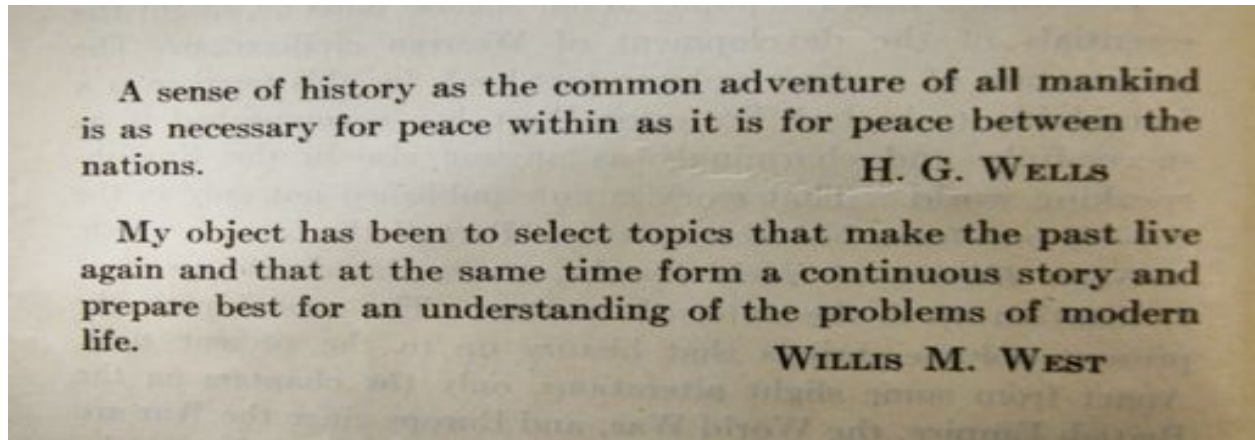


A History of Social Studies Education (1921-1930)

Authors: Christopher Gardner & Marcus Kingston

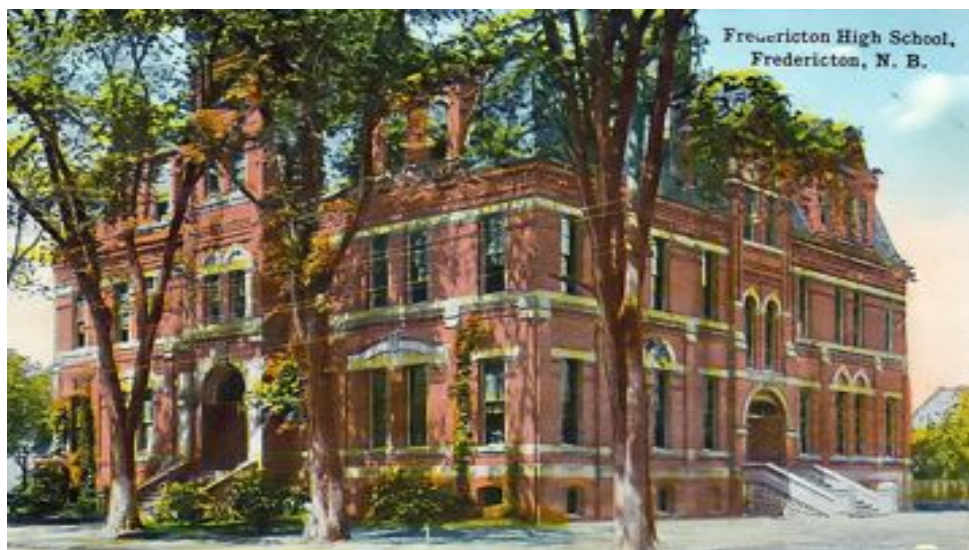


Hypothesis:

There were stark similarities and differences in the content and method of delivering Social Studies education during the 1920s in New Brunswick. In fact **Social Studies as a subject did not exist, but by definition would consist of History and Geography**, for students who attended from the provincial population, which in 1921 was approximately 387 876 (*The Canada Year Book*, 1922 p. 97). It was a time in which a greater importance was being placed on education, teacher salaries were increasing, and female teachers in New Brunswick were given equal pay to males.

It is our hypothesis that these subjects were taught with different assumptions in mind, and from a different point of view than today. This period of education exists before many influential historical events that helped shape the goals and approach to Social Science programs as we know them, including World War II, The Cold War, War on Terrorism, social movements, The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and the dawning of the information and technology age. To explore our presumptions we use secondary sources to set the context for our study, and examine school textbooks

and provincial documents as primary sources to discover the nature of Social Studies education during the 1920s, compared to today.



(York-Sunbury Historical Society, Walter Calkin Smith Collection – The York Street School in Fredericton, built upon the site of the Baptist seminary, served as Fredericton High School until 1925.)

Primary Sources:

Geography Notes. Toronto: The Educational Publishing Company Ltd, 1923.

This text published in 1923 was more of a supplementary text for teachers, though it did contain some information in it that could be taught to students, it was also a resource for ordering other teaching supplies such as maps.

'High Roads of History' Sixth Book: Modern Britain. London: Thomas Nelson & Sons. 1916.

This book reinforced that British history during the 1920s was as important as Canadian, and gave insight into topics covered relating to Britain and its empire, It also suggested cross-curricular strategies for literacy were used in Social Studies classrooms during this era.

Outline of courses of study for public schools. Fredericton: Department of Education. 1922.

This text is a primary source directly from the Department of Education presenting clearly to readers the courses that taught in New Brunswick during the 1920s. It also gave a brief idea of the focus of different subjects over the course of grades one through eight, an education the government felt was important for all citizens of New Brunswick to have at the time.

Bourinot, Arthur S. *How Canada is Governed*. Toronto: The Copp Clark Company Ltd. 1928.

This text book gave some insight into the methods of governing the nation and what was taught to students during the time period about Canadian Government. It also demonstrated that the concept of Canada at the time still maintained a very strong linkage to the British Empire.

Carter, W. S. *Annual Report For The Schools Of New Brunswick*. Fredericton: 1921.

This document provided information as to teachers' salaries, enrolment numbers, provincial population, the number of girls versus boys in schools and plenty of other statistical information related to education in New Brunswick at the time.

Hamilton, Douglas Ewart. *The Maritime Provinces*. Toronto: W.J. Gage and Co. Ltd, 1927.

This textbook, used in some schools during the 1920s, provided an engaging experience for its readers, who were most likely geography students. The engagement it provided was derived from the narrative form the book undertook, as readers went on a journey through the Maritimes with a couple fictional characters developed in the text. The text provided great detail and imagery for students studying the Maritimes at the time, and was more interesting than a textbook full of straight facts with no creativity in its presentation.

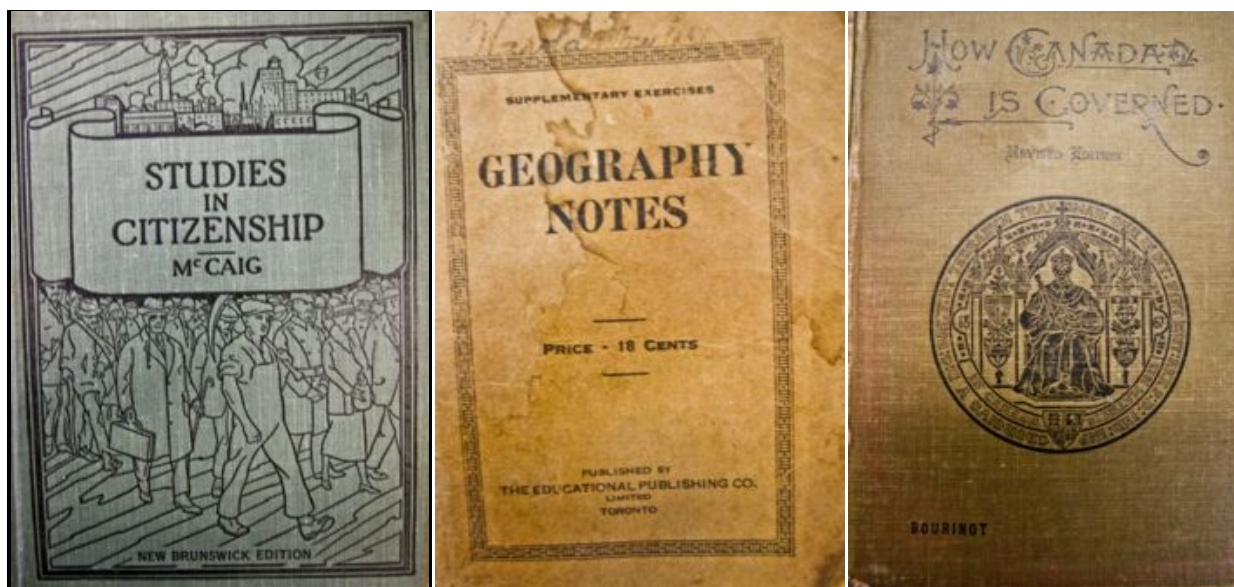
McCaig, James and Wallace, P.B. *Studies in Citizenship*. Toronto: The Educational Book Company Ltd, 1925.

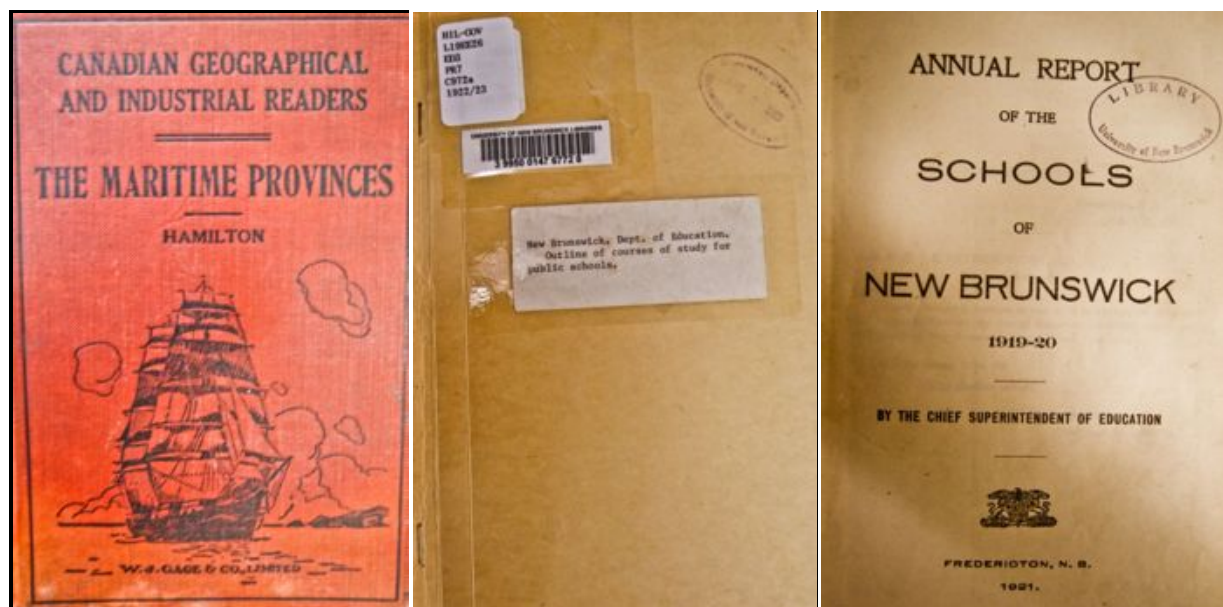
This was probably one of the most useful textbooks viewed in this study of New Brunswick Social Studies Education in the 1920s. It provided great insight into the type of information that was being disseminated to students at the time, along with the biases, stereotypes and discriminatory ideals that still existed in Canada during the 1920s, despite some great strides of social progress. Not only this, but *Studies In Citizenship* also couples as a secondary source for the study with a chapter specifically on education in New Brunswick at that time.

West, Willis Mason. *A Short History of Modern Peoples (Part II of World Progress)*. Canadian Ed. Norwood, MA: Allyn and Bacon, 1924.

West, Willis Mason. *The Story of Modern Progress: With a Preliminary Survey of Earlier Progress*. Revised Ed. Norwood, MA: Allyn and Bacon, 1927.

These were examples of upper level History texts that were used in certain schools in New Brunswick, published in the 1920s. They illustrated how the duties of citizens were worked into the history classroom. A hidden curriculum within the subject matter promotes nationalism, portrays aboriginals as violent savages, and European colonizers as great heroes.





Secondary Sources:

The Canada Year Book. Dominion Bureau of Statistics. Published Authority of J. A. Robb, MP. Ottawa:

F. A. Acland, 1922.

This secondary source provided statistical information related to the context of New Brunswick at the time, including information such as population numbers and composition.

Newbrunswick.net. Retrieved online March 17, 2011:

<http://www.new-brunswick.net/new-brunswick/facts.html>

This site provided some general information about the governing parties and premiers of New Brunswick throughout the past decades, as well as providing history of the province.

Multicultural History Society of Ontario. *Encyclopedia of Canada's Peoples*. Ed. Paul R. Magocsi.

Toronto: University of Toronto Press. 1999. Retrieved online March 17, 2011:

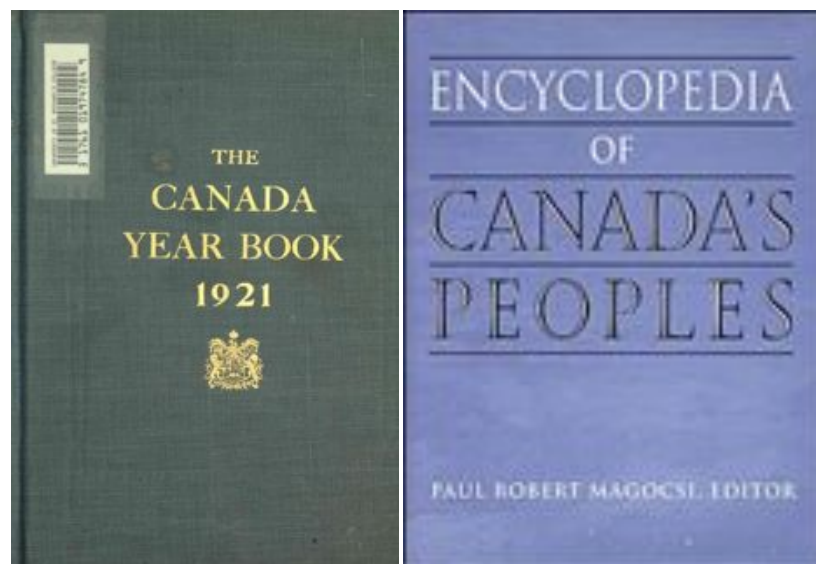
[http://books.google.ca/books?id=dbUuX0mnvQMC&printsec=frontcover&dq=Encyclopedia+of+Canada'](http://books.google.ca/books?id=dbUuX0mnvQMC&printsec=frontcover&dq=Encyclopedia+of+Canada)

[s+peoples&source=bl&ots=K7v3jKfYel&sig=FqoIG_Yr9HQ3V6sRjj3ET3T6hTw&hl=en&ei=RQqETeLeIKmP0QHtk43PCA&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=5&ved=0CCkQ6AEwBA#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://www.library.queensu.ca/peoples&source=bl&ots=K7v3jKfYel&sig=FqoIG_Yr9HQ3V6sRjj3ET3T6hTw&hl=en&ei=RQqETeLeIKmP0QHtk43PCA&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=5&ved=0CCkQ6AEwBA#v=onepage&q&f=false)

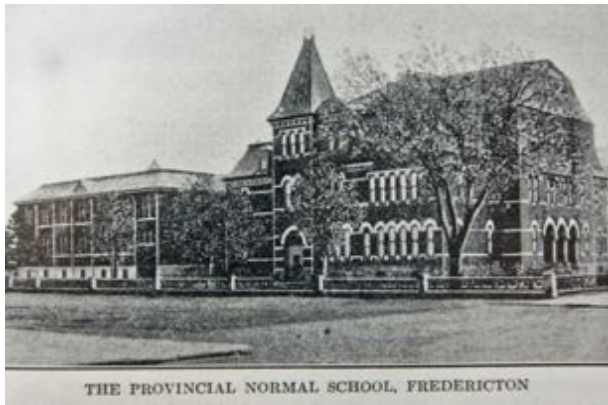
This book is an excellent source for studies of Canadian history and multiculturalism alike. It traces the various peoples of Canada back through the 19th and 20th centuries, including people like the Acadians and the first Acadian premier in New Brunswick during the 1920s. It also spoke of the Ku Klux Klan operating in the province during the decade, ethnic tensions in schools, and the pressing issue of francophone education.

RCMP Youth Engagement Section. *Residential Schools*. National Youth Services Branch of the RCMP's Crime Prevention Services. 2011. Retrieved online March 17, 2011: <http://deal.org/the-knowzone/violence/indian-residential-schools/>

As the title suggests, this portion of the website Deal.org provided a basic timeline of the history of residential schools in New Brunswick, and their primary goals. It explains how in 1920, an amendment to the Indian Act made attending school compulsory for aboriginal students.



Context:



(McCaig, 1925 p. 283)



(McCaig, 1925 p.281)

5. *Vocal Music*.—Singing, in accordance with the provisions of Reg. 17 (5), should be practised at the opening of the school session, and at intervals through the day, as may be found expedient. Teachers musically defective may authorize the singing to be conducted by any capable assistant or pupil whose services may be available. Provision should be made, when practicable, for a systematic course of instruction in vocal music.

(*Outline of courses of study for public schools*, 1922 p. 1)

Education in general in New Brunswick was evidently becoming more important during the 'Roaring Twenties.' The *Annual Report For The Schools Of New Brunswick*, by the superintendent, declared the total number of different pupils in attendance throughout the 1919-1920 school year to be 72 988 (Carter, 1921). This was an increase of 2618 pupils from the previous year, with over 2000 more girls than boys enrolled in public schools across the province.

STATISTICAL ABSTRACT.

TABLE I.—Number of Schools, Teachers, Pupils, etc.

	1st Term.		2nd Term.
Number of Schools	1,978		1,898
Increase	19	Decrease	52
Number of Teachers	2,113		2,054
Increase	35	Decrease	53
Number of Pupils	64,812		65,050
Increase	2,488	Increase	130
Total number of different pupils in attendance during the year, 72,988			

TABLE II.—Proportion of Population at School, Age and Sex of Pupils, Percentage of Attendance.

	1st Term.		2nd Term.
Proportion of population at school 1 in 5.42			1 in 5.41
Number of Pupils under six years of age	671		561
Decrease	6	Decrease	97
Number between 6 and 15	61,949		61,680
Increase	2,174	Increase	19
Number over 15	2,192		2,809
Increase	320	Increase	208
Number of boys	31,118		32,015
Increase	1,545	Increase	231
Number of Girls	33,694		33,035
Increase	943	Decrease	101
Grand total number of days made by pupils enrolled	3,791,252½		5,224,126
Increase	373,175	Decrease	55,625
Average number of pupils daily present during time schools were in session	48,755		45,860
Increase	3,798	Decrease	498
Average number daily present for the full term	46,230		42,125
Increase	4,469	Decrease	1,075
Percentage daily present during time schools were in session	73.68		70.49
Increase	1.55	Decrease	.92
Percentage daily present during full term	71.33		64.75
Increase	4.33	Decrease	1.79

(Carter, 1921 p. xiii)

The proceeding chart provides a snapshot of the distribution of students among the different subjects offered during the time period. As far as Social Studies education goes, it seems to bare some similarity to the impression given by the New Brunswick Education Department today, in that less importance was placed on the subject than others such as Reading and Spelling, Arithmetic and Science-type classes. Arguably, the Lessons on Morals class could be classified under Social Studies education though, and is illustrated here to be also of great importance to the province at the time. Finally, one major difference on the standing of Social Studies in the hierarchy of school subjects during the period was that **Physical Education also appears to be much more important, drawing nearly double the number of students into the classroom than History or Geography.**

COMMON SCHOOL, GRADES I. TO VIII. INCLUSIVE. YEAR ENDED JUNE 30TH, 1920.		
	First Term.	Second Term.
Physical Exercises	62,150	64,167
Lessons in Morals, etc	61,907	62,786
Sewing (Optional)	1,158	2,166
Knitting (Optional)	561	435
Reading, Spelling, etc.	62,354	62,785
English Grammar, etc.	35,436	36,181
History	24,869	25,680
Drawing	62,021	62,600
Writing, etc.	62,283	62,697
Singing	39,450	39,219
Arithmetic	62,326	62,674
Algebra	2,643	4,308
Geography	35,660	36,367
Health Lessons	60,788	61,125
Nature Lessons	61,197	61,762
Latin (Optional)	2,150	2,496
French (Optional)	13,294	13,692
HIGH SCHOOL, GRADES IX. TO XII. INCLUSIVE.—YEAR ENDED JUNE 30TH, 1920.		
	First Term.	Second Term.
English Language and Literature	2,449	2,263
Latin	1,818	1,605
Greek	30	87
French	2,177	2,102
Arithmetic	1,991	1,792
Geometry	2,328	2,181
Algebra	2,405	2,228
Bookkeeping	672	989
Trigonometry	12	70

(Carter, 1921)

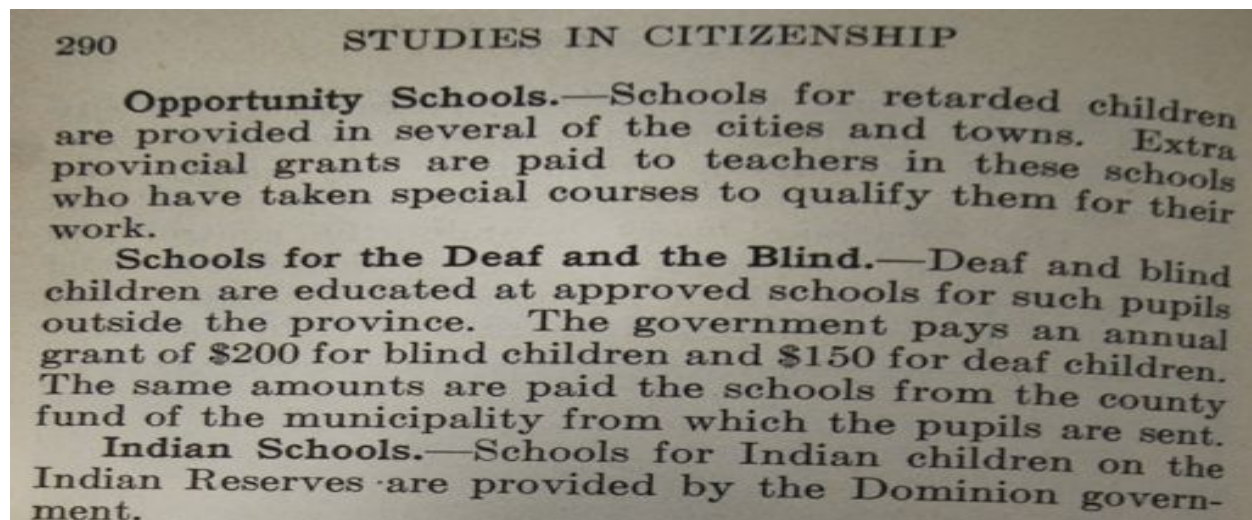
As stated previously, **the importance of education was indeed growing**, yet what was expected academically to succeed in society was much less than today. The common theme at that time sung by school administrators was “**every boy and girl should have the opportunity of securing at least an elementary education,**” (McCaig, 1925 p. 281) an education that would certainly not get students very far in the twenty-first century. Still, education was seen as a right as a Canadian citizen and therefore free for students from six to twenty years of age. At that time elementary school typically ran from grade one to eight, followed by Grammar or Superior schools and a high-school leaving exam, for students that continued their education. The school year ran from approximately August 26th to June 30th each year, with a two week vacation during the Christmas season.

With greater importance being placed on education in the 1920s came a greater value for teachers too. **New Brunswick saw teacher salaries nearly double from 1910-1920 in New Brunswick** (Carter, 1921 p. xv). Although women's salaries were not equal to a man's entering the decade that would be sure to change before the end of it.

Class of Teacher.	1910.	1920.	Increase.
Grammar School	\$1,064.63	\$1,756.11	\$691.48
Superior School	692.22	1,038.70	346.48
First Class, Male	663.28	1,400.61	737.33
Second Class, Male	355.29	604.51	249.22
Third Class, Male	260.90	406.71	145.81
First Class, Female	399.71	848.54	448.83
Second Class, Female	290.25	511.23	220.98
Third Class, Female	227.91	395.87	167.96

(Carter, 1921 p. xv)

The Great War ended in 1918, but the implications it had on Canadian society was still being felt and impacting the New Brunswick public education system during the 1920s. In a note written by the chief superintendent of education, he explained how it was necessary to remove *Myers' General History* from the list of prescribed texts. By December of 1920 they still had not obtained a satisfactory replacement for New Brunswick schools, further delayed by publishers' struggles with securing paper and getting printing done (Carter, 1921).



(McCaig, 1925 p. 290)

Alternative public schooling during the 1920s held much more negative connotations than compared to twenty-first century standards. **Strict policies of inclusion were not common-place practice for teachers during this era**, and any child deemed ‘retarded’ would often be placed in an alternative institution, known as Opportunity School. The Superintendent’s annual report published in 1921 contained information related to amendment of School Acts by the province. One such amendment that occurred during that prior school-year provided the Chief Superintendent with the ability to give districts, that “make provision for retarded peoples a sum not exceeding one hundred dollars for each department” (Carter 1921, p. 192). Teachers who taught in these schools had to take special courses and were paid extra provincial grants. The amendment also allowed the Superintendent to similarly provide these teachers with a sum not exceeding one hundred dollars for special training and licensing to teach these ‘unfortunates’. There were also special schools for the blind and deaf.

Aboriginal students were restricted to ‘Indian schools’ located on reserves and provided by the Dominion government. **In 1920, the Indian Act was amended, and these federally run schools were now mandatory for all aboriginal children aged seven to fifteen.** The goal of these schools was to ‘civilize’ and ‘assimilate’ aboriginal peoples, and fix the ‘Indian Problem’ according to people like Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs Duncan Campbell Scott. “I want to get rid of the Indian problem. Our object is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed” (RCMP Youth Engagement Section, 2011). **Converting aboriginals into ‘respectable Canadian citizens,’ required ‘killing the Indian in the child.’**

(<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DVhiangk2lk> – Here is a touching song about residential schools.)

Aboriginal education was not the only matter of controversy in New Brunswick during the ‘Roaring Twenties.’ The governing party of New Brunswick during the 1920s was split between the Liberals who governed with a minority government for the first half of the decade, and the

Conservatives that took power under John Baxter for the second half. Baxter had defeated the first Acadian premier of New Brunswick, Peter Veniot who in his time often supported the interests of Acadians and rural New Brunswickers in general.

“Acadian politics took on a harder edge, however, after the defeat of the Veniot administration in the election of 1925, a campaign in which the Ku Klux Klan, making its first appearance in provincial politics, tapped into a significant strain of anti-Catholic and anti-French bigotry in the Conservative Party”

(Magocsi, 1999 p. 132)

What this spelt for New Brunswick was increased ethnic tensions fueled by the ‘issue’ of francophone education over the course of the next fifteen years. However, **‘Regulation 32’ was adopted in 1929 which officially recognized the bilingual nature of New Brunswick’s school population, but later would be rescinded, largely due to the operations of the opposing Orange Order.**



(<http://www.old-picture.com/united-states-history-1900s---1930s/pictures/Ku-Klux-Klan.jpg>)

Subjects/Topics of Social Studies Education in New Brunswick in the 1920s:

Social Studies as a subject in itself did not exist in public school during the 1920s. The two school subjects taught at the time that would fall under the umbrella of Social Studies education would be **Geography and History**. According to an *Outline of courses of study for public schools* published in 1922, Social Studies education would not begin until grade four. The first three years of study were focused on reading, writing and drawing, numbers, health and nature. A brief outline of Social Studies topics taught in New Brunswick public schools from grade four to eight are as follows:

	History	Geography
Grade 4	Oral Lessons on leading events in New Brunswick's history will be given.	Students will be acquainted with outline of New Brunswick, and physical features of the province.
Grade 5	Oral lessons on the main events in the history of Britain and Canada will be given.	Students will be acquainted with the notion of latitude and longitude, causes of day and night and Dominion geography.
Grade 6	Oral lessons will explore the history of England and Canada.	Students will be acquainted with the Dominion of Canada on a map, Newfoundland, and North America, with special attention paid to the United States.
Grade 7	Oral lessons on England and Canada to be expanded and reviewed.	Students will be acquainted geographically with Europe and the British Empire.
Grade 8	Oral lessons on England, the British Empire and Canada will be continued.	Students will review the British Empire and be acquainted with Asia, Africa and South America.

(*Outline of courses of study for public schools*. 1922 pp. 2-3)

History:

History texts from the 1920s do bear some similarities to History curriculum material in New Brunswick today. **Teachers and historians of the time believed that the importance of history lies in the lessons we are able to draw from it and apply to our own lives.** Students throughout the public education system would be introduced to Canadian and provincial history in earlier years and move on to be educated on the sources of revolution and connections to England and the British Empire. **History class was also an appropriate platform in public schools for education on citizenship, government and economics to be presented to students.**

An example of a topical outline for a year-long seventh grade History plan might look like this:

Unit 1 – The Protestant Reformation

Unit 2 – The French & Industrial Revolution

Unit 3 – Reform without Revolution

Unit 4 – Continental Europe (French Republic, German Empire, Russia)

Unit 5 – Science and Social Progress

Unit 6 – World In 1914

Unit 7 – World War I (1914-1918)

Unit 8 – Expansion into New Worlds

Through close examination of history textbooks from the period, several differences can be identified in the manner in which content was delivered. **New Brunswick teachers in the 21st Century teach students History through more of a globalized lens than in 1920s when everything seemed to relate back to Britain.** The Protestant Reformation, for example, is something that often gets left out of Modern History classes today due to time constraints, but would very much be talked about in classrooms across the province during much earlier periods of the Dominion's history.



(McCaig, 1925)

One book that would have been sure to make it into some New Brunswick History classes during the 1920s is *'High Roads of History' Sixth Book: Modern Britain*, published by Thomas Nelson and Sons. This text is full of things related to the siege of Londonderry, the days of Queen Anne, The United States of America, The Industrial Revolution, Napoleon, Waterloo, the Crimean War, The Indian Mutiny and the Boer War. Of course having been written in 1916, you'll note the First World War is not mentioned as it had only begun the year prior and would not yet have been written into history texts yet. Interestingly at the end of the book there is a section entitled 'Poetry for Recitation' (p. 310 – 324). **Poetry and reciting poetry was an important concept at the time, as you were thought to be a well rounded student if you could recite the biggest and best literary works.** Through this text students were taught poems such as; *A Ballad of the Boston Tea Party*, *The Battle of the Baltic*, *Waterloo, 1825*, *Wellington and Nelson, 1852*. This helps demonstrate the importance of literacy to New Brunswick education in earlier years as well and cross-curricular applications of it, something there is currently a great push for. Note that all of these poems and most of the chapters in the text have to do with the great moments and people of history, related to Britain. The text contains little to no mention of Canada, one of

Britain's great new colonies, nor does it speak to the 'lesser' people who made up much of Britain's modern history. Also fun to note is that most of the artwork in the book is made up primarily of great history paintings by such artists as Benjamin West, E. M. Ward, Sir George Hayter and A. C. Gow. Of course, a book such as this would want to show the most epic and triumphant of scenes and moments in time.

In New Brunswick and Canada human rights were not so universal during the 1920s as they became after adopting *The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* in 1982. **Aboriginals, who the government was set on assimilating at the time, were referred to in school texts as 'savages' in History textbooks.** This was part of the so-called hidden curriculum in which students inherited a vision of white Europeans as heroes, saviours and modernizers of the New World. One reference from Willis Mason West's *A Short History of Modern Peoples (Part II of World Progress)* stated "France also sent forth the most zealous and heroic of missionaries to convert the savages" (West, 1924 p. 388).

Citizenship

"A Canadian is not merely a citizen of Canada...but that he is also a citizen of the greatest and noblest empire that the world has ever seen." (Bourinot, 1928 pp. 5-6) At this time Canada, more so than today, held very strong ties to Britain and the Monarchy. To be a great citizen was not only doing your best to serve and represent Canada and your people, but to serve and represent the Queen. Beyond this, citizenship lessons as part of History education teach of the benefits of living in a community, and the roles of family, church and school in society.

"If there's anything we've insisted upon more than any other in these studies of citizenship, it's that the one way for a community to prosper is by all members working together for the common good of all" (McCaig, 1925 p. 305). **Citizenship education in the 1920s stressed the importance of cooperation, though was accompanied by some contradictory and dehumanizing social implications,**

reflected in curricular material. For instance, it taught about the natural human desire for companionship, while claiming at the same time tribes had little to do with each other except fight.

Rights and Duties of Citizens:

Canada was still a younger nation in the 1920s, the Great War had just ended and citizenship education in New Brunswick ensured students placed a focus on the duties and rights of citizens.

Common duties outlined in students' textbooks included;

(1) Obedience to law

(2) Paying Taxes

(3) Aiding country through military service in times of need.

(4) Voting

(5) Jury Service

(6) Keeping Healthy

(7) Attending School

McCaig's *Studies in Citizenship*, published in 1925, sends a strong message of personal responsibility and duty as citizen, not only to local community but to country. ***"We should simply remember that it is our duty as citizens of Canada to be prepared to give up even our lives in defence of our own country"*** (McCaig, 1925 p. 307). It was almost taught as gospel, the ways in which one could achieve the status of 'good citizen.' World War I had just recently passed and there was a strong sense of obligation to support the country and those who sacrificed their lives and served previously. We see this same rhetoric still used in the media and by governments today, but not as much in the classroom.

Canada during the 1920s was experiencing some economic success and growth in many areas across the nation, and the hope was for the country to continue to flourish as a successful, just democracy. The backbone of democracy is voting, and students were taught it was up to them who got

elected. If they didn't vote you were basically saying you did not care who was in power and it allowed for the wrong people to get elected, while wasting one of your key freedoms.

The common rights of citizens, in contrast are as follows;

(1) Right to Protection of Life and Property

(2) Right to Protection against Disease

(3) Right to Free Speech

(4) Right to Freedom of Worship

(5) Right to Trial by Jury

(6) Right to Healthful Surroundings

(7) Right to a Good Education

Government:

Part of students' British and Canadian History education includes an examination of the country's political institutions. Public education in the 1920s ensured that students were introduced to the British system of government, Responsible Government, Parliament, Cabinet, and Municipal Government. Bourinot, author of *How Canada Is Governed*, states **"the first duty of citizens in every country is to make themselves thoroughly acquainted with the nature and operation of the system of government under which they live"** (Bourinot, 1928 p.5). Students using this book to learn about Canadian government would explore five major areas. They include;

(1) Functions of the Sovereign

(2) The nature and methods of general government of the Dominion

(3) Powers of the several provincial authorities that compose the federal union

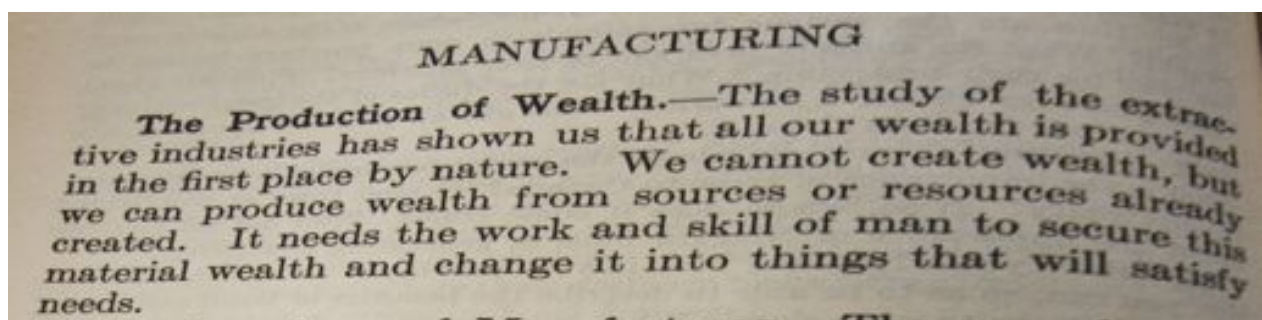
(4) Municipal systems

(5) How public schools are administered and the people in every province.

Health was a major concern for the government during the 1920s, and this was disseminated through school curriculums. Citizenship education taught that the government “insists on pure air and plenty of sunshine, on pure water and pure food, and on the proper disposal of sewage and garbage” (McCaig, 1925 p. 22). This is a government duty citizens of many developed countries would have little confidence in today, as environmental issues affecting the globe continue to surface while destructive ‘extractive industries’ thrive. **The costs of industrialization were not understood to the same degree as today, or to be considered at this time.**

Economics:

During the 1920s, much of what was learned in school about economics, from a Social Science perspective, was related to a rapidly changing social structure and growth of industry in New Brunswick and across North America. This rapid growth was strengthened by major developments in transportation, as automobiles began to replace horse and carriage, and the railway business flourished due to large waves of immigrants that were filling up empty space in the prairies. In 1925, textbooks used in New Brunswick defined ‘extractive industries’ as those organizations or groups of workers that are engaged in extracting wealth from our natural resources. One of the underlying principles of publically taught economic theory at the time was that “all our wealth is provided in the first place by nature” (McCaig, 1925 p. 102), and requires man to manufacture and merchandise it.



(McCaig 1925, p. 102)

A chapter from *Studies in Citizenship* that may have been used in public school during the 1920s describes four different social institutions that makeup the life of a good citizen. These include the *family life, school life, religious life, and business or economic life*. This text described the business life as a life of competition between individuals striving to satisfy wants more completely than others. It also used Bible references to reinforce economic theories about the necessity of a working citizen.

It was during this time that the fishery and lumber industries were booming as well.

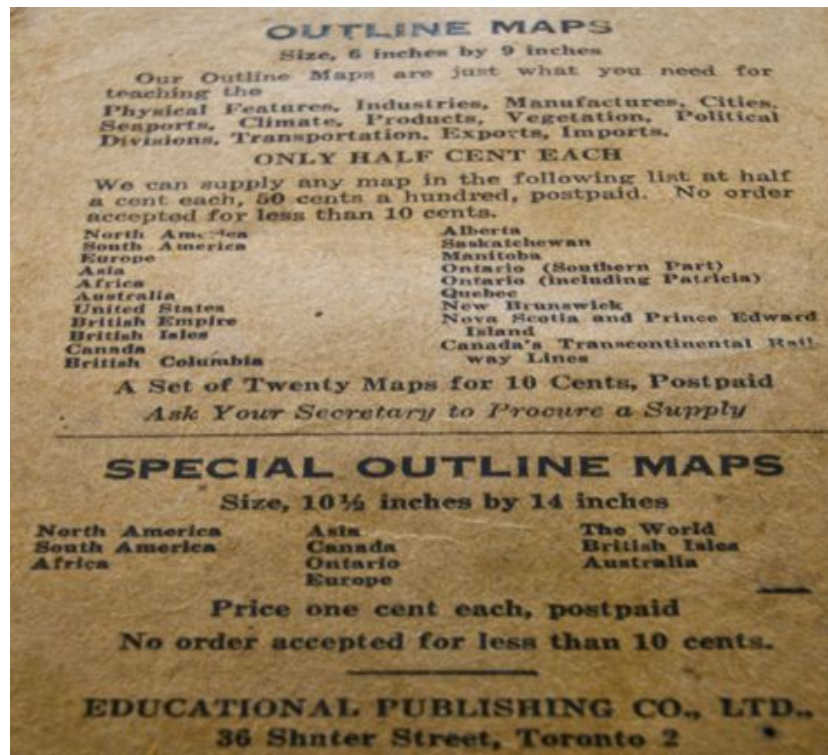
Sample History Questions & Activities for Students From the 1920s:

1. What have the following contributed to the progress of the world: Wilberforce, Edison, Graham Bell, Marconi, Watt, George Stephenson, Arkwright, Romilly, Shaftesbury, Eli Whitney, John Wesley, General Booth, and Luther Burbank? (British, North American History)
2. Consider how many people take part in the making of a loaf of bread. (Citizenship)
3. Write a short composition on "The Progress of the Community in Which I Live." (Citizenship)
4. What are the powers of Senate in relation to a money bill? Why is the power so limited? (Government)
5. Make a list of ten well-known articles manufactured from the products of the farm; of the forest; of the mine; of the fisheries, of the fur-trade. Make a list of the well-known articles that are manufactured from petroleum, or oil. (Economics)
6. Tell the class how you would get along, if there were no manufactured articles. (Economics)
7. Why do Prairie Provinces not control their own natural resources? Would it be to the advantage of these provinces if they had control? (Economics)

Geography:

Geography was taught in a traditional fashion during the 1920s. Technology aside, the material and content covered by Geography educators has seen little change in the last ninety years, with focus still directed at things such as the Earth, climates, oceans, landmasses and countries. In a small, yet information packed, booklet entitled *Geography Notes* students are greeted with the purpose of the subject which reads in the preface; **"We should study geography so that we may become acquainted**

with the Earth, the habitation of man, that we may know the advantages of the climate and the natural resources of each part of its surface” (Geography Notes, 1923).



(Geography Notes, 1923 Back Cover)

Students of the 1920s learned a great deal about the layout and geography of Canada and its provinces. The individual nuances that make the Maritimes different from the Prairies, for example. Also children were subject to learning about the great countries and continents which made up the Commonwealth in the 1920s. Australia, Africa, Ireland, Europe and The British Empire were all examined.

Various teaching aids were available to teachers of Geography, though it obviously involved a bit of a process and some planning ahead by teachers without the internet, Google and instant maps at the click of a finger. Through the booklet *Geography Notes*, a teacher could order dozens upon dozens of maps and visual aids to assist in teaching the subject. Maps were pennies a piece and could be ordered

along with supplemental exercises of the teacher's choosing. Students acquired a great deal of knowledge about topics that are still common geographic principles in school today. Popular topics are as listed, but not limited to:

(1) *The Universe*

(6) *Clouds and Moisture*

(2) *Earth*

(7) *Weather Patterns*

(3) *The Sun and Moon*

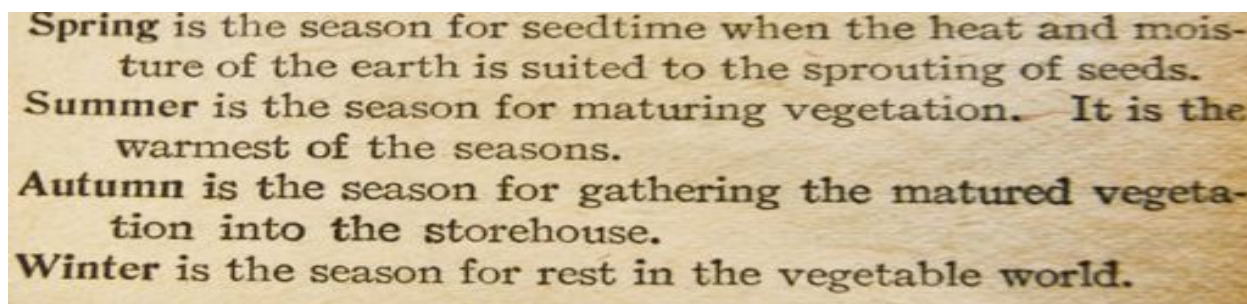
(8) *Seasons*

(4) *Tides*

(9) *The Three Kingdom's (Animal, Vegetable and Mineral)*

(5) *Eclipses*

The *Three Kingdom's* is a recurring theme which refers to three major areas of commerce for a people; animal production, vegetable production and mineral production. Children were taught a great deal about the wealth of resources available in various provinces, countries and continents and the direct link to a healthy and economically secure society that they hold. When educating students on the natural resources available in their world, **humans were presented as being the pinnacle of all God's creations, thus inheritor of the Earth's great treasures.** Little is said about the implications of extraction of a natural resource on the environment and society with the emphasis, for the purposes of education, being placed on the value of these items on a national and global scale. Even when studying the seasons, they were presented in a manner that was relevant to farmers, and the area of commerce



Spring is the season for seedtime when the heat and moisture of the earth is suited to the sprouting of seeds. Summer is the season for maturing vegetation. It is the warmest of the seasons. Autumn is the season for gathering the matured vegetation into the storehouse. Winter is the season for rest in the vegetable world.

(*Geography Notes*, 1923)

related to vegetable production. Capitalist agendas were very much linked to Social Studies education during the 1920s. Even in the early years of public school, grades one to three, though History and Geography education had not officially started, classes on nature often proceeded from an agricultural position, keeping the value of production in mind.

Being a Social Studies student in the Maritimes meant learning about your province and region. One great resource from the period that engaged students in Maritime studies was the *Canadian Geographical Industrial Reader; The Maritime Provinces*, written by Douglas Ewart Hamilton in 1927. This text follows the Grant family as they travel around the Maritimes and unlike many textbook approaches to teaching geography, is actually quite engaging. This can be attributed to its narrative approach that allowed students to relate to or assume the roles of characters Bobby and Sister Jean on a wild summer vacation. These characters' father is the tour guide that fills them in on anything and everything they could possibly want to know about the Atlantic Provinces along the way. Students reading this unique and picture-filled text would learn about and experience Halifax, the Annapolis Valley, The North Shore, Saint John and surrounding towns, Fredericton and the River Valley, Northern New Brunswick and the Eastern Shore and lastly Prince Edward Island.

Another benefit of working with Hamilton's text in Geography classes, at the time when it was published was linked to the great attention to detail and descriptive nature of the book. **In the days before television and internet a descriptive narrative, guiding students through the Maritimes, must have awakened their imaginations and curiosities about the region.** "A few miles above Oromocto, the tree lovely banks and hills of Fredericton came into sight. The first buildings to be seen as one ascends the river are those of The University of New Brunswick standing high on a hill at the back of the city" (Hamilton, 1927 p. 296). The one weakness in the text that can be identified, most likely is deliberately linked to the social context of the period, as it mentions little about the native population with regards

to settlements and demographics. It also, for the most part, seems to ignore the smaller communities that actually make up a majority of the population.

Sample Questions & Activities for Students from the 1920s:

(GEOGRAPHY)

- 1. Of Canada, give in detail the boundaries; name, describe and locate three mountain systems and three forest systems.*
- 2. Describe the fishing industry of New Brunswick.*
- 3. What and where are the following. State an important or interesting fact about each: Manchuria, Belize, Gibraltar, Madrid, Geneva, Suez.*
- 4. On a full page, draw a map of the Saint John River, showing and naming its main tributaries and the towns and cities situated on it.*



CONCLUSION:

Social Studies education during the 1920s was indeed very different from today in various aspects. The lack of 21st Century technology meant that methods of delivery differed from today's standards and student engagement did not consist of watching films, video clips, using interactive online programs, working on the internet and having Skype video conversations with other people and students around the world. Engagement consisted of such things as including texts similar to Douglas Ewart Hamilton's narrative account of the Maritime Provinces when possible to meet teaching and learning goals.

The presumptions in which History was approached in a nation founded on the basis of freedom, equality and liberty was somewhat at odds with these concepts. Aboriginals were referred to as savages, Britain was painted as the centre of civilization, racism was very much active in a visible way and language issues fueled linguistic and ethnic tensions in the school system. The so called 'hidden curriculum' fueled nationalism in Canada, which was important to this young nation, promoted military service as a duty of all citizens, though women were not fully included as equal members of society at this point and European colonizers were portrayed as heroes. Also, inclusionary practices were not important issues as students deemed to be 'retarded' by the era's standards were removed from classrooms and placed in separate schools.

Education was becoming increasingly important, but during an era before the Information and Technology Age we so often attribute to today's society, getting a job and career was much easier requiring less innovation and formal knowledge. Though we would not conclude it was absent completely in every instance, critical thinking and historiographical principles were not readily applied in classrooms of the 1920s. Teachers and schools took more of an indoctrinating approach to disseminating knowledge, with the goals of producing healthy, obedient and good Canadian capitalists

that hold Britain in high regard. For the aboriginal community, this goal required a strict policy of 'killing the Indian in the child.' The 'Roaring Twenties' were not so progressive for all students of New Brunswick, and this was evident in Social Studies classrooms as much or not more than anywhere else in the school system, though some of the reasons for studying History were similar to today, such as the idea of learning from our past to improve our future.