COURSE OF STUDIES - PUBLIC SCHOOLS, 1912  
Grades I to VIII

SUBJECTS	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	Page
* Arithmetic	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	9
* Reading and Literature	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	16
* Writing	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	24
* Spelling			x	x	x	x	x	x	27
* Grammar				x	x	x	x	x	30
* History and Civics					x	x	x	x	38
* Composition	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	48
* Nature Study	x	x	x	x	x	x	Agri.	Agri.	56
* Geography					x	x	x	x	62
* Drawing	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	64
* Geometry								x	69
Manual Training & Household S'ce	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	69
Physical Culture	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	85
Hygiene	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	97
Music	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	106

\* Examination Subject

<sup>1</sup> From A.R., 1912, p. 81.



It is interesting to note that drawing was included as an examination subject. However, a glance at the course description reveals that aesthetic development was not the principal objective of the drawing course; it was valued for developing fine motor skills, which would be useful for other subjects.

In the course description for music, objectives and course content were summarized thus:

The course in music is made up of rote singing, progressive mastery of the mechanics of music, systematic voice culture and sight singing.

The object is to teach the right use of the voice by exercise in tone production and to develop an appreciation of melody and harmony. Incidentally, music should aid language by improving articulation and by giving flexibility and expressiveness. It gives force to the sentiment of poetry.<sup>1</sup>

This was certainly more detailed than "singing of rote songs, drill on the scale, and intervals", which had sufficed for over fifteen years. However, the rather utilitarian objectives were in striking contrast to Goggin's eloquent treatise of 1896 on the cultural value of music. Nevertheless, it can also be argued that, although Goggin was aware of the emotional power of music, he did not offer any

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<sup>1</sup> A.R., 1912, p. 139.

practical suggestions as to how music could be taught in the classroom. Once his personal remarks were removed from the programme of studies, "singing of rote songs, drill on the scale, and intervals", was all that remained.

The work of each grade level was also described briefly. Rote singing was emphasized in the early grades, with theory being incorporated into the work of the higher grades. The course progressed from grade I, for which "Rote songs, including action, nature, season, lullaby songs. Scale singing, scale songs and the doh chord", were prescribed; to Grade VIII, which merely stated, "King Edward Reader, Book III. Construction of Minor Scales. Modulation".<sup>1</sup>

The principal goal of the 1912 course was that at its completion "pupils should be able to sing music of ordinary difficulty at sight."<sup>2</sup> This was to be accomplished through interval drills, time drills, and reading from the music staff. However, some work with tonic solfa names was also recommended, commencing with the doh chord in Grade I, and progressing to moveable doh in Grade IV (singing and reading in different keys).<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> A.R., 1912, pp. 140-141.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 139.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 140.

The King Edward Music Reader, Books 1-3, was the new prescribed textbook. It was recommended for Grades IV-VIII.<sup>1</sup> This Canadian text was written by the supervisor of music for the Winnipeg public schools, and was also authorized for use in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and British Columbia. The series contained far fewer exercises and drills than The Normal Music Course. Although material was sequenced according to rhythmic and melodic difficulty, beginning with simple patterns based on the C major scale, it consisted mainly of songs, supplemented by some exercises. Each book of the series also contained a selection of patriotic songs from the British Isles and Canada.

Also included in the course of studies was an extensive list of supplementary songbooks for teacher reference. Although the ultimate goal of the music course was the acquisition of skill in sight singing, the singing of rote songs was always important, from the kindergarten and game songs of the earlier grades, to the glees, part songs, and patriotic songs of the higher grades.

In 1914 the authorized textbooks were changed. For the first time, a distinction was made between graded and ungraded schools. The New Normal Music Course was prescribed for graded

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<sup>1</sup> Lawrence H.J. Minchin, The King Edward Music Reader, Books 1-3 (Toronto: Morang Educational Co. Ltd., 1910).

schools.<sup>1</sup> This completely revised version of The Normal Music Course contained more song material, and far fewer exercises, than the original course. Many of the songs were settings of poems for children, thus fulfilling the objective stated in the 1912 course of studies that music "should give force to the sentiment of poetry." The Common School Book of Vocal Music was prescribed for ungraded schools.<sup>2</sup> This Canadian text was written, according to the author, so that "the entire school can join in singing all the songs with keen appreciation and enjoyment".<sup>3</sup> The material was sequenced, as in other music courses, but the author hoped that each child would learn something, according to his age: the older children sight singing, the intermediate children singing by rote, but becoming aware of notation, and the youngest children learning entirely by rote. However, no separate course in music was prescribed for the rural schools; neither were teachers given any suggestions as to how to use the textbook.

The elementary curriculum was further revised in 1917. The music course now contained, in its statement of objectives, references to the aesthetic and emotional potential of music, which

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<sup>1</sup> John W. Tufts and H. E. Holt, The New Normal Music Course (Toronto: The Educational Book Co. Ltd., 1913).

<sup>2</sup> The Common School Book of Vocal Music (Toronto: W.J. Gage & Co. Ltd., 1913).

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., Introduction.

were strikingly different from the purely utilitarian statements of 1912. There was also a concern expressed that the students should enjoy good music:

The object is to develop in the pupil an intelligent appreciation and enjoyment of good music, a musical and expressive voice, the ability to read music at sight and the power of musical interpretation. The aesthetic sense is thus awakened, the emotions trained to lofty expression and the mind disciplined through the simultaneous exercise, in sight-singing, of various mental faculties. A discriminating musical taste is cultivated.<sup>1</sup>

The course outlines for each grade level were expanded considerably, especially with exercises and drills in tonic solfa, commencing in Grade I and II:

Grade I: The so-fa (sic) syllables for a number of the songs, taught to rote as the words of an extra verse.

Grade II: Modulator drill beginning with First Step Modulator (Tonic-chord tones) and progressing to the second step (Tonic and dominant-chord tones) and the third step (Tonic, Dominant and Sub-dominant chord tones).<sup>2</sup>

The modulator was a teaching tool devised by John Curwen. It was a large chart, on which the solfa syllables were printed vertically, with the tonic chord syllables in larger type.

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<sup>1</sup> Course of Studies for the Public Schools, Grades I-VIII (Edmonton: J.W. Jeffery, King's Printer, 1917), p. 106.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 107-8.

Figure 2

Tonic Solfa Modulator<sup>1</sup>

**m**  
 r  
 d  
 t  
 l  
**SO**  
 f  
**MI**  
 r  
**DO**  
 t  
 l  
**S**

The students would sing drills and songs to the teacher's direction, as he or she pointed to the various syllables on the modulator.

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<sup>1</sup> From an illustration in the Course of Studies, 1922, p. 13.

The other elements of the course were also described in more detail than in 1912. Expectations of accomplishment at each grade level were also raised. For example, working from the textbook was not commenced until Grade IV in 1912. In 1917, students began working from the textbook during the second half of their Grade II year. In 1912, moveable doh was introduced in Grade IV, whereas in 1917, it was introduced in Grade II.<sup>1</sup> The complexity of the course must have made it very difficult for teachers who were non-musicians to give effective instruction.

The 1918 revision of the course of studies was undertaken after comments from educators were received about the course for 1917. The introductory remarks stressed even more strongly a concern that pupils should enjoy music.<sup>2</sup> The utilitarian words of 1912, and the lofty sentiments of 1917, were both avoided. In addition, the rural school was mentioned separately for the first time, although there was still no information given as to how to incorporate music into an ungraded school programme, apart from rote singing for the whole school:

The purpose of teaching music in the public schools is primarily to awaken in the pupils an interest in

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<sup>1</sup> Course of Studies, 1912, p. 108, and 1917, p. 108.

<sup>2</sup> Course of Studies for the Public Schools, Grades I-VIII (Edmonton: J.W. Jeffery, King's Printer, 1918), p. 114.

good music and to foster a love for music which will insure that it be given in after life its rightful place in the cultural, aesthetic, and emotional life of the individual and of the community. To this end it should be the aim of the teacher to make the time devoted to music as pleasurable for the pupils as possible; and hence care should be taken not to introduce into the music periods elements of drudgery and monotony in the attempt to master the mechanics of musical notation for their own sake. The extent to which the rudiments of music should be taught depends largely in any given case on the ability of the teacher to utilize the knowledge directly in giving the pupils greater interest and enjoyment in the subject. In rural ungraded schools it is especially desirable that rote singing in which the whole school may participate should form an important part of the musical exercises.<sup>1</sup>

This introductory statement shows considerable enlightenment by looking beyond the immediate goals of mastering the mechanics of music. The suggestion that drudgery and monotony should be avoided also indicates a different attitude to the study of music. However, the actual course content did not reflect this change, since it still focused mainly on mastery of the mechanics. Course outlines for Grades I-VI were essentially the same as those for 1917. It would have been virtually impossible to have avoided "drudgery and monotony" if the prescribed course was followed, because drills and theoretical work were the foundation of the course. However, for Grades VII and VIII a new element was introduced in the form of music appreciation. In Grade VII, learning about orchestral instruments was suggested through listening to phonograph records,

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., pp. 113-114.



if they were available.<sup>1</sup> In Grade VIII, work in music appreciation was even more detailed:

Appreciation work - Special study of operas and various musical compositions, using phonographic records to illustrate same.

Centre song study around special subjects, such as Folk Songs of various nations, Patriotic Songs, Oratorio, Grand Opera, War Songs, College Songs, and songs by recognized composers (Schubert, etc.).<sup>2</sup>

In this part of the course, at least, there was some attempt to fulfill the objectives of the introduction by introducing students to music appreciation, which would hopefully be a foundation for musical experiences in adulthood.

#### Music Curriculum: High School

The introduction of music into the high schools was reported by J.A. Smith, inspector of high schools:

The placing of music in the high school programme and the crediting of the study of Music under outside teachers is another important step towards vitalizing our high school programme.<sup>3</sup>

Unfortunately, it has not been possible to locate any Departmental publication for this time which contains a course outline for high

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., pp. 117-118.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 118.

<sup>3</sup> A.R., 1919, p. 17.

school music. Annual reports did not include courses of study after 1913. The earliest regulations found by this researcher for the crediting of external music examinations are those for 1921. The Department of Education recognized certificates awarded for passing both practical and theoretical examinations from Toronto Conservatory, McGill Conservatory, Associated Board (Great Britain), Canadian Academy, and University of Toronto.<sup>1</sup> These certificates could be applied towards credit in Grades IX to XI. It is evident, from this list of various examining boards, that the Department of Education was anxious to grant external credit for music to as many students as possible.

The 1921 regulations also stated that the Department of Education had prepared a course outline in music for Grades IX-XI. The statement of J.A. Smith quoted earlier also suggests that music was finally being offered as part of the high school curriculum. However, it has not been possible to locate any such outline. Nevertheless, the fact that music was at least recognized for credit, even when taken externally, was a major step forward in the recognition of that subject as a valid part of a high school education.

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<sup>1</sup> "Regulations of the Department of Education relating to the Course of Studies and Annual Examinations for Grades IX, X, XI and XII for 1921", p. 2.

### Music in the Schools

The trends which were noted during the Territorial period continued during the first years of provincial government. Music education flourished in the cities. Music supervisors were appointed in Calgary and Edmonton, and specialists taught this subject in other towns such as Red Deer, Lethbridge, and Medicine Hat. In his pamphlet on education in Edmonton, McKee mentioned that Norman Eagleson was appointed music supervisor for the Edmonton Public School board in 1912.<sup>1</sup> Inspectors' reports for this time reveal pleasure at the good work being done in the urban schools:

A worthy interest is taken in music, drawing, manual training, domestic science and physical culture, in the city schools. Expert supervisors have charge of the work.<sup>2</sup>  
(J.A. Smith, Calgary)

In Medicine Hat and Lethbridge these subjects (Drawing and Music) are under the supervision of specialists and the results are very gratifying.<sup>3</sup>  
(D.A. McKerricher, Lethbridge)

Drawing, music and manual training are taught by competent supervisors and the results are especially good.<sup>4</sup>  
(J.A. Fife, Edmonton)

Some inspectors reported that British teachers, in particular, were well trained in music:

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<sup>1</sup> George Albert McKee, The Story of Edmonton School District No. 7 1885-1935 (Edmonton: Edmonton Public School Board, n.d.), p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> A.R., 1910, p. 46.

<sup>3</sup> A.R., 1909, p. 53.

<sup>4</sup> A.R., 1910, p. 52.

I have found the British teachers much better trained in music, drawing, manual work and literature than our own or eastern teachers . . .<sup>1</sup>

(P.H. Thibaudeau, Lacombe)

The British teacher on account of having received a good training in the schools at home usually excels in teaching, physical culture, drawing and music.<sup>2</sup>

(J.F. Boyce, Red Deer)

Chief Inspector Ross also noted that some high schools included musical activities in their extra-curricular programmes:

The larger schools are well organized for literary society and debating club work, and special attention is paid to oral composition or public speaking, orchestra and glee club work . . .<sup>3</sup>

During the period of the First World War, 1914-1918, town and city school boards reduced the services of specialists. In Calgary and Lethbridge, music supervisors were dispensed with. In Edmonton, there were also some cutbacks, but Inspector Fife noted that school music suffered very little, despite the curtailment of services:

An interesting feature of the work in the city public schools this year was the teaching of singing. The supervisor outlined the work for each grade for each month, and also spent some time in teaching in the different grades. Although two of his assistants were dispensed with, yet the improvement in the singing for the year was quite marked.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> A.R., 1912, p. 49.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 65.

<sup>3</sup> A.R., 1915, p. 24.

<sup>4</sup> A.R., 1915, p. 92.

After the war, music specialists were reappointed to their positions. The Calgary School Board records indicate that a Mr. Hodgson was appointed as music supervisor in 1918.<sup>1</sup>

Music education in the rural areas improved very little during the first years of provincial government. Many inspectors did not mention the subject at all, possibly because other matters, in particular, shortened school years, and poorly qualified teachers, occupied their attention. In many rural schools, music was not offered at all:

Drawing and music are not receiving due attention. This is especially true in the rural schools.<sup>2</sup>

(J.A. Smith, High River)

Drawing and music are only taught incidentally in the rural schools. Only those teachers who have had training or have ability along those lines attempt to give any instruction at all in these two subjects.<sup>3</sup>

(J.F. Boyce, Red Deer)

Music and drawing, if we except note singing, do not receive much attention outside of town schools.<sup>4</sup>

(M.O. Nelson, Wetaskiwin)

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<sup>1</sup> Calgary School Board, "Historical Notes and Minutes of the Calgary School District # 19, 1885 - 1950," Microfilm #B1 (1962), Archives of the Glenbow-Alberta Institute, Calgary, p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> A.R., 1908, p. 54.

<sup>3</sup> A.R., 1912, p. 64.

<sup>4</sup> A.R., 1913, p. 85.

In many of the rural schools inspected several subjects were not being satisfactorily handled. Many lacked even the variety of an occasional song.<sup>1</sup>

(L.J. Williams, Red Deer)

The contrast between city and rural facilities for music education was significant. Although many inspectors did not suggest reasons for the lack of music in rural schools, Inspector Boyce had indicated that teachers lacked adequate training in this subject. The difficult working conditions in rural schools may also have contributed to the omission of music from the school programme.

Schools received additional financial aid through the School Grants Act, which was passed in 1913, and amended in 1919. The Act of 1913 provided for grants to teachers and school boards to encourage the teaching of 'special subjects' in village and town districts.<sup>2</sup> In 1919, the Act was amended and more details were given about the amount of grant available, and which subjects were eligible. Under the terms of this Act, the Government would pay 20% of the salaries of teachers who provided instruction in household economics, manual training, commercial work, music, or art. In addition, it would pay 10% of the cost of equipment used for teaching these subjects. Districts which employed more than thirty teachers were eligible for this grant. A district which had one or

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<sup>1</sup> A.R., 1918, p. 61.

<sup>2</sup> Alberta Statutes (1913), Second Session, cap. 15, sec. 2(f).

more graded schools was eligible for a grant of 50% of the value of equipment used in teaching the above subjects, and a grant of \$50 towards the salary of a teacher who gave instruction in those subjects.<sup>1</sup>

It is clear, from an examination of the conditions for awarding these grants, that town and city schools, or the larger graded village schools, would be eligible to benefit the most. The ungraded rural school was in the worst position; grants were only available for the promotion of agriculture in that type of school.

#### Music Festivals

Music festivals of the type commonly held in Canada originated in Great Britain during the nineteenth century. By the early 1900s there were competition festivals in Great Britain, in which musicians performed for awards, and there were non-competition festivals, in which the emphasis was on participating in choral concerts. Non-competition festivals were held in Eastern Canada beginning in the early 1900s.<sup>2</sup>

The first competitive music festival to be held in Canada took place in Edmonton in May, 1908. It was an adult event, with

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<sup>1</sup> Alberta Statutes (1919), Second Session, cap. 32, sec. 5-7.

<sup>2</sup> Richard W. Cooke, "Competition Festivals" in Music in Canada, ed. Ernest MacMillan (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1955), pp. 198-207.

choirs and individual musicians competing for awards. This festival was subsequently held annually in Edmonton for several years. At the 1911 festival, public school choruses were able to compete for the first time, according to an article in The Musician. Two public school choirs participated in that event. F.W. Wodell, the author of this article, was impressed by the high quality of the entries, commenting that "even the young altos from the public schools showed good tone quality, for which their instructors deserve special praise."<sup>1</sup> By 1915, interest in the music festival had increased considerably among Edmonton teachers. Inspector Fife noted that "at the music festival held in the city in the spring fourteen children's choirs were from the city public schools."<sup>2</sup>

By 1916, Lethbridge and Calgary had also expressed a desire to host the provincial festival. According to the minute book for the Alberta Musical Festival Association, there was much heated debate concerning the annual location of the festival. In October, 1916, "a letter was read from the Lethbridge local

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<sup>1</sup> F.W. Wodell, "The Alberta Musical Competition Festival at Edmonton," The Musician, 26 (1911): 649-650.

<sup>2</sup> A.R., 1915, p. 92.



committee protesting against the holding of the 1917 Festival in Edmonton."<sup>1</sup> In December of the same year, a Mr. Hughes of Lethbridge sent a letter to the committee "demanding a promise from the Central Committee that the 1918 Festival be held in Lethbridge." This demand could not be met, because the committee had decided to hold the festival in Calgary at the first opportunity.<sup>2</sup> By 1920, however, it had been agreed that:

"the P.E. shall appoint the place where the annual festival is to be held . . . As far as possible, the festival shall be conducted by each L.B. in rotation."<sup>3</sup>

This resolution was written into the constitution of the Alberta Musical Festival Association, and, in succeeding years, the provincial festival was held in rotation in Edmonton, Lethbridge and Calgary. This arrangement benefited the schools in those cities, since they had the chance to compete in their home town every three years.

Although the provincial festival served the needs of the city and town schools, many rural schools would have had difficulty

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<sup>1</sup> "Minutes of the Alberta Musical Festival Association, 1915-1964", #74.120S., Provincial Archives of Alberta, Edmonton, p. 44.

<sup>2</sup> "Minutes", p. 151.

<sup>3</sup> "Minutes", p. 195. (This researcher infers that the abbreviation "P.E." stands for "Provincial Executive", and "L.B." stands for "Local Board").

in attending it, because of distance from the location where the festival was held, and because of poor roads and rudimentary transportation. School festivals were organized to meet the needs of the rural schools. According to Olive Fisher, the first school festival was held in Claresholm in 1917. The events included music (singing), instrumental music, recitations, art, and woodwork.<sup>1</sup> This festival continued to be held annually.<sup>2</sup> Fisher also mentioned that a festival was held at Raymond in 1921.<sup>3</sup> No information about these events has been found in other sources.

An important development in rural education was the establishment of school fairs. These functions were intended to encourage agriculture in the schools. They were generally held at the beginning of the school year, and were competitive, with prizes awarded for the best garden products, livestock, baking, etc. Inspectors' reports also indicate that the school fairs were an opportunity to demonstrate school work. A report by Inspector Nelson described the first school fair to be held in Wetaskiwin, in 1917. He stated that a "competition in singing" was included as one of the events.<sup>4</sup> In 1918, the singing competition was held again. In his report for that year, Nelson described the event in more

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<sup>1</sup> Olive Fisher, "The school festival and its contribution to the cultural life of Alberta" (M.A. thesis, Stanford University, 1942), p. 50.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 51.

<sup>4</sup> A.R., 1917, p. 71.

detail. Shields were awarded to the best rural school, and to the best junior and senior departments of graded schools.<sup>1</sup> It is evident, from this information, that the competition was thoughtfully organized to make it as fair as possible for the different types of schools which participated.

#### Teacher Training in Music

The first normal school in Alberta was established in Calgary, in 1906. The four month training session included a course in music. The instructor for this course was Mrs. Booth, who was also a music specialist for the Calgary Public School Board.<sup>2</sup> The examinations which she set were similar to those which had been set in the Regina Normal School before 1905. The nature of the questions indicates that the course was a combination of instruction in the rudiments of music and classroom pedagogy.<sup>3</sup> Mrs. Booth resigned in 1909, and was replaced by Madame Ellis Browne.<sup>4</sup>

In his thesis on the development of music in Calgary, Kennedy wrote that Browne was a significant figure in Calgary musical circles as a vocalist.<sup>5</sup> Her music course for normal students appears to have been more difficult than that of Mrs.

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<sup>1</sup> A.R., 1918, pp. 57-58.

<sup>2</sup> A.R., 1906, p. 36.

<sup>3</sup> A.R., 1906, pp. 206-207.

<sup>4</sup> A.R., 1909, p. 40.

<sup>5</sup> Kennedy, p. 42.

Booth. Her examination questions, which were included in annual reports until 1913, indicate that the course consisted mainly of theoretical instruction in music, with less attention being given to classroom pedagogy. For example, her first examination contained fourteen questions of which only two related to pedagogy.<sup>1</sup> It is also evident that Madame Ellis Browne gave some instruction in tonic solfa. Every examination which she set included at least one or two questions related to this topic, e.g.:

In Sol-Fa what is the Tonic called? Quote the rules for finding Me and Sol from a given Doh and explain how the other notes of the scale may be found from these three.<sup>2</sup>

Give rule for finding tonic from signatures with sharps, with flats; also for finding Mi, Sol, Doh, in staff notation from a given Doh.<sup>3</sup>

These questions show that Browne intended tonic solfa to be an aid both in sight singing, and in the development of literacy in traditional staff notation. It does not appear that she ever used Curwen's alternative musical notation.

Browne's music examinations indicate that she attempted to provide her students with as much musical knowledge as possible in the short time available. However, it is difficult to imagine that any student, without previous musical background, could have absorbed the large amount of material presented in this course. In

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<sup>1</sup> A.R., 1909, pp. 200-201.

<sup>2</sup> A.R., 1910, p. 188.

<sup>3</sup> A.R., 1913, p. 329.

addition, the lack of sufficient information about how to apply this knowledge to the classroom situation must have been a serious drawback.

For many years, E.W. Coffin, the principal of the Calgary Normal School, had been urging that the training session be extended from four months to eight months. In his report for 1907, he had stated that the special subjects such as music, art, and manual training, could not be covered adequately in the short time available.<sup>1</sup> In 1919, the length of teacher training sessions was finally extended to eight months in both the Calgary Normal School, and the Camrose Normal School, which had been opened in 1912. Although Coffin admitted that the amount of actual lecture time for the various courses was not greatly increased, he felt that the extended length of time in which to cover the material was of some benefit.<sup>2</sup> This measure would certainly had made the music course a little easier for students, since the amount of material to be covered was considerable.

In 1916, teachers in Edmonton were given the opportunity to take extra courses in the more specialized subjects, namely, singing, art, and manual training. Inspector Fife stated that "by arrangement with the Department special certificates are granted to those who satisfactorily complete the courses."<sup>3</sup> This step is a

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<sup>1</sup> A.R., 1907, p. 38.

<sup>2</sup> A.R., 1919, p. 38.

<sup>3</sup> A.R., 1916, p. 56.

further indication that facilities for music education in Edmonton were particularly good. About the same time, Norman Eagleson, the music supervisor for the Edmonton public schools, had prepared monthly outlines of the elementary music course as a help for teachers.

An important innovation in professional development was the introduction of summer courses for teachers. The first summer session was held at the University of Alberta in 1913. Emphasis was on the 'special subjects' of agriculture, manual training, art, and physical education.<sup>1</sup> A course in folk dancing and musical games was offered in 1915.<sup>2</sup> Music was first offered in 1918, as a compulsory component of a course in primary work.<sup>3</sup> Dr. Miller, director of the summer school, had written in 1917 that "for several years teachers have asked for special courses in Primary Work and in Music. It is respectfully urged that their request be granted, and that well organized courses in these fields be offered next year."<sup>4</sup> Music was finally offered for the first time as a separate subject in 1919. According to G. Fred McNally, Supervisor of schools, "it was hardly possible to accommodate all who wished

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1 A.R., 1913, p. 51.

2 A.R., 1915, p. 48.

3 A.R., 1918, p. 33.

4 A.R., 1917, p. 41.

to take the music and physical education courses."<sup>1</sup> In 1920, eight music courses were offered, some of which were a continuation of the previous year's work. They included methods courses, ear training and sight singing, primary music, and chorus practice.<sup>2</sup> The fact that so many music courses were offered indicated a great need for instruction in this subject.

### Summary and Conclusions

The elementary music course which had originally been prescribed for Territorial schools in 1896, continued to be used in Alberta schools until 1912. The revised music course of that year contained more details of what should be taught at every grade level. The 1917 revision showed a definite shift in philosophy by referring to the development of emotional and aesthetic feelings, as an important objective of the music course. The 1918 course went even further by urging that music classes should not be filled with drudgery in order to master the mechanics of music literacy. In addition, school music was to be a means of developing those interests of the student which would be beneficial to him as an adult.

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<sup>1</sup> A.R., 1919, p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> A.R., 1920, pp. 35-36.

These changes in philosophy were not reflected in the actual course content, which became encumbered with excessive technical details of exercises and drills, as if to compensate for the sparseness of the former Territorial curriculum. Sight singing remained the principal component of the course, especially from Grade III upwards. Tonic solfa became more prominent in successive course revisions. Theoretical work became much more difficult in the 1917 revision. However, one important innovation in 1918 was the inclusion of some work in music appreciation for Grade VII and VIII, thus fulfilling at least one of the stated objectives; namely, preparing the student to enjoy musical experiences in adult life.

The music course was designed to work in the graded schools, but it was not practical for the ungraded schools of the rural areas. No suggestions were offered as to how to teach music in this type of school, except for a textbook suggestion in 1914, and an exhortation to the teacher in 1918 that rural students should sing songs together in order to develop community spirit. The difficulty of the prescribed course would probably have discouraged many teachers from attempting to follow it, except for those with considerable musical background and ability.

Music was first introduced into the high school programme of studies in 1919, although there is evidence that some city schools had organized orchestras and glee clubs as extra-curricular



activities before this date. Although the Department of Education had stated that a course outline for high school music had been prepared, no copy has been found of such a document. Therefore, it appears that it was not possible to take music courses in high school for credit. However, students could gain high school credits in Grades IX-XI for passing external practical and theory examinations, which were set by approved music examining boards. Because the proportion of students in the high schools was so small (6.03% of the total school population), this measure would not have affected many students.

Facilities for music in city schools improved greatly from 1905-1921, despite temporary cutbacks because of the First World War. Supervisors and specialists attempted to ensure that music was an important part of the programme of studies. Because city schools were graded, it was probably possible to teach the music course effectively; indeed, detailed music lesson plans were prepared for teachers in the Edmonton public school system. Music in the rural schools seems to have been practically non-existent, except for very isolated instances in which the teacher had musical ability. Because general educational conditions in rural schools were so poor, it is hardly surprising that there was little time for music, or concern as to whether or not it was taught.

Music education in Alberta appears to have been at two extremes; either good, as in the city schools, or poor, as in the majority of rural schools. One of the principal problems was that the programme of studies did not offer any suggestions as to how music could be taught in an ungraded school. One improvement as a result of programme revisions was the addition of a list of songbooks. The most encouraging change was the realization, by 1918, that music education should be enjoyable, emotionally satisfying, and free from drudgery. Unfortunately, the pedantic details of the course description did not include any concrete suggestions as to how to achieve those goals. A teacher who followed the course outline faithfully would probably have had difficulty in avoiding drudgery and monotony in music classes.

While teacher training in music was always available at the normal schools, it does not appear to have been effective. Because the length of training was only four months until 1919, when it was extended to eight months, it is unlikely that students would have had much time to concentrate on studies in music, when there were so many other subjects to cover. Another serious drawback was that the music course offered in the normal school was simply not realistic. It was too intensive for the short time available, especially for students without previous musical knowledge, and it was not practical, considering the conditions which most students would be facing in the rural ungraded schools. Given these

circumstances, it is unlikely that many students who took this course would ever have attempted to teach the prescribed elementary course once they commenced their teaching careers. However, some improvement of teachers' musical knowledge and teaching methodology was attempted through the establishment of summer music courses in 1918, by the Department of Education. The large number and variety of such courses offered in 1921 suggest that there was much need for additional training in this subject.

An important cultural development in Alberta was the establishment of a competition festival in Edmonton, in 1908. By 1911, schools were participating in this event, and it is likely that the experience of performing was beneficial for the students who took part. In 1920, an agreement had been reached to rotate the location of this event between Edmonton, Calgary, and Lethbridge. Unfortunately, because these festivals were only held in the large towns and cities, many rural schools would not have been able to compete. An encouraging development in rural areas, however, was the growth of school fairs, in which opportunities were sometimes available to present musical performances. There is also some evidence that rural school festivals were held, with the first such event being organized in 1917 at Claresholm.

While it is evident that there was plenty of official goodwill towards music education, in the form of a detailed elementary course of studies, provision for teacher training and inservicing in music, school grants to encourage music in the schools, and generous conditions by which high school credits could be gained for private music instruction, the majority of schools, which were outside the urban areas, had little or no music. Educational conditions in rural schools improved very little during the first years of provincial government. Much of the official good will mentioned above would have had no relevance in a rural school, where the teacher was often untrained or poorly trained, where the enrolment was too small for the school to benefit from any grants, and where the course could not be taught effectively because it was not applicable to the rural situation. Although many inspectors mentioned music in their reports on schools, several did not. All inspectors were more concerned with the so-called basic subjects of reading and mathematics, than with subjects perceived as more peripheral such as music.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### MUSIC EDUCATION IN ALBERTA, 1921-1935

#### Introductory Background

In 1921 the Liberal Party, which had formed the provincial government in Alberta since 1905, was defeated in a provincial election, and the United Farmers came to power. The new Minister of Education was Perren Baker. Under his guidance, committees were formed to revise the elementary and high school programmes of studies. They considered the results of questionnaires which had been sent out two years earlier under the previous Minister of Education. For the first time, non-educators were involved in the initial stages of curriculum revision. These persons included representatives from many important organizations in Alberta public life, namely, the United Farmers, the United Farm Women of Alberta, the Alberta Federation of Labour, and local newspapers.<sup>1</sup>

The revised elementary curriculum was issued to the schools in 1922. It contained many new features, including a general introduction. The function of the curriculum was stated as being "to put children in possession of their great intellectual heritage."<sup>2</sup> However, a rather utilitarian approach to education is

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<sup>1</sup> A.R., 1921, p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> Course of Studies for the Elementary Schools, Grades I-VIII (Edmonton: J.W. Jeffery, King's Printer, 1922), p. 5.

also evident from the following statement, which was originally made by Perren Baker at a committee meeting, and which was included in the general introduction:

It (the committee) must determine the subjects which are of most worth to Alberta boys and girls. It must plan a course which will make any other than thorough work and the habits of industry impossible, no matter what subjects have to be sacrificed. The new course must be flexible and easily adaptable to the varying needs of the children of all parts of the Province. . . . Finally the committee must produce a piece of work which will meet the demands of the public for an education which is more practical . . .<sup>1</sup>

The subjects of the elementary programme were divided into two categories: fundamental and secondary. English, arithmetic, science, writing, and citizenship were fundamental. Music, physical education, and industrial arts were secondary. In addition, some directive (optional) courses were available in Grades VII and VIII, e.g.; agriculture and French. This new programme was also made more practical for teachers. Specific time allotments per week for each subject were suggested. The programme also contained more detailed descriptions of course content, and more specific suggestions on how to teach it.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Elementary Course of Studies, 1922, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 6-7.

The new high school programme was introduced into the schools between 1923 and 1925. The purpose of the revision, in the words of J.A. Smith, inspector of high schools, was "to organize courses so broad in scope as to meet the individual and social needs of our varied population."<sup>1</sup> The single high school course was replaced by six types of courses, namely, General, Normal Entrance, Agricultural, Commercial, Technical, and University Matriculation. Promotion was to be made by subject rather than by grade, with twenty-one courses required for graduation.<sup>2</sup>

The new elementary and high school programmes underwent some revisions during the 1920s, but the basic format and philosophy of both were not substantially altered. They were prescribed for use until the mid 1930s. By that time, both the curriculum, and the way it was interpreted, were being severely criticized by some educators, including inspectors. For example, Inspector Edwards of Calgary made the following observation in 1931:

Since our curriculum is somewhat rigid and static, with a preponderance of fact, the interpretation of subject matter in terms of the pupil appears to be a teaching problem of fundamental significance.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> A.R., 1923, p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> A.R., 1922, p. 26.

<sup>3</sup> A.R., 1931, p. 35.

According to Inspector Robinson of Lamont, many teachers did not encourage independent thinking in the classroom:

Many teachers are still found who believe that the memorization of lists of facts is education. Little attempt to get pupils to think things out for themselves and to take active part in class discussions is made.<sup>1</sup>

The six-track high school course was a laudatory attempt to meet the varied needs of a rapidly expanding high school population. However, even when the programme was first introduced, J.T. Ross, the Deputy Minister of Education, admitted that: "In the smaller schools it is probable that the course for Normal School entrance or Matriculation to the University will be selected."<sup>2</sup> In other words, opportunities for rural students were as limited as they had always been. In fact, most rural schools did not have either the facilities, or the qualified teaching personnel, to offer a full high school programme of any kind.

During the period 1921-1935, Alberta was affected by two economic depressions. The first, in 1921, was caused by a collapse in the prices of agricultural products. The mid to late 1920s were a time of prosperity, but the worldwide depression of the early 1930s affected Alberta very seriously. Annual reports for that time

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<sup>1</sup> A.R., 1929, p. 42.

<sup>2</sup> A.R., 1923, p. 13.



are filled with accounts of school boards which were unable to collect taxes from impoverished people, of teachers who were obliged to take reductions in salary, and of many other cutbacks in education. For the first time in Alberta, there was a surplus of teachers.

Nevertheless, despite fluctuations in the provincial economy, steady progress was made in many aspects of education. Inspectors' reports indicate that more elementary schools were open for a greater proportion of the school year. The teacher surplus of the early 1930s resulted in a more stable teaching population, which particularly benefited rural schools. Most significant was the increasing proportion of students who took some high school courses. This rose from 6.03% in 1921, to 17.58% in 1934.<sup>1</sup> In order to meet the demand for high school education, some rural high schools were built. However, the inadequacy of the provision for rural students was realized by the late 1920s. In a report on rural education in Alberta, Perren Baker stated that the creation of larger units of school administration would distribute available funds for education more equitably.<sup>2</sup> This suggestion, which was by no means new, was increasingly advocated during the 1930s.

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<sup>1</sup> A.R., 1921, p. 123, and A.R., 1934, p. 81.

<sup>2</sup> Perren Baker, "Rural Education in Alberta", n.d., p. 10.

In 1935, a legislative committee issued a report on rural education in Alberta. This document contained detailed discussion of the inadequacies of the educational system, especially its failure to meet the needs of rural students. Major reforms which were suggested included the following:

- a) The creation of large units of administration in rural areas, in order to distribute available resources more equitably.
- b) A complete revision of the elementary curriculum, which would take into account the development of the "whole" child (physical, emotional, and social, as well as mental).
- c) A revision of the secondary school curriculum, which would enable as many students as possible to pursue a high school education, no matter what career they would eventually choose.<sup>1</sup>

After three decades of occasional changes, it was finally being realized that a complete reform of the educational system was the only way in which to make significant improvements.

#### Music Curriculum: Elementary School

In the new elementary course of studies for 1922, music

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<sup>1</sup> Report of the Legislative Committee on Rural Education (Edmonton: W.D. McLean, King's Printer, 1935, pp. 19-24).

was designated as a 'secondary' course, i.e., it was not fundamental. In Grades VII and VIII, it was included in the list of "constant" subjects, as opposed to the "directional" or optional subjects. For the first time, a separate course for rural schools was included. The time allotment suggested for music was 75 minutes per week in the graded schools (the shortest time for any subject), and the same time in the rural schools, with an added exhortation that the opening and closing of the rural school day should be observed by the singing of patriotic and folk songs.

In the general introduction, the objectives of the music course were exactly the same as those for 1917; i.e., that students should develop appreciation and enjoyment for good music, while having their aesthetic sense awakened, their emotions trained, and their minds disciplined.<sup>1</sup> The concerns expressed in the 1918 introduction, that students should not be subjected to excessive monotony and drudgery while mastering the mechanics of music, were not included in 1922.

The elements of the 1922 course were the same as those for 1917, with one significant addition. This was the recommendation that music appreciation should be taught through the use of phonograph recordings.<sup>2</sup> In 1918, this had only been

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<sup>1</sup> Course of Studies, 1922, Part III, p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

recommended for Grades VII and VIII.

The work of each grade level was described in much more detail than in previous courses of study. Another important feature was the detailed instructions to the teacher on how to achieve certain objectives, and teach certain skills. For example, the directive for the Grade I course of 1917 and 1918; "Special attention to monotones and tone-dull pupils",<sup>1</sup> was expanded in 1922, with specific directions to the teacher for the "treatment" of students with pitch problems:

Occupying the front seats, they should sing and listen in alternate stanzas . . . A row of monotones stand facing the class, leaving sufficient space between them for another group of children, who should represent the best singers in the class, to stand in such a position as to sing directly into the ears of the monotones.<sup>2</sup>

An item from the Grade II course of 1917 and 1918; "Observation of notation of the simpler songs made familiar in Grade I, to which the syllables (solfa) have been applied, musical facts deduced, comparison of note values, etc;"<sup>3</sup> was amended thus in 1922:

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<sup>1</sup> Course of Studies, 1917, p. 107, and 1918, p. 115.

<sup>2</sup> Course of Studies, 1922, pp. 10-11.

<sup>3</sup> Course of Studies, 1917, p. 108, and 1918, p. 115.

### Second Half of Year

The first steps in the development of experience with notation to begin here. From six to ten charts of simple songs, containing no divided beats or chromatic tones, should be made on cardboard sheets about 2 ft. by 3 ft. in size. The charts should be made so carefully as to appear like enlarged photographs of the songs as printed in the book and should be selected from the first text-book to be used. Half of them should have the keynote on a line, and half of them on a space. These songs should have been previously learned by rote. The teacher now points to the notes and sings the sol-fa syllable names until the children can imitate correctly.<sup>1</sup>

Although not all musical concepts and skills were described in such exhaustive detail in this course, there were, in general, many more suggestions given to teachers as to how to achieve certain results in the pupils' mastery of musical skills.

Another topic which was described in more detail than in previous courses, was the use of tonic solfa. A diagram of the modulator was included on several pages of the course.<sup>2</sup> Although use of the modulator had been recommended in previous music courses, no diagram had been included in the course outline. The purpose of including the modulator in the 1922 course was so that it could be shown in its correct form.<sup>3</sup> The fact that it was included in the

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<sup>1</sup> Course of Studies, 1922, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Course of Studies, 1922, pp. 13, 15, 17.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 13. See p. 43 of this thesis for a diagram of the modulator.

course outline is further evidence of the policy of giving more direction to the teacher than before. Use of the modulator was recommended from Grade III upward. In the Grade III course description, the teacher was also encouraged to use the Curwen handsigns with the solfa syllables. There was even a description of the "mental effects" of the scale tones, e.g., do; strong and firm, mi; calm and peaceful, fa; gloomy and desolate, wishing to fall to mi; which was a concept of Curwen.<sup>1</sup> In addition, the teacher was referred to the latter's Standard Course in Tonic Sol-fa Method, for further information. However, despite the emphasis on the use of tonic solfa, it is evident that it was recommended only as a means to aid sight singing and ear training. There was no suggestion in this course guide that Curwen's method was ever to be used in its entirety, i.e., as an alternative to staff notation.

Despite the additional detail, and the more specific suggestions for teachers, the actual content of the elementary music course showed little change from that of previous courses. The work progressed from rote singing, with attention given to correct intonation and breathing, in Grade I, to the mastery of music reading by the use of solfa syllables and musical notation, in the higher grades. However, a conspicuous omission from this course description was any information on how to teach music appreciation,

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

despite the recommendation, in the general introduction, that this topic should be taught. The music appreciation component for Grades VII and VIII of the 1918 course, was omitted in 1922. The extensive bibliography for teacher reference, which was printed at the end of the course outline, contained only one item which was devoted to music appreciation.<sup>1</sup>

The Progressive Music Series was the new recommended textbook for the 1922 programme.<sup>2</sup> A Canadian edition of this American series was available. Of the four books in the series, Books I to III were recommended for Grades IV to VIII. Each pupil's book was accompanied by a corresponding teacher's manual. Unlike the previous textbook, The New Normal Music Course, The Progressive Music Series contained no singing exercises. Song material was sequenced according to rhythmic and melodic difficulty, progressing from songs based on the tonic chord at the beginning of Book I, to songs containing ascending and descending chromatic tones, at the end of Book II. Each rhythmic or melodic concept was taught through rote songs, then reinforced through sight singing of simpler songs. Most of the song material was composed, much of it by the authors of the series. Some folk material was also included.

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<sup>1</sup> Course of Studies, 1922, p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> Horatio Parker, Osbourne McConathy, Edward Bailey Birge, W. Otto Miessner, The Progressive Music Series (Toronto: W. J. Gage and Co. Ltd., 1921).

In 1924, The New Educational Music Course was suggested as an alternative text.<sup>1</sup> This American text was also available in a Canadian edition. Both content and sequencing of concepts were very different from The Progressive Music Series. Each new concept was taught through sight singing exercises, before a song was attempted. The initial learning consisted of the scale in many keys. Whereas The Progressive Music Series recommended the use of solfa syllables, The New Educational Music Course recommended the use of numbers to represent the degrees of the scale. Although it is difficult to explain why two such different texts should have been recommended for the same music course, nevertheless it was possible for the teacher to choose which sequence of teaching he or she was more comfortable with.

According to the general statement for the rural school music course, music was to be included for its recreational value:

The child's inherent love for music and the mental and spiritual benefits that accrue from its expression commend it to a regular place on the programme of each day's studies. A cheerful attitude towards the general work of the school will not fail to result from a well conducted period of singing.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> James M. McLaughlin, and W.W. Gilchrist, The New Educational Music Course, Canadian Edition (Boston: Ginn and Co., 1906).

<sup>2</sup> Course of Studies, 1922, p. 19.



Music was also valued in the rural school as a means of linking the community at social gatherings. However, a more formal study of music was also recommended. For this purpose, the course was split into Division I, for Grades I to IV, and Division II, for Grades V to VIII.

Although the course was not as extensive as that for the graded schools, students from Grades I to IV were expected to learn the solfa syllables, and to sight sing, both from the modulator and from staff notation. They also learned the simpler note values and discovered accent in song. Students from Grades IV to VIII continued with more complex rhythmic and melodic work, and also sang in two parts. The phonograph was recommended as an aid in the music class, both for teaching music appreciation, and for introducing new songs.<sup>1</sup> However, as with the graded course, no further directions on the use of the phonograph were given.

The recommended text book for rural schools continued to be The Common School Book of Vocal Music, until 1924. In that year, it was changed to The Progressive Music Series, One Book Course.<sup>2</sup> This text was a condensed version of the series for graded schools.

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<sup>1</sup> Course of Studies, 1922, pp. 20-22.

<sup>2</sup> Horatio Parker, Osbourne McConathy, Edward Bailey Birge, W. Otto Miessner, The Progressive Music Series, One-Book Course (Toronto: W.J. Gage and Co. Ltd., 1926).

Music Curriculum: High School

In 1922, an alteration was made to the regulations for high school music, which had been first introduced in 1919. The practical examinations of various music boards were still recognized for high school credit, but the Department of Education set its own theory examinations, the requirements for which ranged from a basic knowledge of clefs, time signatures, key signatures, and expression marks for Grade IX, to simple harmonization of melodies and modulations for Grade XI.<sup>1</sup> The Departmental theory examination was a compulsory component of music until 1924. Although the 1922 regulations contained a statement that the Department had prepared an outline of the music course, it has not been possible to find a copy of this document.<sup>2</sup>

The new high school programme was issued in 1925. Out of the six "tracks" available in the high school curriculum, music was suggested as an optional subject in the normal, general, and agricultural courses.<sup>3</sup> Music could be taken for credit during three out of four years of high school. Departmental theory courses were made optional, but a theory component for each level of credit (Music 1, 2, and 3) was still compulsory. Therefore, students could

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<sup>1</sup> "High School Regulations", 1922, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Handbook for Secondary Schools, Grades IX, X, XI and XII (Edmonton: J.W. Jeffery, King's Printer, 1925, pp. 3-4).

gain credits for music either by passing prescribed practical and theory examinations of designated music examining boards; or by passing both the practical examinations of music boards, and the theory examinations of the Department of Education. The only music boards which were now recognized for the purposes of high school credit were Toronto Conservatory, McGill University, and the Associated Board.<sup>1</sup>

Department requirements for Music 1 were a combination of the requirements for the former Grade IX and Grade X courses. Therefore, the course consisted of a review of the rudiments of music, a knowledge of chords and their inversions, and a little harmony. Music 2 included more advanced work in harmony, and work in written transcription of musical phrases to other clefs. Music 3 contained "more advanced questions based on the outline in theory for Music 2." It also included modulation and simple counterpoint. A little music history was also prescribed; "Questions on important facts in the life and work of Bach and Beethoven."<sup>2</sup>

No alterations were made to the Departmental theory courses until 1932, when the composers to be studied for Music 3 were changed to Handel and Mozart.<sup>3</sup> In 1934, Haydn and Mendelssohn were named as the composers to be studied. The theory

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1 Ibid., p. 123.

2 Handbook for Secondary Schools, 1925, p. 124.

3 "High School Regulations, 1932", p. 7.

requirements for each music course were also expanded, especially for Music 2 and 3. A knowledge of music ornaments, e.g., mordents and trills, was specified for both courses. For Music 1 and 2, writing a short melody was also added.<sup>1</sup>

There were also some changes to the names of the theory requirements of the various examining boards.

Table II  
Theory Requirements for High School Music,  
1925 and 1934<sup>2</sup>

Examining Board	Year	Music 1	Music 2	Music 3
University of Toronto (Toronto Cons.)	1925	Primary Theory	Primary Theory	Junior Theory & primary rudiments
	1934	Grade I	Grade II	Grade II, Grade III Harmony
McGill University (McGill Cons.)	1925	Junior Grade Theory	Intermediate Grade Theory	Senior Grade Theory
	1934	Elementary Grade	Junior Grade	Intermediate Grade
Associated Board	1925	Grammar of Music III or Rudiments of Music	Harmony Lower Division	Higher Division Harmony and Intermediate Counterpart
	1934	Grammar of Music Grade III	Grammar of Music Grade IV	Paper Work (Harmony) Grade IV

<sup>1</sup> "High School Regulations, 1934", pp. 7-8.

<sup>2</sup> Information from Handbook for Secondary Schools, 1925, p. 123, and "High School Regulations, 1934", p. 6.

From this information it appears that some requirements were simplified, e.g., in 1925, intermediate grade theory from McGill University was required for Music 2, whereas in 1934 it was required for Music 3. However, for other requirements it is not possible to determine whether actual standards of achievement were changed, or whether the music boards merely changed the names of the theory courses.

It was not possible to take music for credit through the school. The details of Music 1, 2 and 3 were called "requirements", not "courses".<sup>1</sup> No information has been found to suggest that any schools offered theory courses as part of the curriculum. Although some larger high schools organized choirs and orchestras for their students, it was not yet possible to apply participation in those activities towards credit in music. High school handbooks for this time stated that no outline in instrumental music had been prepared.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Handbook for Secondary Schools, 1925, p. 124.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 123, and Handbook, 1930, p. 101.

### Music in the Schools

City and town elementary schools continued to offer high quality music programmes. According to G.W. Gorman, Chief Inspector of Schools: .

The school systems in Calgary and Edmonton have assumed many of the activities peculiar to complex city school systems. In addition to the responsibilities in connection with fundamental requirements, special educational services have been developed, and these have shown considerable expansion and progress since their organization. In the public schools these include Art, Household Arts, Manual Training, Music . . . . Special supervisors and instructors are engaged to direct these special branches.<sup>1</sup>

In the same year, Gorman noted that a music supervisor was appointed in Medicine Hat. As a result of this appointment, "music is now receiving the attention which it justly deserves."<sup>2</sup> Music continued to be neglected in many rural areas. Inspector Edwards noted in Wainwright that "Music is very much neglected throughout the inspectorate, and the natural desire of the pupils to sing is given little encouragement."<sup>3</sup> Inspector Sweet reported that there was group singing in the rural schools of his inspectorate, but little instruction in music:

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<sup>1</sup> A.R., 1922, p. 70.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 77.

<sup>3</sup> A.R., 1927, p. 33.

It is only occasionally that I find any but the slightest attempt to provide instruction in music, though in the majority of rooms there is practice in group singing.<sup>1</sup>

A possible reason for the woeful state of rural school music was suggested by Inspector Scott in 1930:

... treatment of music and physical training is greatly subordinated to subjects considered more fundamental.<sup>2</sup>

In 1931, normal students who were doing practice teaching in rural schools observed and noted the incidence of music classes:

So far as the observation of the students during the practice period went it was found that direct teaching of music had a place on the time-table in only 28 per cent of the 384 schools visited; that in 29 per cent music was neither taught nor mentioned in the time-table; and that in only 19 per cent was the teaching of music observed.<sup>3</sup>

Nevertheless, there were some rural areas where music formed an important part of the school programme. In Pulse of the Community, Charyk described the valiant efforts of some teachers to provide their students with a musical education, despite the difficulties of teaching in one-room, multigraded schools. However,

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<sup>1</sup> A.R., 1931, pp. 57-58.

<sup>2</sup> A.R., 1930, p. 55.

<sup>3</sup> A.R., 1931, p. 26.

he also admitted that the inclusion of music in rural schools "appeared to depend almost entirely on the whim and ability of the teacher, no matter what the program of studies dictated."<sup>1</sup>

Information on the condition of music education in the high schools has been difficult to find from the sources studied. However, statistics provided by the Department of Education in Annual Reports, of the numbers of students taking the various high school courses, indicate that very few students gained credit for music.

Table III  
High School Students Taking Music Externally for Credit,  
1926 - 1932<sup>1</sup>

Year	Music 1	Music 2	Music 3
1926	9	1	1
1927	15	2	1
1928	17	4	3
1929	7	-	-
1930	9	2	1
1931	7	2	-
1932	4	1	1

There appears to have been very little improvement in the teaching of the prescribed music course in the rural schools, despite the provision of a specially designed course. Moreover, inspectors tended to comment on the various school festivals in their inspectorates, rather than on the regular music programme.

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<sup>1</sup> Charyk, pp. 132-134.

<sup>2</sup> Information from statistics in Annual Reports, 1926-1932.



### Music Festivals

The Alberta Provincial Festival Association continued to hold an annual music festival, rotating the location of this event between Edmonton, Calgary, and Lethbridge. In addition, local festivals were established in those towns during the intervening years of the provincial festival rotation. Lethbridge established a local festival in 1923, and was followed by Calgary in 1931. No information has been found about the establishment of a local festival in Edmonton.<sup>1</sup> Other towns and cities in Western Canada were also hosting festivals, and a "chain" was established, whereby adjudicators, who were mostly from the British Isles and Eastern Canada, would travel to Western Canada and adjudicate several festivals in succession.

In order to coordinate festival dates, establish syllabuses, and decide upon the choice of adjudicators, annual meetings of delegates from the Western Festival Associations were held, commencing in 1926. Reports of these meetings have been found, beginning with 1931. An important topic of discussion which concerned schools was the competitive nature of the festivals. Information contained in the reports for 1932-1935 indicates that there was some opposition from school authorities in Calgary to

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<sup>1</sup> Helmut Kallmann, Gilles Potvin, and Kenneth Winters, eds., Encyclopedia of Music in Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981), s.v. "Alberta Music Festival Association".

competition in the provincial festival. Mrs. Egbert, who was from Calgary, observed in 1932 that "the schools had for years held an exhibition Festival shortly before the competition Festival."<sup>1</sup> In 1934 and 1935, delegates from Alberta stated that the school demonstration festivals held in Calgary for those years had actually hurt the competition festival, because school entries in the latter were relatively few.<sup>2</sup> There does not appear to have been much support from other delegates for eliminating competition in the schools section of the festival.

A perusal of several festival programmes of this period indicates that city schools, rather than rural schools, participated in these events. The majority of entries were from the public schools, i.e., Grades I - VIII, but some high school groups also took part. For example, in 1928, high school choirs from Raymond and Lethbridge participated in the provincial festival, which was held in Lethbridge that year.<sup>3</sup> In 1929, two high school choirs, and also two high school orchestras, entered the provincial festival in

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<sup>1</sup> "Report of the 6th Annual Conference of delegates from the Musical Competition festivals of Western Canada, 1932," #74.120, 3a, Provincial Archives of Alberta, Edmonton, pp. 12-13.

<sup>2</sup> "Competition Festivals Reports," 1934, p. 11; and 1935, p. 11.

<sup>3</sup> "Programme of the 21st Alberta Provincial Festival, May 15-18, 1928, in Lethbridge", papers of Eileen Hamilton, M6365, Folder #6, Archives of the Glenbow-Alberta Institute, Calgary.

Edmonton.<sup>1</sup> The majority of entries were from schools in the city which hosted the festival that year. In 1924, in Calgary, out of 23 entrants in the junior and senior public school choruses, 20 were from Calgary, and 3 were from Edmonton.<sup>2</sup> In 1929, when the festival was held in Edmonton, 10 of the public school choirs which entered were from Edmonton, with one choir from Calgary.<sup>3</sup> However, it is interesting to note that some choirs were willing to travel from Edmonton to Calgary, or from Calgary to Edmonton, in order to participate in the provincial festival. This attests to the importance of this event for some schools.

School festivals were originally established in the smaller towns and more rural areas of Alberta. The Department of Education supported these events, both through grants, which were made available to the festival committees, and through the administrative work of school inspectors, who were often responsible for organizing and adjudicating festivals within their inspectorates.

According to Fisher, the school festivals which were established in Claresholm and Raymond continued to be held

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<sup>1</sup> "Programme of the 22nd Provincial Festival, May 14-17, 1929, in Edmonton." (Hamilton Papers, Glenbow).

<sup>2</sup> "Programme of the 17th Annual Provincial Festival, May 12-16, 1924, in Calgary." (Hamilton Papers, Glenbow).

<sup>3</sup> "Festival Programme, 1929." (Hamilton Papers, Glenbow).

annually.<sup>1</sup> In 1925, school festivals were established in Peace River and Vegreville. Inspector Yule reported that at the Peace River festival, "Chorus and solo competitions attracted 175 participants."<sup>2</sup> The chorus category was divided into junior, intermediate, and senior. Thereafter, the festival was held annually. The list of chorus winners for 1926 included a fourth category - rural school chorus. This addition indicates that rural schools were also being encouraged to enter the festival.<sup>3</sup> The first Vegreville festival was held after the local teachers' convention. It was held at that time so that teachers might be encouraged to undertake festival work in their own schools, once they had seen what was possible:

The contest was staged before a gathering of teachers so as to demonstrate the work that could be done in typical schools, especially the New Canadian schools where the musical ability of the children is of a high standard.<sup>4</sup>

During the late 1920s, the number of school festivals held in Alberta increased considerably. Inspectors' reports for this time contained considerable detail about the festivals held in their inspectorates. In every account, general remarks about the effect of festivals on music education were very positive:

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<sup>1</sup> See p. 55.

<sup>2</sup> A.R., 1925, p. 76.

<sup>3</sup> A.R., 1926, p. 45.

<sup>4</sup> A.R., 1925, p. 77.

The Vegreville School Festival was held on May 23rd. The festival of song and drama to be held in this inspectorate surpassed in its results the most sanguine hopes of its originators. From the rather obscure and insignificant programme held three years ago, to the elaborate functions of this year is a great step. It signifies progress, but above all it marks the establishment of the children's festival in Vegreville.<sup>1</sup>

I wish to make special reference to the Wainwright Musical Festival as the outstanding educational event of the year. If education is to be thorough, it must touch essential phases of life; and training in self-expression, self-development, and self-interpretation is a fundamental principle of school activity. The value of such training, particularly for rural pupils, is inestimable, since it can add so much that is wholesome and cultural.<sup>2</sup>

(This same inspector had noted two years previously that music was very much neglected throughout his inspectorate).<sup>3</sup> Inspector Scofield of Wetaskiwin hoped that the establishment of a music festival would improve the status of music in the schools of that area:

In only a few cases is good work being done in the theory of music, but rote music is being taught more successfully. To give impetus to the work in this subject it is the intention of the teachers in this inspectorate to organize a school festival in 1931.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> A.R., 1928, p. 55.

<sup>2</sup> A.R., 1929, p. 65.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 83.

<sup>4</sup> A.R., 1930, pp. 51-52.

By the mid 1930s the number of festivals held had increased to between 30 and 40.<sup>1</sup> In addition, the size of the individual festivals had increased so much that, in some cases, it was necessary to hold elimination competitions:

The committees of the large festivals have found it expedient to organize sub-festivals in the four or five local centres tributary to each of the large festivals, at which elimination contests are held simultaneously, the winners alone competing in the final contest. This plan works very well. It relieves the festival officials from an overwhelming burden of entries, makes the programme less cumbersome, and reduces the distances that the children have to journey. It increases, however, the difficulty of securing expert adjudication.<sup>2</sup>

In the same report on school festivals, however, a trend towards discouraging competition, rather than increasing it, was described with regard to the Lamont school festival:

At the festival of the Lamont inspectorate, held at Fort Saskatchewan, no medals or trophies were awarded; instead, the performances were graded as being very good, superior, and excellent. In this manner, competitions between individuals and between schools were replaced by competition against a standard of quality.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Letter from the Deputy Minister of Education to Mrs. Parker, Canadian Welfare Council, Dec. 10, 1935, Department of Education records, #79.334, folder #44, Provincial Archives of Alberta, Edmonton.

<sup>2</sup> A.R., 1934, p. 66.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

It does not appear that school festivals were adversely affected by the economic depression of the early 1930s. Files of Department of Education correspondence for this time include much valuable information about the organization of festivals, and the distribution of grants to festival committees. The award of a grant was conditional upon the Department of Education receiving from the festival committee a copy of the festival programme, together with a statement of the number of competitors, and the number of school districts involved.<sup>1</sup> In 1930, the earliest year for which figures are available, the grant to each school festival which had been approved by the Department of Education, was \$75.<sup>2</sup> However, in 1931, this was reduced to \$60.<sup>3</sup> The reason for this reduction, according to the Deputy Minister of Education, was:

. . . the number of centres at which music festivals are being held this year is greater than in any former year, and the amount set apart for musical festival purposes will not enable the Department to pay a grant of seventy-five dollars during 1931 as paid to several festivals in former years.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Letter from the Deputy Minister of Education to Secretary of the Peace River Festival, Nov. 9, 1932, Department of Education records, #79.334, folder #43, Provincial Archives.

<sup>2</sup> Letter from the Deputy Minister of Education to the Chairman, Peace River Festival, May 8, 1930, Department of Education records, #79.334, folder #43, Provincial Archives.

<sup>3</sup> Letter from the Deputy Minister of Education to the Secretary-Treasurer, School Musical Festival of Wetaskiwin Inspectorate, May 20, 1931, Department of Education records, #79.334, folder #43, Provincial Archives.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

In 1932, this amount was further reduced to \$50.<sup>1</sup>

However, despite the reduction in financial help available from the Department of Education, and despite the inevitable hardships of the Depression, the school festival movement continued to flourish in rural Alberta. In some areas, it provided the only stimulus to music education at a time when there was still more emphasis on the so-called fundamental subjects in the schools.

#### Teacher Training in Music

Although the normal school course had been extended to eight months in 1919, it was still too short, according to W.A. Stickle, principal of the Camrose Normal School.<sup>2</sup> In particular, he mentioned that the "special" subjects, including music, were not adequately covered:

In such subjects as Art, Music, Handwork, Domestic Art (and probably Penmanship) few of the students have had much actual training. This makes it necessary for the lecturers to give a good deal of time to teaching the fundamentals of the subject, and leaves too little time for instruction in method.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Letter from the Deputy Minister of Education to Mrs. Walkinson, Fairview Musical Festival Committee, June 22, 1932, Department of Education records, #79.334, folder #43, Provincial Archives.

<sup>2</sup> A.R., 1921, p. 43.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.



Few details about music training are available from Annual Reports of this period; any mention of music in the normal schools generally described musical productions and concerts put on by the students.

In the Edmonton Normal School, an attempt was made to solve the problem of equipping prospective teachers with enough musical knowledge to teach, within the short time available:

More than ever before the course in music has been of such a character as to make it probable that it can and will be taught in the rural schools. The following aims have been set up:

- 1) To make our students so enjoy singing that they will teach their students to sing.
- 2) To cover only as much of musical theory as can be done thoroughly and will be of practical use in the rural schools. The result will be that we shall cover slightly less ground than last year, but shall cover it more thoroughly. Evidence is not lacking that former students of the school are endeavouring to teach music in their schools. About half of our students come to us knowing no music whatever. Many have never even tried to sing.<sup>1</sup>

In the final sentence of that quotation, the "vicious circle" of the problem of music education was stated succinctly; if students were not exposed to music in school, they would be less likely to teach it themselves. It is also evident that teachers who had never attempted to sing before attending normal school, would not be

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<sup>1</sup> A.R., 1931, p. 32.

capable of giving effective instruction in an elementary music course in which the teacher's ability to sing was vital.

Summer courses for practising teachers included several offerings in music during the 1920s. In 1922, a course was offered in order to familiarize teachers with the new programme of studies in music.<sup>1</sup> In 1924, both theoretical and methods courses were offered, including a course in sight singing and ear training.<sup>2</sup> This latter course would have been particularly valuable, considering the heavy emphasis on sight singing in the elementary programme. It is encouraging to note that according to the Annual Report for 1925, a course in music was still compulsory in order to obtain a special certificate in primary work.<sup>3</sup> The inclusion of this requirement suggests that music was considered to be an important part of education in the early grades.

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<sup>1</sup> A.R., 1922, p. 28.

<sup>2</sup> A.R., 1924, p. 24.

<sup>3</sup> A.R., 1925, p. 25.

### Summary and Conclusions

The revised elementary music course for 1922 reiterated objectives which had been stated in 1917, i.e. that students should develop both appreciation and enjoyment of music through singing expressively; and also develop the ability to read music at sight. There was no reference to the more enlightened words of 1918, in which enjoyment of music was stressed more strongly than the acquisition of skills. Course content remained very similar to previous courses, except for slightly lowered expectations of achievement at the higher grade levels. However, more detail was included on what to teach at all grade levels. A significant feature of this new course was the detailed directions to teachers about exact procedures to use in skill development. Although use of the phonograph was suggested for teaching music appreciation, there was no advice given as to which music to select, or how to teach it. A separate course for rural schools was included for the first time. It was a condensed version of the course for graded schools. The principal emphasis in the elementary music course was still sight singing, with a more intensive use of tonic solfa than before.

Although the course for graded schools was more practical for teachers because of the instructional details, it was still too technical for those who had little or no musical training. The rural music course was slightly better, because it emphasized more rote singing, and the role of music in providing some relaxation from

other subjects. Nevertheless, it also emphasized the development of sight singing skills, which may have discouraged those teachers who were lacking in those skills themselves.

High school credit for external practical and theory music examinations continued to be available to students. In 1922, Departmental theory examinations were compulsory, but by 1925, when the new course of studies was introduced, theory courses could be taken either through external music examining boards, or through the Department of Education. In the new high school programme, three levels of music were offered. It was not possible to apply music activities taken in high school (e.g., orchestra, glee club) towards credit in this subject. Therefore, music was still not considered to a valid part of a high school education except through external credit. Statistics indicate that very few students availed themselves of this latter opportunity.

Music education continued to be well provided for in larger centres, mainly through the efforts of music supervisors and specialists. The increasing popularity of the provincial festivals, and the development of local city festivals, also provided a stimulus to the music programmes in urban areas. The neglect of music in rural schools was still widespread, with a few exceptions. Inspectors again blamed the lack of ability in teachers as a primary reason for the situation. However, there were also suggestions that

some rural teachers did not regard music as an essential subject, and subordinated it to the teaching of the so-called basic subjects.

Nevertheless, one significant development which boosted rural school music was the increased popularity of school festivals. The Department of Education promoted such events through the awarding of grants to festival committees, and by the participation of inspectors, who helped to organize and adjudicate these events. Despite poor economic conditions during the 1930s, the number of school festivals increased significantly, from two or three in the mid-1920s to between 30 and 40 a decade later.

Little information has been found about teacher training from 1921-1935. However, scattered reports indicate that, as a rule, normal school students had so little previous musical knowledge, that the short course available was still insufficient either to equip them with a knowledge of music, or to instruct them in how to teach it.

Although conditions for music education were still very poor in some areas of Alberta, there were some improvements during the period 1921 - 1935. The elementary course still failed to meet the needs of many teachers, but a significant new element in music education had emerged through the growth of the school festival. It is a testament to its importance that it reached its height of popularity at a time of severe economic depression.

## CHAPTER SIX

### MUSIC EDUCATION IN ALBERTA, 1935 - 1945

#### Introductory Background

During the decade 1935-1945, the educational system of Alberta underwent major administrative and curricular changes. No aspect of education was left unaffected by these reforms. Although there was a change of government in 1935, when the United Farmers were defeated by the Social Credit party in a provincial election, the work of reforming the educational system continued uninterrupted. In fact, the interests of education were probably even better served than before because the new Premier of Alberta, William Aberhart, was himself a former teacher. In addition to his duties as Premier, he also assumed the office of Minister of Education from 1935 until his death in 1943.

In 1936, a School Act was passed which made possible the formation of large units of educational administration called divisions. During the first year of the new legislation, 11 divisions were formed, which absorbed about 800 school districts.<sup>1</sup> By 1943, there were 50 divisions, which included in their jurisdiction all but the most isolated districts.<sup>2</sup> Under

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<sup>1</sup> A.R., 1936, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> A.R., 1943, p. 9.

the new system, a group of school districts (between 50-100), would unite to form a division, which would be administered by a board of trustees. Its responsibilities included operation of schools, hiring of teachers, preparation of budgets, acquisition of materials, and provision of health and other student services.<sup>1</sup> School buildings and facilities were centralized, with transportation being provided for students who lived far away. The principal advantages of the new system envisaged by the Department of Education, were the following:

. . . health supervision, better instruction in music, facilities for training in household economics, and practical education of all sorts, training in speech production and dramatics, better library service and, most important of all, the provision of high school services on terms similar to those which are the commonplace of city dwellers.<sup>2</sup>

A report issued in 1940 indicated that the establishment of the school divisions had resulted in greatly improved facilities and opportunities for rural students.<sup>3</sup> The one-room, multi-graded school started to disappear, as students were transported to more centralized, graded schools.

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<sup>1</sup> J.W. Chalmers, Schools of the Foothills Province (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967), p. 285.

<sup>2</sup> A.R., 1936, p. 7.

<sup>3</sup> After Three Years: A statement concerning the larger unit of school administration in Alberta (Edmonton: A. Shnitka, King's Printer, 1940).

In 1936 the allocation of grade levels between elementary and high school was also changed. Grades I-VI now constituted the elementary school, Grades VII-IX became a new category called intermediate, and Grades X-XII formed the high school. Although, in many cases, students still attended the same school for their entire education, there were separate curricula for each stage of the process.

The new elementary curriculum was piloted in 1935, and issued to schools in 1936. In philosophy and content it was radically different from previous elementary programmes. It was essentially child centred, with the principal focus on learning through activity:

Learning is not something that a child gets, but something that he does. The child grows into knowledge, skill, appreciation and culture; he does not take these things from the hand of the teacher.<sup>1</sup>

Although students would still do some formal study in the basic skills of language and mathematics, they would also work co-operatively on "enterprises", or projects, e.g.; "The Sun makes a healthy body."<sup>2</sup> Integration of subject areas was an important feature of enterprises. In addition, a significant result of this

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<sup>1</sup> Programme of Studies for the Elementary School, Grades I-VI (Edmonton: A. Shnitka, King's Printer, 1936), p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Elementary Programme of Studies, 1936, p. 305.



type of education, according to H.C. Newland, supervisor of schools, and an enthusiastic advocate of the new approach, was the opportunity for children to experience democracy first-hand:

At this time of world crisis, when we are struggling to maintain our democratic way of life, we do well to recognize the fact that to think and act democratically does not develop automatically in children, like a sixth-year molar, but must be taught through a living situation both at home and in the classroom. Accordingly, Alberta's Activity Programme for the Elementary School provides a type of classroom experience in which children may practice democracy, and learn about it from living in it.<sup>1</sup>

A third important feature of the new curriculum was the emphasis on the emotional and aesthetic development of the child through his/her increased participation in the fine arts. All subject areas of the programme were now recognized as necessary and valuable in the child's education.

The intermediate curriculum was first introduced into the schools in 1937. It represented the first attempt in Alberta to consider the educational needs of adolescents separately from other age groups. The programme consisted of a core of compulsory subjects, with provision for choosing options. The principal goal of the programme was to develop the interests and aptitudes of all students, whether they would proceed to high school or not.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> A.R., 1940, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> A.R., 1937, p. 17.

The high school programme was introduced in stages, becoming completely operational by 1939. The six track programme, which had been in place since 1925, was replaced by one common programme, which consisted of a core of compulsory subjects, with optional subjects available.<sup>1</sup> The Department of Education also required that teachers who gave instruction in high school subjects, and some Grade IX subjects, had to be properly qualified. In addition, restrictions were imposed on the type of high school courses which could be offered in one room schools. Transportation and dormitory facilities were provided for students who did not have access to a high school education near their homes.

The Department of Education was very satisfied with the results of the changes to the educational system. According to G. Fred McNally, Deputy Minister of Education, the most significant advance was in the greater availability of quality high school education to rural students:

It is in this particular field that the Divisions have made their most significant achievement. One Board is able to say that no pupil in the entire Division who wished to proceed from the Intermediate School to High School last September was prevented from doing so.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> A.R., 1938, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> A.R., 1937, p. 10.

Educational reform was initiated in Alberta at a time of economic depression. This depression was only fully abated by the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939. War conditions caused many problems in the educational system, including a severe shortage of teachers, interruptions to the school year when high school students were needed to work in agriculture, and restrictions on transportation because of gasoline rationing. However, despite the obstacles caused by the exigencies of war, the Department of Education was generally pleased with the progress in education during this time. Although the realities did not always match up to the ideals envisaged during the mid 1930s, there was never any suggestion that there should be a return to the former system.

#### Music Curriculum: Elementary School

Music received special attention in Departmental reports of the mid 1930s. "Music in every school" was an item contained in the report of the legislative committee on rural education.<sup>1</sup> (It was the only subject to be singled out in this way). In the description of the new elementary programme for 1936, the following statement was included:

Music will be a required subject throughout the elementary school, and will be closely linked to every activity of the school programme.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Report of the Legislative Committee on Rural Education (Edmonton: W.D. McLean, King's Printer, 1935, pp. 20, 31.

<sup>2</sup> A.R., 1936, p. 16.

In the 1922 elementary programme, subjects had not been designated compulsory or optional; all subjects were presumed to be part of the programme. However, they were designated as being fundamental or secondary.<sup>1</sup> Inspectors' reports prior to 1935 had indicated that some subjects (including music) were neglected, because teachers gave priority to instruction in subjects they perceived as more fundamental. The emphasis in 1936 on music as a required part of the programme may be inferred as an attempt to correct the misunderstanding that some subjects in the curriculum could be omitted.

There was no separate section for rural schools included in the 1936 elementary music course. However, in the general introduction, it was stated that the new course was written with the limitations of rural and small-town teachers in mind, and that specialist teachers would be expected to cover more than the minimum requirements.<sup>2</sup> The time allotment for music was the same as in the 1922 course (75 minutes per week), but a daily music period of fifteen minutes was recommended.<sup>3</sup>

The general aim of the music course was stated as follows:

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<sup>1</sup> See p. 72 of this thesis.

<sup>2</sup> Elementary Programme of Studies, 1936, p. 223.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 225.

The chief aim of Music instruction is to develop among children cultural interests and appreciations which will enrich their lives not only at school but during their leisure time; to give a training that will result in the development of a reasonable amount of skill and a love and taste for good music which will function in their scheme of living both now and in later life. "Children must be helped that their lives may be enriched from beginning to end."<sup>1</sup>

The emphasis on developing interests which would enrich students' lives after leaving school had previously been mentioned in the 1918 course, but had been omitted from the 1922 course.

The principal elements of the course were song singing, music reading, listening to music for aesthetic enjoyment, and, in cases where teachers had sufficient training, some work with original composition by elementary pupils.<sup>2</sup> Song singing and music reading had formed the principal elements of previous music courses. Listening to music (i.e., music appreciation) had been mentioned in the 1922 course, but no suggestions had been given as to how to incorporate it into a music programme, or what objectives could be achieved from it. In the 1936 course, under a sub-heading, "Appreciation", it was stated that listening to music on the phonograph or radio could achieve the following:

. . . bringing to the hearing of children a greatly expanded range of musical expression: the rich palette of

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 223.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

orchestral tone colours in various combinations; the unlimited possibilities of the full symphonic orchestra in expressing every shade of emotion; the illustration of all styles, forms, moods and periods of musical composition . . . <sup>1</sup>

Integration of music with other subject areas was also encouraged, e.g., learning folk songs of other countries to correlate with work in social studies, or listening to music depicting nature. However, it was emphasized that music selections chosen for this purpose were to be of good quality, and also that some elements of the music course would still have to be taught separately.<sup>2</sup> Although the course was described grade by grade, it was also divided into two broad sections: Division I (Grades I-III), and Division II (Grades IV-VI). The rural teacher, as in 1922, was advised to teach by division, rather than by grade. Minimum standards of achievement for each division were also stated.

The work of each grade level was described in even more detail than in previous programmes of studies. The elements of music for Division I (Grades I-III) were tune, rhythm, and appreciation.<sup>3</sup> More suggestions than before were given for helping out of tune students or "monotones", with use of imagery which could be expected to appeal to children, e.g., imitating the

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 224.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp. 226-230.

wind, or an aeroplane, or the crowing of a rooster, in order to find ones high voice.<sup>1</sup> Although rote singing had always formed an important part of previous music courses, it was not until 1936 that any directions were given to the teacher as to how to teach a rote song:

Songs presented as a whole, artistically, at least twice, then taught, phrase by phrase, children imitating the teacher at some motion of teacher's hand without breaking the rhythm . . . If children cannot give back the phrase, either the song is too difficult or it has not been heard often enough. With beginners the phrase may have to be broken into two sections. One stanza only is to be taught in one lesson.<sup>2</sup>

A significant new element in the work for Grades I-II was rhythmic training. In the 1922 course, rhythmic work was not begun until Grade II, and it merely consisted of discovering accent in songs. In 1936, rhythmic activities were described in great detail. They included physical response to the beat in music through clapping, walking, marching, and skipping to music; the performing of singing games in order to encourage physical responses to music (in previous programmes of studies, singing games had been mentioned in the physical education course, but not in the music course); and participation in rhythm bands in order to reinforce response to the beat in music.<sup>3</sup>

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1 Ibid., pp. 226-227.

2 Ibid., p. 228.

3 Ibid., p. 229.

Music appreciation in Grade I was valued principally for correlation with pictures or poetry, for developing rhythmic response in children, and for quiet listening. Several phonograph recordings were suggested, with objectives indicated, e.g. children would view a picture of marching soldiers while listening to Schumann's Soldiers March.<sup>1</sup>

The work of Grades II and III was a continuation of the work begun in Grade I, with increased emphasis on analysis of the music performed or listened to. This included indicating higher and lower pitches with a hand gesture; distinguishing similar and different phrases in songs; and improvising answering phrases to 'question' phrases. Activities in appreciation for Grade III also included distinguishing between the sounds of some common orchestral instruments. Tonic solfa syllables were introduced in Grade III, and preparation for music reading was begun with observation songs on charts (in 1922, this work was commenced in Grade II). The procedure for introducing an observation song was described in even more detail than in 1922, with hypothetical teacher questions to the student included.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., pp. 230-231.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 236-237.



The course for Division II (Grades IV-VI) also consisted of work in tune, rhythm, and appreciation, with the addition of a section on music theory. The principal emphasis in "tune" was on learning to sing music at sight. As in the 1922 programme, the use of tonic solfa was recommended, and explained in detail, including the mental effects of the tones of the major scale, and the use of hand signs and the modulator. Interval drills were also suggested, with chromatic tones being introduced in Grade VI.<sup>1</sup> On the whole, the melodic and rhythmic work of Division II was not as complex as that of the 1922 course, and was introduced in later grade levels than before. The work in rhythm included formal study of note values, but folk dancing and rhythm band work were also suggested in order to encourage physical rhythmic response to music, thus continuing the work of Division I.<sup>2</sup>

A large portion of the Division II course was devoted to music appreciation through listening to phonograph records. Lists of recordings were provided, which illustrated the various concepts to be covered. Throughout Division II, the students were expected to learn about the various instruments of the orchestra, to identify national characteristics of some music, to identify mood in

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., pp. 240-264.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 245.

music, and to enjoy selections for quiet listening.<sup>1</sup> By Grade VI, students had also learned to distinguish between major and minor (both through listening to records and through singing major and minor songs), and were noting the difference between descriptive music and pure music.<sup>2</sup>

The prescribed pupil's text for Grades IV-VI continued to be The Progressive Music Series, Books I and II. The extensive list of materials in the teacher's reference section reflected the changes in the elementary music course. In addition to the rote song collections and pedagogical books, it now included collections of action songs arrangements of music for rhythm band, books on music appreciation, and supplementary books for children's reading.<sup>3</sup>

In 1940, the elementary curriculum underwent some revisions, in response to reactions from the teachers who had been using it for four years. The only changes to the music course were a new prescribed pupil text, and some changes in the list of teacher reference materials. The Music Hour, Books I and II, were prescribed for use in Divisions I and II respectively. Three out of the four authors of this text had also written The Progressive Music

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., pp. 245-248, pp. 252-254, pp. 258-261.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 252-253.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp. 264-266.

Series. Sequencing of material was similar, but there were specific objectives stated as to the purpose of each song; whether it was for rote singing, observation, or reading. The text also contained some well-known classical melodies set to words. The teacher's book for the early grades contained suggestions for activities with rhythm bands.<sup>1</sup>

The elementary music course of 1936 reflected a greater effort, on the part of its designers, to bring more variety into the school music programme. Although sight singing was still at the heart of the course, especially for Division II, other experiences in appreciation and rhythm had been added. Course content indicated a more enlightened approach to the subject in terms of the child's interests and stages of development.

#### Music Curriculum: Intermediate School

Music was compulsory for Grades VII and VIII of the intermediate school, and optional for Grade IX. Two periods per week were allotted for music in Grades VII and VIII, and between two

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<sup>1</sup> Osbourne McConathy, W. Otto Miessner, Edward Bailey Birge, Mabel E. Bray. The Music Hour, Books I and II (Toronto: W.J. Gage and Co. Ltd., 1938).

and four periods were available for Grade IX. In Grade IX, it was also possible to obtain full standing in music by gaining credit from external examining boards in practical examinations.<sup>1</sup>

The music course for Grades VII and VIII was intended as a continuation of the elementary course. However, whereas sight singing was heavily emphasized in Grades V and VI of the elementary course, pleasureable experience, rather than skill development, was stated as an important objective of the Grade VII and VIII courses:

Enjoyable musical experiences aid in the development of high ideals, the formation of good taste and artistic discrimination. "What the pupil is able to do here and now is of less importance than what interests or repels him. Attitudes, tendencies, desires are more important than immediate achievement."<sup>2</sup>

The potential of music to appeal to the emotions of adolescents was particularly stressed:

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<sup>1</sup> Programme of Studies for the Intermediate School, Grades VII, VIII and IX, and Departmental Regulations relating to the Grade IX examination (Edmonton: A. Shnitka, King's Printer, 1935?), pp. 9, 10, 16.

<sup>2</sup> Intermediate Programme of Studies, 1935, p. 167.

Music selected for these grades should be worthwhile, and should make a strong emotional appeal to pupils through its beauty of melody, its appealing harmony, and its expressive text. "Music is the language of the finer emotions."

"It is emotion captured and crystallized in tone. If we do not teach it so, we do not teach it at all."<sup>1</sup>

The elements of the course were chorus practice, sight singing and ear training, listening to music, and some work in theory. Membership in a school glee club was suggested as an additional activity in larger schools. Establishment of a school orchestra or band was also encouraged.<sup>2</sup>

In the section on chorus practice, detailed instructions were given to the teacher as to how to identify voice range, improve diction, and enhance tone production. However, there were numerous implications that drudgery was to be avoided, and that the less talented students should also be encouraged:

They may, then, become interested in music not necessarily as an art to be cultivated, but as a recreation to be indulged in.<sup>3</sup>

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1 Ibid.

2 Ibid., p. 169.

3 Ibid.

Work in sight singing was not advanced beyond the standard recommended for elementary students, except for practice in reading two and three part songs. Some practice in inner hearing sections of songs, and improvising music, was suggested. Theoretical work was intended to be incidental, rather than a primary component of the course.

Listening to music was strongly emphasized. Some work in this area had been recommended in Grades VII and VIII in 1918, but it had been omitted from the revised course of 1922, even though music appreciation had been suggested in the general introduction to that course.<sup>1</sup> In 1935, suggested listening experiences were the same as for 1918; namely, selections from opera, oratorio, art song, and folk song; and listening to the sounds of orchestral instruments. However, whereas in 1918 no specific musical selections were recommended, in 1935 numerous recordings of various musical genres were listed. In addition, students who had musical training were encouraged to perform for their classmates, and thereby encourage others to learn an instrument.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See p. 72.

<sup>2</sup> Intermediate Programme of Studies, 1935, pp. 179-185.

In Grade IX, credit for music could be gained by taking a general music course similar in outline to the one prescribed for Grades VII and VIII; or by taking an instrumental option, together with some appreciation and theory. The instrumental option could be taken either through participation in a school orchestra or band, or through private instrumental study. Although the requirements for private instrumental study included some school-based music courses, the Department of Education also listed standards in theory from external examining boards, which could be credited towards Grade IX music. Possibly this alternative was made available to students who had no access to music in school.<sup>1</sup>

Although participation in a school orchestra or band had been mentioned as a possible component of the music course for Grade VII and VIII, no further details had been given. For Grade IX, a specific requirement was stated that practices had to occupy two hours per week throughout the school year. The ensemble was expected to master a minimum of ten selections, with recommendations

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 186.

for those pieces provided in the course description.<sup>1</sup> An interesting alternative to the instrumental requirement was membership in a school pipe band. The pipes, which were made of bamboo, could be purchased or made by the pupils.<sup>2</sup>

In the general music course, the elements of the programme were the same as for Grades VII and VIII, namely, chorus practice, music appreciation, sight singing and ear training, and theory, with the first two elements being the most important. Recommended song books for chorus practice included The Progressive Music Series, Parts III and IV, which had also been listed for Grades VII and VIII.

#### Music Curriculum: High School

Music was listed as an optional subject in the new high school programme. As before, students could gain credit for Music 1, 2, or 3, by attaining a certain standard of proficiency in practical work and theory, according to the requirements of certain

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 187.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.



music examining boards. The four boards recognized for this purpose were Toronto Conservatory, McGill University, the Associated Board, and the newly formed Western Board of Music. The Department of Education conducted the Western Board examinations.<sup>1</sup>

The standards of proficiency required by the examining boards in performance and theory were not changed. However, specific types of practical work were stated, i.e., piano, violin, cello, and singing. Practical and theory requirements remained the same from 1935 - 1945, except in the case of Toronto Conservatory and the Western Board of Music, whose requirements in piano were made easier by one grade level.<sup>2</sup>

For the first time, it was now possible to take high school music for credit entirely through the school, in Music 1 and 2. Music 3 still had to be taken through external credit. The aims of the high school music courses were stated as follows:

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<sup>1</sup> Regulations of the Department of Education for the year ended June 30th, 1939. Relating to the Programme of Studies and Annual Examinations for High Schools (Grades X, XI, and XII) (Edmonton: A. Shnitka, King's Printer, 1937), p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> "High School Regulations, 1943", p. 31.

... to deepen the student's love of good music; to enable him to better understand what he hears or performs; and to develop his performing technique.<sup>1</sup>

Ideally, a well rounded course in music (for Music 1 and 2) would consist of chorus singing, theory, ear training and sight singing, music appreciation, harmony, orchestra or band, and glee club.<sup>2</sup>

Although course content was the same as for the intermediate school (with the exception of work in harmony), different outcomes were expected, because of the difference in age and development of the students. Objectives for the various elements of the course focused on a more intellectual approach to music. For example, in chorus singing, "music would be selected to illustrate specific points of interpretation, style, form and period of composition."<sup>3</sup> The benefits to be gained from music listening included "an intelligent idea of music forms, history, biography and aesthetics."<sup>4</sup>

In chorus singing, the work of the intermediate school was continued, with increased emphasis on part singing. In theory

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<sup>1</sup> High School Regulations, 1939, p. 116.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 117.

and ear training the student was expected to master the basic rudiments of music. The section on music appreciation was described in detail, with a study of various media of musical expression, such as opera, art song, symphony, and suite being prescribed. Credit in Music 1 or 2 could also be awarded for membership in an orchestra or band, together with some work in theory and appreciation. The regulations for gaining credit in this way were the same as for Grade IX.<sup>1</sup> This activity was particularly encouraged by the Department of Education. In the general introduction, the following statement was made:

When orchestra classes are maintained in Public Schools, there will be no difficulty in organizing fair-sized orchestras in the High Schools. But, even where such classes have not existed, all High Schools should, if at all possible, organize orchestras. The nucleus may be nothing more than a few violins and a piano. With sympathy from the school staff and educational authorities, interest will be generated and other instruments added. It may then become the duty of the Board to provide teachers for classes in violin, clarinet, cornet, etc., and to procure for the school those instruments not so popularly found in the home  
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From this statement it is evident that the Department wished to encourage the growth of instrumental music in the high schools, even

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 121.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 18.

if it were through very small groups. Possibly there was also a wish to dispel the illusion that an instrumental ensemble had to be very large.

### Music in the Schools

"Music in every school" was the ideal stated by the legislative committee on rural education.<sup>1</sup> For many years, inspectors had documented the neglect of this subject in rural schools. The only improvement in rural school music had occurred as a result of the popularity of school festivals.

During the decade 1935-1945, the status of music in the schools was described more consistently by inspectors than previously. Before this time, work in the so-called basic subjects of English and mathematics was always commented upon, but mention of music was always haphazard, possibly depending upon the inspector's personal interest in the subject.

During the first few years of the new elementary programme, inspectors noted some improvement in the teaching of music in the schools:

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<sup>1</sup> See p. 104.

The fact that music is assuming its proper importance as a subject in the curriculum is most encouraging. The interest aroused by the Music Festival together with the advantage of a definitely outlined course in Music should do much to overcome the evident neglect of this important subject.<sup>1</sup>

Experience in rhythm is being provided in various forms of musical expression; choral work is now the rule rather than the exception in our schools.<sup>2</sup>

Music and rhythm are now more commonly recognized as fundamental needs of child-life, but instruction in the mechanics of music is still far short of the requirements in the programme.<sup>3</sup>

However, there were also some expressions of disappointment that there was not more progress:

In rural schools generally, accomplishment in Music and Art is far from satisfactory. The fault is not with the pupils, nor is it altogether in the circumstances of the case, but mainly with the teacher, and, indirectly, therefore, with our institutions for teacher-training.<sup>4</sup>

Inspectors' comments on music in the intermediate grades also contained both positive and negative observations:

Not only is the quality of instruction in Music definitely improving, but many students who previously never took part are completely free from self-consciousness in doing so now. Rote singing in

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1 A.R., 1936, p. 57.

2 A.R., 1940, p. 64.

3 A.R., 1939, p. 63.

4 A.R., 1937, p. 66.

chorus dominated the activity but some progress is being made in Music appreciation, although sources of good music are restricted in many schools.<sup>1</sup>

Where the teacher has some knowledge and appreciation of these subjects (music and art), good work is being accomplished, but in many schools the results in Music and Art are disappointing.<sup>2</sup>

The course in Music for the Intermediate Grades is rather too advanced for the average rural school; most of the schools are working at the Elementary school level in this subject.<sup>3</sup>

Statistics provided by the Department of Education in the annual report for 1938 show that many students in Grade IX chose music as an option, with the majority gaining credit through the school, rather than through external examinations. The registrar for the Department of Education also noted that this represented a large increase over previous years.

Table IV

Numbers of Grade IX Students in 1938 who elected to take music as an option<sup>4</sup>

	At school	Approved documents
Cities, Towns and Villages	1,799	45
Rural	1,455	6
Total	3,254	51

1 A.R., 1938, p. 66.

2 A.R., 1939, p. 65.

3 A.R., 1940, p. 66.

4 A.R., 1938, p. 38.

Since the total number of students writing departmental examinations for Grade IX was almost 9,400, the proportion taking music was approximately 33%, a most encouraging figure.

Instrumental work in schools had been specifically encouraged in the intermediate and high school music courses. In 1938, high school inspectors noted an increase in the number of instrumental ensembles in the schools:

In spite of financial handicaps, Music has made a notable advance. Several school bands and orchestras have made their appearance within the last year or two.<sup>1</sup>

The numbers of students taking music as part of their high school programme also increased dramatically.

Table V

Students taking Music 1 in high school  
in 1937, 1938, 1940, and 1945<sup>2</sup>

Year	1937	1938	1940	1945
Numbers of Students	5	738	1676	1583

These figures show that, once courses in music were available in school, students were willing to take them. The significant increase in the number of students taking Music 1 in 1940 may be

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<sup>1</sup> A.R., 1938, p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> From information contained in Annual Reports, 1937, 1938, 1940, 1945.

attributable to the fact that, in the same year, a high school course in music became a compulsory requirement for normal school entrance.

With the creation of large units of administration, which commenced in 1936, large-scale spending on equipment for schools was possible. Inspectors' reports for the decade 1935-1945 indicate that many divisional boards purchased pianos, phonographs, and radios for their schools:

There has been a marked increase in the number of schools which have been supplied with typewriters, Shop and Household Economics equipment, pianos, gramophones and records for Music . . . The efforts that have been made by most Boards of Trustees, sometimes involving great sacrifices, indicate that the revision has introduced welcome changes . . .<sup>1</sup>

Pianos and well-selected records for music appreciation are now found in most schools where Music is offered.<sup>2</sup>

In addition to supplying equipment for music, some divisions also employed music supervisors or specialist teachers, who would travel from school to school:

There has been a gratifying increase in the number of centres that make co-operative agreements for the teaching of Shop and Home Economics, Music, Art and Commercial subjects with travelling teachers devoting their full time to this special work.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> A.R., 1937, p. 46.

<sup>2</sup> A.R., 1938, p. 46.

<sup>3</sup> A.R., 1939, p. 58.



To facilitate an efficient instruction in Music, a musical supervisor was engaged to take over active duties last September. All schools of subdivisions 1, 2, 4 and 5 have received the benefits of his work. The schools of subdivision 3 have been under the direction of a music teacher who assists in teaching as well as in supervision.<sup>1</sup>

Because there was now such a demand for music specialists, there is evidence that some divisions and schools wished to hire musicians who were not qualified teachers, to give instruction in music. In 1938, the general committee on the high school programme discussed this subject. A recommendation was made that such persons could be certified to teach music in schools, on condition that they attended three sessions of summer school.<sup>2</sup>

Information taken from the annual reports of the decade 1935-45 indicates that there were considerable efforts made to improve the facilities for music instruction. Although some areas of Alberta still lacked good quality music programmes, improvements in other districts were quite marked. Divisional boards appeared to be quite willing to spend money on specialists and equipment in order to improve instruction in music.

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<sup>1</sup> A.R., 1937, p. 58. The school division described was Collett.

<sup>2</sup> A.R., 1938, p. 18.

### Music Festivals

School festivals continued to increase, both in numbers of festivals held, and in size of events, during the late 1930s. A change in the way that Department of Education grants were paid had to be made when the creation of school divisions commenced in 1936 (grants had previously been awarded to inspectorates). A letter from the Chief Inspector of Schools to the St. Paul Festival Association in 1939 stated that "the money available will (then) be divided among the festivals on the basis of size and particular need of assistance."<sup>1</sup>

The number of school festivals being held reached a peak of 50 in 1939, according to Department of Education figures.<sup>2</sup> The outbreak of war was a serious blow to the school festival movement. In 1942, the number of school festivals held had decreased to 31. Records of the Department of Education show that, as the war continued, more festivals were cancelled. This was principally because of transportation difficulties due to gasoline rationing. In 1945, the number of school festivals held was 26, which was a decrease of almost 50%.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Letter from the Chief Inspector of Schools to the St. Paul Festival Association, June 14, 1939, Department of Education records, #79.334, folder #46, Provincial Archives.

<sup>2</sup> A.R., 1940, p. 57.

<sup>3</sup> Memo from W.H. Swift to R.A. Douglas, October 23, 1945, Department of Education records, #79.334, folder #52, Provincial Archives.

During the late 1930s, inspectors continued to note that the school festivals provided a useful stimulus to rural school music. However, two issues became increasingly contentious at this time, namely, the competitive nature of festivals, and the amount of school time spent in preparing for them:

Officials of some of the festivals do not make use of medals or trophies of any kind; undesirable types of competition have been replaced by a grading of individuals or groups, with progress rather than achievement as the main objectives.<sup>1</sup>

Owing to the high cost of school festivals, not only in money but in time, it is the considered opinion of some that the benefits derived from Festivals are by no means commensurate with the effort and money expended.<sup>2</sup>

In order to arrive at a definite policy regarding school festivals, a meeting was held in September, 1942. It was attended by representatives of divisional superintendents, Alberta music teachers, and the Music Festival Association. The superintendents were particularly concerned about the detrimental effects of school festival work on the regular programme:

A considerable number of superintendents had found a tendency in rural schools to concentrate on festival work in the late spring, to the detriment of other school

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<sup>1</sup> A.R., 1937, p. 68.

<sup>2</sup> A.R., 1942, p. 43.

work; or to make the teaching of school Music merely an adjunct of festival preparation. Seven of the superintendents reported that the festivals do not improve or even help the teaching of Music in rural schools. The majority, however, believed that under proper direction the festivals could perform a valuable service in helping to promote Music as a school activity.<sup>1</sup>

The resolutions of the committee were publicized in a bulletin entitled "School Festivals." They were also summarized in the Annual Report of the Department of Education for 1942. Important points included the following:

- a) Festivals should be non-competitive, with no trophies, marks, or classification of standard of performance.
- b) Preparation for festival should be a regular part of school work, but the regular music programme should not be interrupted because of festival work.
- c) The Department of Education should appoint a Supervisor of Music, who would encourage the study of Music in the schools, and co-ordinate the work of the festivals.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> A.R., 1942, p. 43.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 44-45.

The committee also agreed that smaller, rather than larger festivals should be encouraged. It also doubted the necessity of hiring highly placed (and therefore expensive) adjudicators.

The controversy over competitiveness had also been noted in Chapter V with regard to the large city and provincial festivals. The 1935 report of the delegates from the Western competition festivals indicated that Calgary schools participated in a demonstration festival prior to the competition festival. It was further stated that city schools were not allowed to receive marks at the competition festival.<sup>1</sup> At the 1937 conference, the Alberta delegate reported that the same situation had occurred in Edmonton, with detrimental results:

. . . at the last local festival in Edmonton they had, under pressure from the School Supervisor, given no marks in the School Choral classes, confining themselves to announcing the first three in order of merit. The result was not satisfactory in that it decreased interest both among the children and among the audience.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Report of the 10th Annual Conference of delegates from the Musical Competition Festivals of Western Canada, 1935," #74.120 3a, Provincial Archives, p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> "Report of the 1937 Conference", #74.120 3a, Provincial Archives, p. 19.

According to the report from the 1938 conference, the music supervisor in Calgary was finally convinced to accept the marking system of the festival.<sup>1</sup> Little further mention of the controversy over competition has been found in subsequent reports. It appears that delegates from Alberta were in a minority regarding the issue of competition.

#### The Western Board of Music

Because the Department of Education granted credit to high school students for practical and theory examinations in music which were taken externally, it was natural that they should take an interest in some of the problems connected with these requirements. Since 1919, the Department of Education had granted high school credit in music to students who reached a certain standard in practical and theory examinations of the various music examining boards. By 1936, certificates were recognized for credit from the Associated Board (Great Britain), Toronto Conservatory of Music, and McGill University. However, there was some dissatisfaction with these arrangements. Correspondence between representatives of the prairie provinces indicated concern both because of a lack of uniform standards for granting credit in music, and because of the expense incurred through arranging for examiners to come to the West

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<sup>1</sup> "Report of the 1938 Conference", #74.120 3a, Provincial Archives, p. 10.

from Eastern Canada and Great Britain.<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, meetings were set up in order to solve these problems. They were attended by representatives of the Universities of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, and of the Department of Education of those provinces. At a meeting held in April, 1936, the following was agreed upon:

. . . that the three provinces would co-operate in a common syllabus, standards of attainment and common fees.<sup>2</sup>

It was also agreed that the title of the new Board would be the Western Board of Music.

There had been some concerns expressed at several meetings that the other examining boards were too firmly entrenched in Western Canada. In 1941, at a meeting of the Senate Advisory Board on Music, it was pointed out that the Western Board syllabus had not been used by many music teachers since its establishment five years previously. Although a suggestion was made that the syllabus was too difficult, it was also acknowledged that the principal problem was the strength of other examining boards.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Encyclopedia of Music in Canada, s.v. "Western Board of Music."

<sup>2</sup> "Minutes of the meeting of representatives from the Departments of Education and Universities of the three prairie provinces, April 28, 1936", #79.334, folder #70, Provincial Archives.

<sup>3</sup> "Meeting of the Senate Advisory Board for Music, Jan. 17, 1941", #79.334, folder #71, Provincial Archives.

This problem had not been solved by 1944, when a report from Alberta indicated the following:

Not much progress has been made in Alberta in promoting the courses of the Western Board. Eastern organizations, particularly the Toronto Conservatory, are so well organized that teachers are reluctant to transfer . . . The Minister of Education has been unwilling to withhold standing from all except those taking Western Board examinations. It begins to appear that this action would be necessary to insure any considerable swing to the syllabus of that Board.<sup>1</sup>

No evidence has been found to suggest that the Department of Education ever considered withholding credit for music examinations taken through boards other than the Western Board. However, it must have been discouraging to the Department that a music examining board which took so long to organize, should have been so little used.

#### Radio in Music Education

In her thesis on the history of educational radio in Alberta, Lyseng stated that the first official school broadcast in Alberta took place on Empire Day, 1929. It consisted of addresses, and musical selections performed by children in Edmonton.<sup>2</sup> In 1936, a local radio station in Lethbridge commenced regular school

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<sup>1</sup> "Report of the Western Board of Music, March, 1944", #79.334, folder #71, Provincial Archives.

<sup>2</sup> Mary J. Lyseng, "A history of educational radio in Alberta" (M.A. thesis, University of Alberta, 1978), p. 11.



broadcasts, principally to help rural teachers with the new elementary curriculum. A weekly music programme formed part of the schedule.<sup>1</sup> By 1937, the Department of Education had expressed an interest in educational radio. At a conference held for educationalists who were interested in educational broadcasting, the Minister of Education was asked to set up a Departmental Radio Committee. At the first meeting of this committee in May, 1937, recommendations included the following:

- a) School broadcasts should be commenced.
- b) Music and music appreciation would be included in the programming.
- c) Broadcasts would be a maximum of fifteen minutes in length.<sup>2</sup>

School broadcasts commenced in 1938. Music programmes for elementary and intermediate students were conducted by Janet McIlvena, music supervisor for the Lethbridge city schools, and by Glyndwr Jones of Calgary. Programme schedules were available for teachers in order that they, and their students, could prepare for the broadcasts. Copies of these schedules, which were included in Lyseng's thesis, indicate that the music programmes followed closely the activities suggested in the prescribed music course. For example, a typical elementary broadcast would include a patriotic

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<sup>1</sup> Lyseng, p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> A.R.; 1937, p. 26.

song, some selections from the prescribed music textbook, a rhythmic activity, and a phonograph recording for some aspect of music appreciation.<sup>1</sup>

Educational radio quickly became very popular in Alberta. Information from Annual Reports indicates that many school divisions purchased radios for their schools. Inspectors also reported on the positive effects of school broadcasting on the regular school programme, especially in the rural areas:

A number of the superintendents comment very favourably on the improvement of Music in rural schools that has been effected through their use of the Department's school broadcasts. It appears that music, at least, is not a war casualty.<sup>2</sup>

At a time when participation in music festivals had decreased because of gasoline rationing, at least educational radio was still available in rural areas.

Although the benefits of the use of radio in music education were obvious, the Department of Education was vigilant in ensuring that radio should enrich the regular curriculum, not supplant it. In 1942, when the possibility of cooperative

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1 Lyseng, pp. 53-56.

2 A.R., 1943, p. 27.

broadcasts with the C.B.C. was discussed, the chairman of the Alberta committee objected to the cost of such a scheme, and doubted its educational value:

While it is true that professional musicians, actors and scriptwriters can put on a much more entertaining performance than local teacher-broadcasters, the basic purpose of school broadcasting is not entertainment. Elaborate preparation for such broadcasts is of no special value in the classroom unless it calls for a considerable amount of active participation on the part of the pupils themselves; and usually it does not.<sup>1</sup>

#### Teacher Training in Music

The lack of adequate teacher training in music had been a serious problem in Alberta since education was first established in that region. The one-year normal school course had long been recognized as being entirely inadequate for training students effectively, especially in the more specialized subjects such as music. Since there was no immediate prospect of lengthening the normal school course, it was decided that students who intended to become elementary teachers would have to have some musical knowledge before they came. Therefore, high school credit in one music course was compulsory for all students entering normal school, beginning in 1940.<sup>2</sup> This measure probably accounted for the large increase in

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<sup>1</sup> A.R., 1942, p. 34.

<sup>2</sup> High school Regulations, 1939, p. 13.

students taking Music 1 in high school. In 1941, the Department of Education also noted an immediate improvement in the musical ability of normal students:

The results of the new regulation requiring Music for Normal Entrance are rather striking. For years past, only 50 or 60% of the students had an acquaintance with music before coming to the Normal School; but this year 90% have some foundation in music, and therefore make it possible for the Normal School to offer real training in the teaching of Music.<sup>1</sup>

The Department of Education also provided methods courses in the new intermediate and high school music courses at the School of Education, at the University of Alberta.<sup>2</sup> Restrictions were imposed on which teachers were allowed to give instruction in music from Grades IX - XII. Only those with special qualifications in music were allowed to offer courses at these grade levels, thus ensuring some control over standards of instruction.

Practising teachers were also provided for with summer courses which focused on implementing the new programme of studies

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<sup>1</sup> A.R., 1941, p. 39.

<sup>2</sup> A.R., 1937, pp. 22-23.

in the schools. Special certificates in elementary music were available, commencing in 1936. The Department of Education stated that many of the summer courses were being provided as a "second-year normal school course", thus attempting to remedy the inadequacy of the one-year course.<sup>1</sup>

#### Summary and Conclusions

The curricular and administrative reforms of the 1930s increased considerably the status of music education, and the priority it was accorded. The creation of large units of administration facilitated large scale spending on equipment for music such as pianos, phonographs, radios, and text and reference books, and, in some cases, the employment of music supervisors and specialist teachers.

The elementary curriculum still emphasized the acquisition of musical knowledge through sight singing, but many other elements were added to the programme, including music appreciation through listening to phonograph records. A significant addition to the programme for Division I was rhythmic training through participation in singing games and movement, and through taking part in rhythm bands. There was more attempt than before to

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<sup>1</sup> A.R., 1936, p. 18.

relate the music course to stages of child development, and to emphasize active participation and enjoyment.

The new intermediate programme focused principally on active participation in music, particularly through singing, with less emphasis on skill development. Music appreciation also formed an important element of the course. Music was compulsory in Grades VII and VIII, and optional in Grade IX. External credit for music was also available in Grade IX.

For the first time in Alberta, it was possible to gain credit for music taken in high school. Participation in chorus, orchestra, or band, was especially encouraged, but a knowledge of music theory, and acquaintance with musical forms such as opera and symphony, was also required, with the objective of developing an intellectual and aesthetic appreciation and knowledge of music. Listening to music formed an important element of this course, as it was also in elementary and intermediate courses. External credit for music could be gained for all three music options, but it was the only way in which to gain credit for Music 3. The fact that it was now possible, for the first time, to take music in high school for credit, indicates that this subject was finally recognized as a valid part of the education of this age group.

The entire music curriculum from Grades I-XII showed a consistency of objectives, especially in the field of music appreciation, and the student's personal participation in musical activities through singing, playing in a musical ensemble, and responding to music. It also related greater or lesser emphasis on certain activities to the emotional and intellectual needs of the students according to their age and stage of development.

Although there was some disappointment expressed in annual reports at the lack of music education in some areas, there was also evidence of much growth in music in the schools. The most significant gains were in the high schools, where many students had rarely had the opportunity to take music. An important reason for the growth of music in the high schools may have been the fact that credit in Music I was compulsory for normal school entrance by 1940.

School festivals continued to grow in number and size throughout the late 1930s. However, the outbreak of war, and subsequent rationing of gasoline, caused a significant decline in the number of festivals held. The question of competitiveness in school festivals became an important issue at this time. In 1943, the Department of Education issued a policy statement discouraging competition in school festivals, and encouraging smaller events; and also making it clear that the regular music programme should not suffer because of excessive time spent in preparation for music

festivals. The Department continued to assist festivals with grants, but festival committees were expected to abide by Departmental policy if they wished to receive monetary assistance. City and town festivals were also affected by the controversy over competition. Occasionally, schools were not allowed to receive marks at these events. These festivals were also affected by the outbreak of war, because it was no longer possible to hire adjudicators from the British Isles.

The Department of Education was instrumental in the formation of the Western Board of Music in 1936. It was hoped that music teachers in Alberta would use Western Board examinations for their students. However, the results were disappointing. The majority of music teachers were used to the systems offered by other boards, and were unwilling to change, even though it was cheaper and easier to take examinations through the Western Board.

A significant potential for enrichment in music education was made through the advent of educational radio in 1937. The Department of Education showed keen interest in the potential of radio in schools. However, it resisted the pressure to become excessively sophisticated in this genre, stating that radio should be a help for the teacher, not a substitute. Radio was particularly beneficial for music education in the areas of class singing and music appreciation. School broadcasts were always linked to the objectives and content of the regular music courses.



The efficacy of teacher training in music was considerably improved by the introduction, in 1940, of a compulsory requirement of credit in Music I for normal entrance. The benefit of such a step was twofold. Firstly, more students entering normal school finally had some previous training in music. Secondly, high schools were now obliged to offer music in school, since many students went on to normal training, and would need at least one music course in order to secure admission.

The general state of music education in Alberta improved considerably during the decade 1935-1945. New influences, such as the radio and the phonograph, enriched the curriculum, which hitherto had been based principally on vocal music. It had finally been acknowledged that music should form a part of education from the early grades through high school. A more enlightened curriculum emphasized the importance of objectives such as enjoyment and active participation, and the new system of educational administration ensured that many facilities, such as music specialists and equipment for music, were now provided in more rural areas, instead of being available only in city schools. It is clear that the piecemeal changes of the past had not resulted in significant improvements. It was only when a complete reform of the educational system was effected that music education experienced its most noticeable growth.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter, each topic which was discussed in previous chapters, has been summarized according to its development throughout the entire time frame of this study. Conclusions have also been drawn about the significance of each area to the entire spectrum of music education in Alberta.

#### Music Education: Elementary Curriculum

Music was always included in the Territorial programmes of studies, but the only details given of course content were the prescribed textbooks, and brief statements of what was to be taught. Rote singing, interval drills, and sight singing were the principal elements of early music courses. No objectives for music, or reasons for its value, were stated until Goggin became Superintendent of Education. Although he did not expand or elaborate on actual course content, he included in several reports his personal views on the value of music. He perceived this subject as a means of imparting culture, providing relaxation from more strenuous tasks, and developing patriotic loyalty to the British Empire.

When Alberta gained provincial status in 1905, the Territorial music course remained in use until it was revised in 1912. This revision contained a statement of objectives, and more detail of course content at every grade level (Grades I-VIII). Singing with good vocal habits, and facility in sight singing, were the principal course objectives. Drills in tonic solfa were also included. Further revisions to this course were made in 1917 and 1918. In 1917, standards of achievement at most grade levels were raised, and more tonic solfa drills were included. However, the statement of objectives was changed considerably. It now included references to the aesthetic and cultural value of music, and a suggestion that students should develop appreciation and enjoyment of good music. Objectives for 1918 indicated a more thoughtful approach to the value of music in future adult life, and an exhortation to the teacher that music classes should not become mere exercises in developing literacy, at the expense of enjoyment. However, course content did not, in general, reflect this philosophy, since drills and mastery of music theory still comprised the basis of the course. The only change was the addition of a music appreciation component for Grades VII and VIII.

The revised course of 1922 was separated into sections for graded schools and rural schools (the latter were generally one room multi-graded facilities). Development of music literacy was

still the principal objective of both courses, but in the rural school section, rote singing was stressed as a valuable aid to building community spirit within the school. Other objectives for music were a restatement of those for 1917. Course content for graded schools showed little change from that of 1917 and 1918, but it was described in greater detail, especially work in tonic solfa. An important new feature of this course was the inclusion of specific directions to teachers as to how to teach some of the skills and concepts at the various grade levels. Work in music appreciation was suggested in the general introductions to both graded and rural courses, but no further directions or suggestions were given, except for one teacher's reference book in the bibliography. In addition, the music appreciation component for Grades VII and VIII of the 1918 course, was not included in 1922.

The revised course of 1936 contained many new elements to be taught, and more direction to the teacher. Objectives for the course were reminiscent of those for 1918, with enjoyment and participation being most important, and acquisition of skills taking a lesser place. Important new elements of the course were detailed work in physical response to rhythm, especially in the lower elementary grades; and music listening and appreciation with phonograph records at all grade levels, with specific objectives for each age group also indicated. However, sight singing was still an

important component of the course, especially at the higher grade levels.

Throughout its numerous revisions, the elementary music course for Alberta schools expanded both in content and detail. In the earlier courses, it was considered sufficient to indicate which textbook was to be used. By 1917, more specific details of what to teach were included. By 1922, directions as to how to teach were also being indicated. Both these components were further expanded in 1936.

Objectives for music also showed considerable change. In the 1890s, Goggin valued music as a refining influence. In 1912, utilitarian objectives referring to voice culture and sight singing were stated. In 1917, 1918, and 1922, enjoyment and appreciation of music were suggested, but skill development was paramount, except in 1918. In 1936, the child's personal response to music was being stressed.

The 1936 course reflected a greater consistency between stated objectives and actual course content, than earlier courses. Goggin's eloquent pronouncements on the cultural value of music did not include specific suggestions as to how this value could be enhanced during the music classes. The 1912 course stressed "right

use of the voice," but did not include directions as to how to achieve this goal. Enjoyment and appreciation of music were stated as objectives in 1917, and even more emphatically in 1918, but the course became more encumbered with mechanical interval drills, which would be unlikely to enhance enjoyment and appreciation. In 1922, drills and theory work were still important, but some direction was given to the teacher as to how to achieve some of the objectives of the course; e.g., how to begin music reading, and how to help out of tune singers. In 1936, not only were more specific directions given to teachers as to how to teach certain elements of the course, but actual course content reflected more awareness on the part of the course designers, that active participation in music should be an enjoyable and emotionally satisfying experience.

Early Territorial and provincial courses consisted mainly of rote singing and sight singing. Rhythmic work was less important, except for some drills in specific patterns. It was not until 1936 that rhythmic work, and the child's physical response to rhythm, were included as important elements of the music course. Some work in music appreciation had been suggested for Grades VII and VIII for 1918, but was omitted in 1922, even though the general introduction had included references to this topic. In 1936, music appreciation was considered an important element of instruction at all grade levels, and was described in detail. Work in sight

singing was first described in 1912, was made more difficult in 1917, and was simplified a little in 1936. Throughout each course revision, it was described in more detail, especially with regard to the use of tonic solfa. Although work in rhythm and appreciation were added to the 1936 course, work in sight singing was not appreciably diminished. It still remained as the foundation of the elementary music course.

#### Music Curriculum: Intermediate School

Until 1936, Grades VII and VIII had been included in the elementary school, and Grade IX was part of the high school. Course descriptions for Grades VII and VIII had been very brief, except in 1918, when a music appreciation element was introduced. In Grade IX, it had not been possible to take music for credit except externally. The new intermediate course for 1936 concentrated on the development of the student's emotional response to music, with less emphasis on skill development. Singing and appreciation were the principal elements of the course, thus continuing the work of the elementary school. Instrumental work in orchestra or band was also encouraged. It was still possible to gain credit for Grade IX music by passing practical and theoretical examinations of music examining boards.

### Music Curriculum: High School

Music was not officially included in the high school course of studies until 1919, when it became possible to gain high school credit by passing prescribed practical and theoretical examinations of designated music examining boards. Departmental involvement in high school music was limited to the outlining of an optional theory course, and the establishment of standards of achievement from the various music examining boards. Any other music offered in high school was entirely at the initiative of individual teachers.

In 1937 a high school music course was introduced for the first time. Course content was a continuation of work in singing and appreciation, which were also part of elementary and intermediate music, but more theoretical work was included. Participation in orchestral or band work was strongly encouraged. Objectives for high school music stressed intellectual response rather than emotional response, which had been stated for the intermediate course.

The Department of Education was also involved in the establishment of the Western Board of Music which was officially created in 1936. This board was organized by the four Western provinces in order to provide a home-based examining board, and also



to help unify standards of music achievement for the purpose of high school credit. Although much work was done to establish and promote the Western Board, it was not a significant force in music examinations during its first decade.

Until 1936, school music had only been officially prescribed for Grades I-VIII. The inclusion of music in the curriculum at all grade levels, and the expansion of course content to include other elements than rote singing and sight singing, indicate the increased significance accorded to that subject as a valid part of a rounded education. In particular, the attempt to relate course content to the various stages of students' mental and emotional development shows a greater searching for the purpose of including music in the curriculum.

#### Music in the Schools

Although music was prescribed for all elementary schools from Territorial days, there were sharp differences in the implementation of the course in different areas of Alberta. Facilities for music education in urban schools were established during the pioneering days of the 1880s. In some cases, music specialists and supervisors were employed, especially in Edmonton and Calgary. The religious teaching orders also included music in their school programmes. There is evidence that city and town

schools offered well organized music programmes to their students. Some high schools also offered extra-curricular activities in orchestra and glee club. The high quality of music programmes in urban areas may be attributable to the provision of specialists and supervisors in the subject. It is significant that, as towns such as Medicine Hat and Lethbridge increased in population, their school boards also employed supervisors and specialists. In rural areas, music was generally neglected, except where the teacher had some ability and training in the subject. Inspectors' reports for the first two decades of this century indicated a dearth of music education in many rural schools. Indeed, the fact that many inspectors did not mention the subject at all is a manifestation of lack of interest on their part, as well as on the part of teachers. Possible reasons for the woeful state of music education in many rural areas were given by inspectors, with the teacher's lack of ability and training in music being cited most often. Some inspectors also mentioned that music was neglected because it was not perceived as fundamental to the curriculum. Other reasons may be deduced from reading Department of Education reports from 1900-1930. The provision of educational facilities did not keep pace with the rapid expansion of population. A chronic shortage of teachers was only alleviated by the depression of the 1930s. Many rural school districts had very short school years, and what little education was offered, was provided in one-room multi-graded

facilities which were totally inadequate, often lacking enough textbooks and other materials. Because rural districts were so poor, they were unpopular with better qualified teachers, who tended to migrate to urban areas. Therefore, rural schools were established and run under conditions which must have seemed almost hopeless at times. Given these conditions, it is hardly surprising that music education was not a high priority either with teachers or, in some cases, with inspectors. There was such a struggle to teach the so-called fundamentals, and cope with the poor conditions of rural schools, that many teachers, especially those who lacked training or ability, may not have been unduly concerned about omitting music from the educational programme. In addition, for many years the elementary music course failed to make special provision for rural schools. The graded courses of 1912 and 1917 would have had little relevance to the multi-graded one-room school. Some attempt to remedy the deficiency was made in 1922, when a separate music course for rural schools was established. Although this course contained less technical detail than the graded school course, it was still too difficult for an untrained teacher to follow.

However, by the late 1920s, conditions for music education had improved slightly in rural schools, because of the development of school festivals. In many cases, these events provided the only stimulus to music in rural areas. The educational

reforms of the mid 1930s effected even greater improvements. Departmental committees had finally realized that the lack of music in many schools was a serious concern. "Music in every school" was a declared educational priority, and subsequent statements about the new elementary curriculum emphasized that music was compulsory in all elementary grades. Inspectors were also more diligent in reporting about the status of music in schools under their jurisdiction. Although some expressed disappointment at a lack of improvement, others indicated that many teachers were now attempting to follow the new elementary course.

The establishment of educational radio in 1936 provided some enrichment to the music course, and also some help to teachers who may not have had much musical training. Although radio became a very popular educational medium during the 1940s, the Department of Education insisted that the broadcasts were intended to supplement the regular curriculum, not replace it. The Department also ensured that these broadcasts always related to the objectives and content of the curriculum.

Administrative reforms of 1936 also increased the status of music. The creation of large units of administration improved financial conditions in rural areas. More money was available for large scale spending on educational materials and equipment. Many divisional boards made a serious effort to improve music education

in their schools. Pianos, radios, records, and phonographs were purchased, and some divisions also appointed music supervisors and specialists. Therefore, facilities which had always been available in city schools, were now being established in rural schools. Inspectors noted a significant improvement in music education in those areas which had access to music resource people and materials. More intermediate and high schools were offering music as part of the school programme during the late 1930s. Bands and orchestras were organized in many schools, a step which had been encouraged in the programme of studies. Since its establishment as a high school course, the number of students gaining credit for music increased significantly. Further increases to this number during the 1940s were probably caused by the fact that high school credit in music became a compulsory requirement of normal entrance in 1940. This measure would have indirectly forced many more high schools to offer music. In addition, because the Department of Education required that persons teaching high school music be properly qualified, the employment of teachers with musical training would have been essential.

### Music Festivals

There were two types of music festivals which directly affected music education: the provincial and city festivals, which were conducted under the aegis of the Alberta Provincial Musical Festival Association, and the school festivals, which were generally

organized in small towns and rural districts with help from the Department of Education.

Edmonton was the location of the first competitive music festival to be held in Canada, in 1908. This festival became an annual event in that city, but by 1920 the location was rotated between Edmonton, Calgary, and Lethbridge. Choirs from city schools began competing in the provincial festival, as it was now called, in 1911. During the 1920s, this event became so popular that some schools were willing to send their choirs to compete, even if the festival was not being held in their home town. The contribution of the schools was principally in elementary choral work, but some high school choirs and orchestras also competed. Very few rural schools participated in the provincial festival.

By the early 1930s, some disillusionment with the festival was evident among music supervisors in Calgary and Edmonton. They objected to the excessive competitiveness of this event, and organized their own demonstration festivals, in which no marks were awarded. Occasionally, they did not allow school groups to receive marks in the provincial festival. These measures hurt participation of schools in the festival to some extent, but it appears that Western provincial festival associations favoured competition, and were not sympathetic to the concerns of Alberta delegates.

The exact origins of the school festival are obscure. There is some evidence that the first school festival was held at Claresholm in 1917. In addition, choral and singing competitions were held in other areas as part of school fair activities. During the mid 1920s more rural areas began to hold school festivals. Many school inspectors took a keen interest in these events, by helping to organize and adjudicate festivals within their inspectorates. The Department of Education awarded grants to festivals. Although the amount of each award was reduced during the early 1930s, the number of festivals held continued to increase to between 30 and 40 during the mid 1930s.

The school festival provided a much-needed stimulus to rural school music. The regular music course was very little taught, and there were few other incentives to engage in musical activities, except for annual school concerts. The festival provided an opportunity for students to perform in front of others, and for teachers to prepare selections with care, and receive helpful criticism from adjudicators. In addition, the festival stimulated interest in music among adults of the local community, who flocked to the public performances. Festivals were often one of the only forms of entertainment available during the drab days of the Depression. During the decade 1925-1935, inspectors were unanimous in praising the beneficial effects of festivals on rural school music. Indeed, some inspectors organized these events

precisely to generate interest in that subject in the schools of their inspectorates. The festival movement reached its peak of popularity in 1940, when 50 such events were held.

Although the spirit of competitiveness had been approved of during the early years of school festivals, by the mid 1930s some voices were being raised deploring it. A few school festivals dispensed with awarding marks and trophies, and merely gave adjudications which indicated standards of performance. By the early 1940s, some educators were also expressing concern about the excessive amount of time being spent by some teachers in preparing for festivals. In 1943, the Department of Education issued a policy statement regarding festivals, which stressed that future events were to be non-competitive; that marks were not to be given; that festivals should not be too large; and that the regular music programme was not to be disrupted because of festival preparation. It has not been possible to determine if this policy had a detrimental effect on school festivals, because the imposition of gasoline rationing due to war conditions had caused a significant decline in the number of festivals which were held at this time.

The provincial festival provided enrichment for music programmes in town and city schools. On the other hand, the school festival was often the sole reason for the existence of any music education in some rural schools. In both cases, after the initial



euphoria of participation had declined, serious philosophical questions were raised regarding their educational value. These questions had not been fully resolved by the early 1940s, when the festival movement was forced into decline because of war conditions.

### Teacher Training in Music

Music was first included in the four month Territorial normal course in 1898. This course consisted of instruction in music theory, and some work in classroom pedagogy. A similar course was established at the Calgary normal school, which opened in 1906. The large amount of material to be covered in the short time available was a serious problem. Although hundreds of teachers graduated from the normal schools during the early years of this century, there is scant evidence that they taught music in the schools.

In 1919, the length of the normal course was extended to eight months. However, this measure did not appear to benefit music education, because many students commenced their training with little or no previous knowledge of music. Although the music course represented a valiant effort to remedy this deficiency, it was difficult for the music instructors to fulfill the dual role of providing students with a basic knowledge of music, and instructing them in classroom pedagogy. Although occasional attempts were made to simplify the course material, normal school principals admitted

that music and other special subjects were under a particular disadvantage because of the brevity of the training programme.

In 1940, a high school course in music became a compulsory requirement for normal entrance. This measure caused an immediate increase in the number of new students who had some previous musical training. In addition, it probably obliged many high schools to offer music, because a large proportion of their students became teachers. The University of Alberta also established music courses for those teachers who would give instruction in this subject at the upper intermediate and high school levels, for which special qualifications were required.

The Department of Education attempted to compensate for the brevity of the normal course by establishing summer schools for serving teachers, beginning in 1913. Music was first offered in 1918. By 1921, several music courses were being offered each summer, thus indicating a considerable demand for additional instruction in this subject. After the major curricular reforms of 1936, summer courses were offered for which teachers would be awarded special certificates in music. This measure would have been very useful to divisional boards, many of which were hiring music specialists.

It is evident that, until the early 1940s, measures to provide sufficient musical training for teachers were totally inadequate. In addition, the elementary music course which was prescribed during the first three decades of this century was too complex and technical for inadequately trained teachers to follow.

#### Suggestions for Further Study

In this study, the history and development of music education in Alberta, from 1884 to 1945, has been chronicled and discussed. However, in the process of research, questions have been raised, and other possible areas of research have been illuminated. Some suggestions for further study are listed below:

1. A continuation of this study from 1945 to the present, in order to record and discuss developments in music education after the time limit of this study. However, it is likely that this topic would have to be subdivided. Possible specialized areas of research include the following:
  - a. The development of the high school music course.
  - b. The development of instrumental music (orchestra and/or band) in the junior high and high schools of Alberta.
  - c. The development of the intermediate school (in later years, junior high school) music course.
  - d. The development of the elementary music course.

3. A more detailed examination of the development of the school festival, continuing the study to the present day. The school festival reached an interesting stage of development in 1945. It was in a state of decline because of war conditions; and official discouragement of competition may also have affected its popularity.
4. A comparison of selected aspects of the Alberta music curriculum with those of other provinces.
5. A historical study of music education in a city such as Edmonton or Calgary.

#### Concluding Statements

During the period 1884-1945, music education in Alberta progressed from being perceived as a peripheral subject, to being perceived as an essential part of elementary education, and a valid part of high school education. Music in the schools developed from being available mostly to students in urban areas, to being available to many more students in rural areas. The music curriculum expanded from brief statements and a list of prescribed textbooks, to a detailed course outline, which contained statements of objectives, detailed directions to teachers, more information on what to teach, and plentiful suggestions of reference materials. Course content expanded from exercises and drills in sight singing,

to include work in rhythm and music appreciation. Whereas mastery of sight singing skills was emphasized in early courses, in later years the enjoyment and appreciation of music through active participation and listening were stressed.

Although some changes and developments in music education occurred over many decades, it was during the 1930s that the most significant progress was made. This was because many aspects of education were reformed at the same time. Previous change in one area may have been ineffective because it was not reinforced by changes in other areas. For example, the elementary music course of 1922 was an improvement on previous courses because it contained many useful directions to the teacher. However, because the course demanded a high level of musical ability on the part of the teacher, it would have been necessary to improve the normal course in music, in order to make the elementary course more practical for teachers.

The reform of the elementary music course in 1936 would have been much less effective without reforms in other areas. However, many other changes occurred at the same time. The creation of school divisions facilitated the provision of quality music programmes in rural schools. The inclusion of music in the high school programme ensured that more students would have some musical knowledge before proceeding to normal school. The compulsory music

requirement for normal entrance ensured that students could concentrate on pedagogy, because they already had some previous acquaintance with music.

Therefore, the realization that areas of education were interdependent probably resulted in the most significant gains for music education in Alberta. In addition, the Department of Education's declared intent to have "music in every school" indicated a wish on its part to stem the former neglect of this subject. Finally, the action taken by the Department to reform the curriculum, improve the economic conditions of rural school districts, and raise teaching standards, ensured that a foundation had been laid for significant improvements to music education in the province of Alberta.

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