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PUBLIC EDUCATION IN PITTSBURGH, 1835-1950¹

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THE CONCEPT of free compulsory public education in Pittsburgh dates back to the year 1682 when William Penn and a small group of Quakers drafted a code of laws for the establishment and government of the Colony of Pennsylvania which they were about to establish in America. Section 13 of this code read: "That all children within this province of the age of twelve years, shall be taught some useful trades or skill to the end none may be idle, that the poor may work to live and the rich, if they become poor, may not want." A revision of this code two years later added a clause stipulating that a fine of five pounds must be paid by parents or guardians neglecting to comply with the law. It required 150 years to establish public schools legally in Pennsylvania, and 212 years to complete the original concept of free compulsory public education.

The long delay in the fulfillment of this great social movement was due, in large measure, to the Quakers themselves. From a downtrodden and ostracized class in England, they rose rapidly to positions of economic and political influence in Philadelphia and the surrounding terri-

¹ Presented at a meeting of the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania on March 28, 1950. In his position as educational statistician of the Pittsburgh Board of Public Education for many years, Mr. McCoy made a comprehensive and intensive study of this subject and has compiled a complete, well-documented history, the first of its kind, of which this necessarily brief sketch is only an epitome. With regard to the latter he calls attention to the fact that, beginning with the year 1868, the material is grouped according to the several administrative periods of the seven city school superintendents, with the events in each described in chronological order.—*Ed.*

tory. Many of them renounced their Quaker faith and joined the Anglican Church. They educated their sons by private tutors until they were ten or twelve years of age and then sent them to England and continental Europe for their formal education. Their daughters received their education in private schools near home.

For these and other reasons, the concept of public education receded into the background and received but little attention at the time of the adoption of the first state constitution in 1776. Fourteen years later in 1790, the constitution was revised. Article 7 on education was almost forgotten. It was moved to Article 11 during one of the last sessions of the constitutional revision committee, and the clause "the poor may be taught gratis" was added.

During the next forty-four years this blighting clause prevented all efforts to establish free public schools. During these years, every governor and legislature bandied this important social movement about and all the while hosts of children went without any education whatsoever.

In the legislature of 1834 Senator Samuel Breck of Philadelphia was made chairman of a joint committee of the senate and house to draft a bill to provide free public education for all children. The act finally passed both houses and was approved by Governor George Wolf on April 1, 1834.

The new school law provided for the organization of the state by county-wide districts under the county commissioners; acceptance or rejection to be decided by vote of elected delegates; taxes for school purposes to be levied, collected, and dispersed by the commissioners; a state subsidy to each county to the extent of one-half the amount collected in local taxes.

On November 11, 1834, the sheriff of Allegheny County called a meeting of delegates from each of the local districts to meet in the courthouse. At this meeting, it was unanimously agreed that the provisions of the new school law be approved and acted upon. The citizens of Pittsburgh then elected six school directors in each of the four wards of the city. The twenty-four men thus elected included eight lawyers, one judge, four manufacturers, three doctors, and three tradesmen—certainly, in the main, a very high type of personnel for these new and important offices. Their subsequent actions indicate that they were competent, fearless, and progressive in the management of the schools.

Even though the school system was under way, there were some

citizens who were opposed to it. The chief objection was due largely to taxation. In Pittsburgh more than \$3,000 were collected in taxes the first year, of which amount only half was required to operate the schools. The remainder was distributed by the commissioners outside of Pittsburgh. This gave the enemies of the system a strong argument in support of their opposition, and even some of the friends of the system became doubtful over this seeming injustice. However, the school directors of the four wards increased the tax millage and collected \$13,300 the second year. While this seeming confusion was going on in Pittsburgh agitation was developing in various parts of the state for the repeal of the law.

At the 1835 session of the legislature, 558 petitions with more than 31,000 signatures were presented asking for the repeal of the school law. It was during this discussion in the legislature that Thaddeus Stevens made his famous speech in behalf of the law. The repeal was defeated, and the law remained on the statute books. Its repeal has never again been considered from that time until today. The senate and house journals show that every legislature has taken some action for the expansion and development of the schools from 1835 to date.

Here in Pittsburgh, there came a lull in the preparations for opening the schools while the legislature was considering the repeal. However, as soon as the law was affirmed, action resumed to have the schools in operation at an early date. Four available sites were selected, one in each ward. One was an abandoned carpet factory, one a chair factory, and two were old warehouses. Contracts were let for the building of suitable desks for the pupils, purchasing of limited supplies and other equipment and putting the buildings in order for the opening of schools in the fall. Advertisements were inserted in the local papers for teachers capable of using the Lancasterian System of instruction. These advertisements included a note for eastern papers to copy and bill the Pittsburgh school directors.

One such advertisement came to the attention of a young man from New England teaching in an eastern town, and he applied for a position and was promptly elected. His name was James B. D. Meads, and he became the first teacher elected to teach school in Pittsburgh. A Mr. and Mrs. Whittier and a Mr. and Mrs. Creighton came from New England and remained for many years. Local teachers were chosen to teach in the fourth school. The first public school in Pittsburgh was opened on

September 5, 1835, with five boys enrolled and James Gilmore, a young law student, as the teacher.

Coeducation was frowned upon. The primary department for small children was located on the ground floor of the building. The older boys occupied the second floor and the girls the third floor. Separate entrances were provided for each. The number of pupils assigned to each teacher varied from 100 to 250. The Lancasterian method provided for the teacher to select ten or twelve of the brighter pupils as monitors, each identified by a brass check suspended from the neck. These monitors were instructed directly by the teacher, and they, in turn, instructed the other pupils in small groups. The monitors had the power of reporting their charges for discipline to the teacher. This sometimes proved unfortunate for the monitor, for the disciplined pupil reserved the right to call in his pals and to settle his grievance with the monitor outside of school hours. The Lancasterian method was considered a success, but it did not last more than two or three years in Pittsburgh.

Most of the schoolrooms were crowded, children sat on the floor and on the window sills, and when these positions were filled late comers were sent home. Some of the pupils were without books; free textbooks were not yet in existence. Parents had to buy the books for their children. The school directors sometimes bought textbooks for the poor children for use in school, only. The problem was further complicated by the frequent changes in textbooks, and the fact that each ward had its own books and changed them frequently, thus adding to the financial burden of the parents who could ill afford to keep up with the demands of the schools.

There were only limited quantities of paper available and pupils used slates for written work. Steel pens were not available at this time, and quill pens were used for writing. An incident related by one of the pupils of Mr. Meads of the South School indicates that he would sharpen some fifty to seventy-five quills while eating his noon lunch. Also, there were no slate blackboards. These were made of wood painted black, and the teacher did the painting. The teacher was responsible for firing the pot-belly stove in the center of the room and keeping the room properly swept and clean.

Teachers were employed not so much for their mental abilities as for their ability to manhandle the large and unruly members of their classes. In one ward, the directors debated whether it was entirely proper

to elect any woman as a teacher. On second thought, they did, at forty dollars per quarter. Women teachers never received more than one half the salary of men teachers. Schools were in session six days a week for seven and one half hours a day. There were two holidays each year, Christmas and the Fourth of July.

Pupils started to school at six years of age and scarcely ever remained beyond the age of twelve years because there was no type of school or instruction available beyond that age. Child labor was an important factor in the industrial life of the city. Children, sometimes very young, were put to work in the glass factories or in the textile mills to work from sunrise to sunset, six days a week. It is a matter of record that when a child was "bound out" to a tradesman, he was to furnish that child with food, clothing, shelter, and at least three months of schooling each year. On certain occasions, the employer worked the child all day and made him attend night school for his education.

Colored children were excluded from public schools during the first two years the schools were in operation. A petition from the colored citizens backed by a recommendation of a number of prominent white citizens caused the directors of the four wards to combine in the establishment of a central school for these children. The school was opened in November, 1837. This school remained in operation under both colored and white teachers, in a number of locations, until July 4, 1881, when all such schools were outlawed by an act of the legislature.

All pupils were admitted to schools on a ticket issued by any member of the school board, and in some instances by the teachers. This latter practice was questioned, because teachers sometimes accepted pupils from other than their own wards in order to maintain larger enrollments. Expulsions and suspensions from school for any cause were made by the directors. Truancy was one of a long list of offenses prevalent from the very first year. As a control for truancy, notices were sent to the parents which required their signature and prompt return to the teacher; continued violations resulted in suspension or expulsion from school. There were gangs then, one or more in each ward, and any boy caught away from his own district met with rough treatment at the hands of a rival gang.

There was time for recreation both in school hours at recess time and after school. According to an old resident who attended school previous to 1850, the boys played walsdown, tag, whip and a form of ball.

The girls jumped rope, played jacks and catcher. Fishing and swimming in the near-by rivers provided recreation while playing "hooky" or outside of school hours. Occasionally, excursions were made to the country under the guidance of the teacher.

The makeshift quarters so hastily acquired in the beginning were soon found to be inadequate and undesirable for school purposes. The school directors began to plan for new and better buildings during the first year. The first schoolhouse was built in 1836 and others were built within the next two years. Annexed wards soon built substantial schoolhouses. All of these buildings were built on or near a corner site in order to provide separate entrances for the different sexes. Some of these buildings were the most imposing structures in the wards. As an example, the Fifth Ward School, later known as the Ralston School, indicates the civic interest in schools. The grounds were surrounded by an iron fence, and shade trees were planted in the school yard. The building was a brick structure three floors high with a basement. City water and gas were piped into the premises. As an indication of the substantial character of this building, it remained in active service for more than eighty years. Another school building, known as the Wickersham School, was built in 1849 and was still in active service in 1950. For economic reasons not all of the buildings were so durably built, but most of them were, which reflects the good judgment of the directors.

Between the years 1835 and 1855, Pittsburgh expanded rapidly by annexations. The original four wards, North, East, South, and West, were renamed First, Second, Third, and Fourth. The Fifth and Sixth Wards were annexed in 1837. The Seventh and Eighth Wards were annexed in 1845 and the Ninth Ward in 1846. The population increased from approximately 21,000 to 47,000 in 1855. This growth of the city was reflected in the schools. The enrollment increased from 1,000 to 3,500, the number of teachers from 7 to 97, and the number of buildings from 4 to 9. The number of directors increased from 24 to 54. The taxes for school purposes increased from \$550.45 in 1835 to \$48,640 plus a state appropriation of \$3,040.

All of these increases added to the labors of the school directors. School boards usually held their weekly meetings in the several schoolhouses. In one of the latter a Mrs. Mercer was employed to make the wood fire in the stove to keep the place warm, for which service she received 50 cents a month. Later, many of the meetings were held in the

several homes of the directors. In each ward the directors were organized into various committees, one of which was a visiting committee of two. Such a committee would visit the local school every week, observe its condition and the quality of the work of each teacher, and report to the next board meeting. They also made direct purchases of coal, books, and supplies. They examined and employed teachers, admitted pupils, and looked after the repairs and upkeep of the building. These tasks were time-consuming and resulted in a great turnover among the directors. However, there were a few directors who made the necessary sacrifices and adjustments to perform this public duty for many years. The success of their work is evidenced by their untiring efforts to perpetuate this great social enterprise.

As stated above, a complete education in the public schools at first covered a period of only six years, ending when the child reached the age of twelve years. As early as 1845, many of the young people of the city felt the need of more schooling, but were deprived of this privilege on account of daytime employment. Evening schools were then provided for these boys and girls. The only requirement for this privilege was the furnishing of their own books and candles for light.

Even so, this all too brief period of schooling was recognized as inadequate for the future citizens of this rapidly growing city. Something had to be done to remedy this serious defect of the local schools, and the citizens of the Sixth Ward took measures to help not only the young people but older ones as well. They inaugurated a course of six lectures for which adults were charged fifty cents and children fifteen cents. Lemuel Stephens, a member of the faculty of the Western University, was engaged to deliver the lectures for one hundred dollars. His subjects covered the field of science, with emphasis on electricity and physics. The response of the citizens was encouraging. The attendance was large, often taxing the capacity of the room. Wide publicity of this course of lectures attracted the attention of citizens in other wards and similar courses were started in different parts of the city. Before long, a general public meeting was called to discuss plans for the opening of a high school in the city. Professor Stephens was made chairman of a committee to draw up plans for such a school, and it was he who developed the idea of a unified city school system with a central board of school directors, a city-wide tax system for schools, and the creation of a Pittsburgh high school. He also drafted a bill for the establishment of these innova-

tions, which was passed by the legislature and signed by the governor. The proposition was put before the citizens of Pittsburgh at a general election in June, 1849, but the campaign was a bitter one and the proposition was defeated.

The next important step in the development of the public schools, taken in 1854, was to organize them on a county-wide basis with a county superintendent of schools. This change was bitterly opposed by both school directors and teachers, because one of the most important functions of such an official was to examine applicants for teaching and to issue teachers' certificates. Many of the directors felt that they could examine the teachers better than anyone else. The teachers, themselves, objected to the examinations feeling that they knew best whether they could teach school. The school directors of the county were required to elect the superintendent. It is recorded that when they came to deciding the salary to be paid this new official there was a wide divergence of opinion. To settle the controversy, the directors were asked to write the salary each thought best on a piece of paper and deposit it in a hat. When the votes were counted, it was found that the salary suggested ranged from one dollar to three thousand dollars a year. The salary was fixed at one thousand dollars.

The first man to hold the position of county superintendent, James M. Pryor, remained but one year; the second, Rev. B. M. Kerr, stayed two years. The latter made several very elaborate reports to the state superintendent of schools in which he cited some of the errors he found in the answers to the teachers' examination papers. For examples, meridian was defined as "half round, when the sun shones fare at 1 o'clock"; grammar, "the art of science"; evolution, "a turning round"; and one, asked how Pennsylvania is bound, answered, "i don no how bound." Many former teachers as well as applicants were refused certificates.

The period from 1835 to 1855 may be considered one of trial and error, for it was during this time that many experiments were made and defects were remedied always looking forward to the improvement of the schools.

The Great Fire of 1845 did not destroy any school buildings, but the schools were forced to close on account of all city taxes being suspended.

The first class in special education for mute children was organized

and conducted by the city public schools. The school, the first of its kind in the United States, was later taken over by the state.

Music was first taught in the Pittsburgh schools in 1842. It was stated that it had great disciplinary value since it tended to soften the hardest natures.

The position of principal was created in 1850 for the purpose of relieving the school directors of some of their time-consuming activities in operating the schools.

Schools were graded on the basis of age groups in 1850.

Advanced classes known as high school classes were added to the regular school grades.

Report cards were first used in 1851. At first, they were issued daily, then weekly, and finally monthly.

During this period, the ward and school directors operated as separate entities performing their several functions without regard to uniform procedures. The state recognized this as a serious drawback to the advancement of the city schools, and enacted legislation to correct this fault.

In 1855, the legislature re-enacted that law of 1849 which was the reorganization program advocated by Lemuel Stephens. This law provided for a central board of school directors with power to levy a city-wide tax for schools, pay all teachers' salaries, purchase supplies, operate two high schools, one for girls and one for boys, and a school for colored children. Local ward boards were continued with power to levy ward taxes for erecting and maintaining school buildings. Teachers in the ward schools were elected by the ward boards. At this time there were fifty-four board members in the nine wards of the city.

The central board was organized with nine members, one from each of the wards. Officers and committee members were chosen from the central board membership, except the position of secretary, which was a paid position as was the position of treasurer.

The central board organized but one high school and opened this institution on September 25, 1855, in a rented building located at 508 Smithfield Street, on a site now occupied by the Mellon bank. During the first few years it seemed doubtful that the school would survive the attacks of its critics. For years it operated under the most adverse circumstances, but it gradually emerged as an important part of the city system. Rev. Jacob McGowan of Cooperstown, N. Y., was the first prin-

cipal. He had two assistants, William Dickson and Philotus Dean. Miss Mary Maitland was elected as preceptress. Entrance examinations were conducted and 114 students were admitted on the first day of school. There were two courses open to the students; one for two years for those who could not remain any longer and a regular four-year course. Examinations for admission were conducted twice each year during the first several years the school operated. The enrollment was equally divided between boys and girls and every ward in the city was represented by the students. The school grew very slowly, due to the fact that the building could not accommodate all of the pupils who desired to attend. In June, 1859, the first commencement exercises were held in one of the theaters. The graduating class consisted of two boys and one girl. The public expressed doubts as to the value of such a costly institution which yielded only three graduates after four years of expensive education. The classes were never large and the smallest number of graduates in any year was in 1868, when only one girl received her diploma.

The high school remained in its original quarters until 1868 when it was moved to the Commonwealth Bank building. In 1871 it was moved to the first high school building erected in the city.

The first three principals of the high school were educated as ministers. The third, Philotus Dean, was largely responsible for the erection of old Central High School, but he died a few days before the school was opened in the new building. It was he who laid the foundation for the further development of the school and its curriculum, and stimulated public interest in the high school. Although the building was purposely made larger than current requirements, it was a matter of but a few years before the building was crowded to overflowing.

An act of the state legislature in 1867 made the city of Pittsburgh an independent school district with freedom to organize outside the jurisdiction of the county superintendent of schools. The first city school superintendent was elected in 1868. George J. Luckey, one of the ward school principals, was chosen for the position. He was a native of Black Horse, Maryland, and at the time of his election he was thirty years of age, which made him the youngest city superintendent elected in Pittsburgh. He received his A.M. degree from Adrian College in Michigan and studied law in New Lisbon, Ohio. His term of office covered more than thirty years, the longest of any city superintendent. Mr. Luckey

was elected by a convention of ward school directors, but he was directly responsible to the central board of directors.

The most important change in the city school system at this time was its rapid growth through the annexation of the central and east sections in 1868 and the south side in 1872, thereby adding many schools, teachers, and pupils.

The next most important change came about through the erection of the Central High School, its dedication and occupancy in 1871. The high school enrollment grew rapidly and soon overflowed into near-by ward school buildings. This crowded and unsatisfactory condition in the high school continued for the next twenty-five years. The Fifth Avenue High School was erected in 1895 and the South Side High School in 1898.

The superintendent in examining applicants for teaching positions discovered the need for teacher training in Pittsburgh. He therefore established a two-year course in the last two years of the high school curriculum, with practice teaching in near-by ward schools. Later, this course was expanded to cover four years of training and the school with practice teaching rooms was located in the Miller School which had been erected as a school for colored children.

City teacher institutes were started in 1866. At first, attendance was voluntary and the meetings were poorly attended. The teachers were required to pay dues for the support of the institutes. The programs were made up of lectures by local educators and demonstration lessons by ward school teachers. The first professional teachers organization in Pittsburgh was organized on January 17, 1870, with 180 charter members. It was known as the Pittsburgh Academy of Teachers and its object was to establish and maintain a fraternity of earnest and enthusiastic public school teachers. Meetings were held once each month and the dues assessed at one per cent of the monthly salary of each member. This organization finally passed out of existence about 1885.

As evidence that the teachers were interested in their professional betterment, the teachers' institute of 1875 began the publication of the *Educational Voice* for the dissemination of educational intelligence and the exchange of educational practices. Many of the articles published were definite instructions for the teaching of the several branches included in the curriculum. In 1885, under the direction and guidance of the superintendent of schools, the Pittsburgh Teachers' Library was

founded. The library was made possible by four concerts given by public school pupils, and by donations from William Thaw, Andrew Carnegie, Mrs. George Westinghouse, and Henry I. Gourley, a former principal. The library was chartered.

A drastic change in the financial policy of the public schools of Pittsburgh was made by an act of the legislature in 1877. This act materially changed the school system of the city. It transferred from the school authorities to the city councils the power to levy and collect taxes for school purposes and made the educational department a department of the city government.

The problem of handling textbooks passed through many stages before it was finally settled. The original trouble came about through the frequent changing of the textbooks. In 1871, the legislature limited the changes to once in three years, and in 1878, to once in six years. In 1885 the state gave the several school districts permissive authority to furnish free textbooks, and in 1893 this was made mandatory, together with the furnishing of free supplies.

The first school census in Pittsburgh was taken in 1868. It indicated that 3,781 children under fifteen years of age were not enrolled in any school. As a result of this finding an agitation began for some sort of obviously needed compulsory education law. This idea kept recurring for the next twenty-seven years, or until 1895, when a compulsory state law was passed by the legislature. Pittsburgh immediately elected truant officers to make the law effective.

Public school enrollment grew rapidly through the years as indicated by the following figures: in 1868 only 7,416 pupils were enrolled, and in 1898 the figure had risen to 46,021. The high school enrollment in 1870, with one building, was 234, and in 1898, with three buildings, had risen to 1,922.

In the early part of this period, the schools were divided into four major departments: primary, intermediate, grammar, and high school. The intermediate department was dropped, leaving the others unchanged for many years. During the period the curriculum grew to ponderous size and at the same time highly complex. To the original reading, writing, and arithmetic were added music, geography, history, drawing, physical culture, physiology, cooking, and sloyd work. With annual promotions, it required seven years, on paper, to complete the primary and grammar grades, but actually, the average time required

was nine and one-half years. Critics of the prevailing system recommended various changes to shorten the time by eliminating much of the arithmetic, geography, history, and grammar being taught at that time. In the high school, the course of study was even larger. One of the first diplomas issued in 1859 showed sixty-four different subjects completed in four years.

School kitchens were installed in 1881 by philanthropic citizens with the directors paying the teachers' salaries, and in 1891, sloyd woodwork was made a part of the curriculum.

The Pittsburgh and Allegheny Kindergarten Association started kindergartens in 1892. The central board of directors subsidized these classes by providing rooms and paying part of the salaries of the teachers, and later paid practically all of the expenses of the kindergartens in Pittsburgh.

Samuel Andrews, the second superintendent of the Pittsburgh public schools, was elected to that position on May 2, 1899, and assumed control of the office on June 1, at the age of fifty-two years. He was born in Allegheny County in the section now occupied by the borough of Carnegie. He attended country school near his own home and later attended Curry's Institute for three years. He entered the service of the Pittsburgh public schools as principal of the Thaddeus Stevens School in the Thirty-sixth Ward. He remained in this position for fifteen years when he was elected principal of the Howard School. While serving as principal he was active in politics, serving as a member of the common and select councils from the Thirty-sixth Ward. He was a candidate for the position of city superintendent in 1893, and again in 1896. He remained in this position of superintendent until the year 1911.

The schools, under the central board, the superintendent, and the large group of ward school directors, continued to flourish and grow. Practically all the problems of this administration were repetitions of those of the previous twenty-five years. The educational achievements were most encouraging, but the business aspects of the schools left much to be desired. The city grew, by the annexation of Allegheny City, six boroughs, and three townships, from an estimated population of 300,000 to 402,749 as recorded in the Census of 1910. The assessed value of real estate and personal property for taxation purposes was more than doubled. It is interesting to note that while the population increased but 34.2% the taxable property value increased 103%. In 1899, the in-

come from local taxes for school purposes reached the million-dollar mark and at the end of the decade in 1910 that amount had been doubled. The schools were making rapid strides towards reaching more of the children of school age. The number of school buildings increased from 80 to 104, and the school enrollment increased in every department. The number of pupils admitted to high schools rose from 1,982 in 1899 to 2,861 in 1910; to ward schools, from 43,350 to 50,075; and to kindergartens, 1,007 to 4,279—or a total increase from 46,339 to 57,215.

The question of teachers' salaries kept recurring from time to time under growing pressure from the principals, the teachers, and an increasing number of the patrons. After much deliberation, the central board established a new salary schedule based upon merit and a re-examination of all the teachers. A salary commission composed of five local school people was appointed to conduct the examinations and recommend the salary advances. The examinations were held and 303 of the 512 teachers examined failed. Criticism of the plan reached a high pitch among the teachers and the public.

The Pittsburgh Teachers' Association took the matter before the Allegheny County courts, where they won the decision. The central board carried the matter to the Supreme Court, and the lower court decision was sustained. The salary schedule and the plan were both dropped.

The large body of public school teachers in the city had begun to turn their attention towards the organization of their group for the purpose of economic and professional improvement. The Pittsburgh Teachers' Association was organized on April 20, 1904, with Miss Clarissa Moffitt as president. It was not until October 14, 1908, that Miss Moffitt was elected general secretary on a full time basis. During its early days, the association supported its request for salary increases with a petition containing sixty thousand names of citizens. The *Pittsburgh School Bulletin* was the association's magazine, starting in June, 1907. The association developed and operated a pension system for its members. Many other improvements in the profession were due to the activities of this organization.

In the field of professional betterment, the teachers organized or supported numerous projects directed towards the better preparation of all teachers. Teachers' institutes were better organized, and teachers' reading circles were established. Many attended university extension

classes, teachers' round tables, grade institutes, and participated in teacher-directors' meetings. In 1909, the Henry Clay Frick Educational Commission was founded for the purpose of distributing free scholarships to teachers.

The Pittsburgh Principals' Association was organized in the late 1890's. Its activities closely paralleled those of the Teachers' Association, but in numerous instances, the principals opposed the policies of the teachers, as was the case in developing the pension system. Professional meetings were held monthly, but the attendance was usually poor. The Principals' Association was responsible for working out a plan with Carnegie Library for furnishing a selected list of books for individual classroom use on request by the teacher. Another project of merit was the procurement of photographs of the pictures in the permanent exhibit of the Carnegie Art Galleries for circulation through the different school buildings. In 1904, the Principals' Association procured a supply of botanical specimens from the Phipps Conservatory for use in botany classes in the schools.

Some improvements were made in caring for the individual needs of pupils, both mental and physical. An Open-Air Class for pre-tubercular children was opened in the Irene Kaufmann Settlement under the sponsorship of the central board in 1910. The same year, a class for backward children was opened.

The Winodausis Club, a Masonic auxiliary, began serving penny lunches for undernourished poor children in the Fort Pitt School in 1908. The Council of Jewish Women joined in this service in 1910 at the Franklin School.

The first public evening high school was opened in 1907 in the Fifth Avenue High School building. This work was designed to offer a high school education to those unable to attend day school. During the first year more than twelve hundred pupils were enrolled.

Medical inspection in the schools was advocated by the city health department. The Civic Club helped in installing a modified form of this activity in the schools. This health project was resisted by the central board for financial reasons.

There was marked evidence that the fifty-year-old system in our schools was reaching its final stages of usefulness. Although the professional activities of the schools had made commendable progress, the business management had made an almost complete failure. The time had

arrived for a radical change in both educational and business management.

In 1907 the legislature passed an act authorizing the governor to appoint a commission to survey the schools and recommend necessary changes in their organization. The report of this commission was presented to the legislature in 1909, but failed to be approved. The same measure was again presented and passed in 1911. This law codified the more than two hundred amendments which had accumulated during the previous one hundred years, and set up an entirely new type of local management: in Pittsburgh, a central board of education, with fifteen members appointed by the county courts, in place of all the local ward boards. The Board of Public Education took office in November, 1911, and immediately began the reorganization of the public schools.

Dr. Sylvanus Laurabee Heeter was elected on February 13, 1912, as the third city superintendent and the first of the Greater Pittsburgh District. Dr. Heeter was a native of Indiana, where he graduated from the Indiana State Normal School, and attended the University of Chicago for postgraduate work. He was assistant superintendent of schools in Minneapolis and superintendent of schools in St. Paul before coming to Pittsburgh. He remained in Pittsburgh until the spring of 1913.

While in Pittsburgh, Dr. Heeter reorganized the educational department by the appointment of four associate superintendents, and of directors of special subjects with supervisors for field work. He opened a continuation school and added a department of vocational guidance. The kindergartens were made a new department completely under school management. A department of health and physical education was also added.

The administration of the schools was divided into three departments: Education, Buildings, and Supplies, with a superintendent in charge of each responsible to the board of education.

Dr. William M. Davidson was the fourth superintendent. He assumed this position on January 1, 1914. He was a native of Pennsylvania, born in 1863. His youth and early manhood were spent in the state of Kansas, and he graduated from the Kansas State Teachers Normal School. He filled the position of principal in a number of cities in Kansas and served as superintendent of Topeka, Kansas, schools for twelve years. He was superintendent of the Omaha, Nebraska, schools from 1904 to 1911. He was then elected to the superintendency

of the Washington, D. C., schools, where he served until coming to Pittsburgh.

Dr. Davidson's principal task upon arrival was to consolidate and put in working order the new organization. This he did with consummate skill. In addition he brought Pittsburgh to the attention of the outside world through his state, national, and international activities.

A trade school for boys was established in 1915, and a similar school for girls in 1928. The first junior high school in the city was organized in 1917. A modern high school system was organized and an extensive building program completed.

Public education was extended to give advantages to many underprivileged children, including hospital classes for crippled and pre-tubercular children, and instruction in speech correction. There were also classes for adult foreign-born residents, in schools and homes. A juvenile detention home school was established in cooperation with the county courts.

Educational standards for obtaining teachers' certificates were raised; teachers' salaries were increased; definite tenures were established; and a state pension system for retired employees was put into operation in 1919.

The conservative conduct of the Board of Public Education, combined with the sound business practices it employed, materially aided in winning the complete confidence of the public.

Enrollment in the schools grew rapidly, especially in the high schools, during this period. When the new administration took charge, thousands of pupils were on part-time attendance due to the lack of facilities. This difficulty was completely overcome before the close of Dr. Davidson's administration in June, 1930, when he died in service.

Dr. Ben G. Graham, the fifth superintendent of the city schools, was elected to this position in October, 1930. He was a native of Pennsylvania and had spent his entire teaching career in this state. He received his B.A., M.A., and Sc.D. degrees at Westminster College, and was awarded a number of other doctoral degrees by various institutions including the University of Pittsburgh and Harvard University.

Dr. Graham had had a wide teaching experience in Lawrence County, McKeesport, Greensburg, and Pittsburgh. He had organized the first junior high school in Pittsburgh in 1917. He had then become superintendent of schools in New Castle, Pennsylvania, and had later

returned to Pittsburgh as associate superintendent of schools in charge of secondary education.

It was during Dr. Graham's administration that the great depression held sway. School enrollment reached its peak at 108,000 and then began a decline. Instruction was carried into the homes of children afflicted with infantile paralysis and a school was set up in the Heart House for Cardiacs. A nursery school was also established in the Bellefield School. The personnel department for handling all employment problems was thoroughly established.

An extensive educational survey was made of the schools by a group of educators from Columbia University in 1940. A recommendation of this survey called for the appointment of a business manager for the board of education. The position was created and Hiram H. Rothrock was elected in April, 1945, with the title of business manager and secretary of the board of education.

Dr. Graham died in service in March, 1942, and until the following September Drs. Earl A. Dimmick and Gerald D. Whitney, associate superintendents, shared the responsibilities of the administration of the educational department.

Dr. Henry Harrington Hill was the sixth superintendent of schools in Pittsburgh. He took office in September, 1942, and resigned in June, 1945. Dr. Hill was born in Statesville, North Carolina. He had received his bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Virginia, and his doctorate from Columbia University. During his administration, he stressed financial policies and improved public relations.

Dr. Earl Amber Dimmick is the seventh, and incumbent, superintendent of schools. He was elected to this position at the beginning of the school year 1945-1946. He is a native of Pennsylvania. He attended and received his bachelor's degree from Albright College, and his master's and doctor's degrees from the University of Pittsburgh. He obtained his experience in school work as teacher, principal, and director of guidance in Philipsburg, Duquesne, and Pittsburgh. He was associate superintendent of schools in Pittsburgh before becoming superintendent.

During the present administration a number of broad and sweeping changes have been made in the work of the schools. A program of intercultural relations has been promoted within the schools and the public outside the schools. Creation of a new position, first associate superin-

tendent in charge of instruction, has unified the entire educational program, focusing attention on the child and his education from the kindergarten through the senior high school. It has centralized authority and responsibility for the improvement of instruction. Emphasis on democratic and cooperative supervision is making possible a functional approach to instructional problems which gives promise of real gains leading to a possible renaissance of learning in the Pittsburgh public schools.

Public relations has been further emphasized by the appointment of a director of public relations whose activities are devoted to keeping public attention focused on the constantly changing efforts at improving education to meet the requirements of the youth of the city.

This brings to a close one hundred and fifteen years of the history of the Pittsburgh public schools. This great educational system was begun under adverse circumstances, but it contrived to continue and grow. In 1835, 1,000 pupils were enrolled in four schools under seven teachers at an annual cost of \$2,300 with a property investment of less than \$1,000. In 1950, more than 80,000 pupils are enrolled in day and evening schools under 3,000 teachers at an annual cost of nearly \$20,000,000, and a property valuation in excess of \$60,000,000. There are now in operation 97 elementary schools and 27 high and trade schools. Throughout the years the schools have served more than 5,000,000 pupils and have graduated from high schools, since 1855, more than 120,000 students. All this has cost Pittsburgh and the state of Pennsylvania over \$500,000,000.

This vast educational enterprise throughout the years has made possible the potential development of Pittsburgh. It has also materially aided in spreading the fame of this great city as the "Work Shop" of the entire world, through the achievements of its educated citizens in every avenue of human endeavor. The dream of the poet of more than seventy-five years ago has been achieved to the glory of Pittsburgh, as witness the following verses penned by Richard Realf, one-time news editor of the *Pittsburgh Commercial*, and published in the *People's Monthly* (Pittsburgh) of August, 1871:²

² Twenty years after Realf's death his works were collected and published in a volume entitled *Poems by Richard Realf, Poet, Soldier, Workman* (New York and London, Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1898). Here, a revised version of the above poem appears under the now best-known title, "Hymn of Pittsburgh" (p.142), an accurate rendition of which is also to be found in John N. Boucher, *A Century and a Half of Pittsburg and Her People*, 1:523 (Lewis Publishing Company, 1908).

PITTSBURGH

I think my Father was Vulcan,
 I am Smith of the land and sea;
 And the cunning spirit of Tubal Cain,
 Came with my marrow to me.
 My commonest thoughts are winged with steel,
 I coin vast iron acts,
 And orb the impalpable dreams of Seers
 Into comely lyric facts.

I am monarch of all the forges,
 I have solved the riddle of fire.
 The Amen of Nature to need of Man,
 Springeth at my desire.
 I search with the subtle soul of flame
 The heart of the rocky Earth,
 And from under my hammers, the prophecies
 Of the miracle years come forth.

I am brown with the soot of my furnace,
 I drip with the sweats of toil;
 But my fingers throttle the savage wastes,
 And tear the curse from the soil.
 I fling the bridges across the gulfs
 That hold us from the To Be,
 And build the roads for the bannered march
 Of crowned Humanity.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Because complete documentation of the foregoing brief sketch would equal or surpass the text, only the principal sources and depositories where they are to be found are noted here, for the benefit of the reader who may wish to pursue the subject in greater detail in the thousands of books, papers, and documents available.

Sources

Pennsylvania—Digests of laws, journals of the house and senate, executive documents, annual reports of the official latterly known as the state superintendent of public instruction, and the *Pennsylvania School Journal*.

Pittsburgh—City ordinances, newspapers, and directories; histories and historical sketches; biographies of educators and other citizens; early minute books of ward school directors' meetings; and old school reunion programs.

Depositories

Washington, D. C.—Library of Congress.

Harrisburg—Pennsylvania State Library and Museum; Dauphin County Historical Society.

Lancaster—Lancaster County Historical Society.

Pittsburgh—Board of Public Education; Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania; Carnegie Library; Allegheny County Law Library.