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EARLY AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION IN BRITISH COLUMBIA:

THE PIONEERING ROLE OF THE FARMERS' INSTITUTE

By

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ABSTRACT

Even though agricultural education was among the first examples of government-sponsored adult education in British Columbia, it has received scant attention from historians of education. Details of early agricultural education in B.C. are contained in the reports of the Department of Agriculture and the Farmers' Institute, the basic sources for this study.

The British Columbia Farmers' Institute was created by the provincial government in 1897 to assist a struggling agricultural industry. The founding legislation provided for a dual purpose organization which would promote co-operative systems of purchasing, producing, and marketing. It would also promote and facilitate a program of scientific agricultural education for the province's farmers. A Department of Agriculture had been formed in 1891 and its early work was largely educational in nature, consisting of the collection of information about agricultural conditions in the province, the dissemination of this information to farmers, and the promotion of settlement in rural areas. When the Farmers' Institute was begun, James R. Anderson,

the first statistician and deputy minister of agriculture, was appointed Superintendent of Farmers' Institutes and began immediately to organize farmers into local institutes for the provision of scientific agricultural education.

In spite of the challenges presented by the geography of the province, the Institute experienced steady growth in its early years. By the end of the period examined in this study, 1897 to 1915, the Institute had nearly 8500 members in various parts of the British Columbia. During this time the province experienced a tremendous influx of population with many of the newcomers settling in rural areas to take up farming. Agriculture flourished too, so that the value of agricultural production in 1914 actually surpassed that of both forestry and mining.

Accompanying the growth in the importance of agriculture was an increased awareness of the value of agricultural education to farmers. The Department of Agriculture expanded and decentralized. The federal Agricultural Instruction Act supplied funds to the province for agricultural education and a Faculty of Agriculture was one of three faculties in the new University of British Columbia when it opened in 1915. New agricultural organizations were formed, many with the support of the Department of Agriculture.

As sources of agricultural education became increasingly diverse, the focus of the Farmers' Institute shifted toward the promotion of co-operation within the agricultural industry. Its early success in organizing farmers and popularizing agricultural education was partly responsible for the change in role from primary agent of adult education to facilitator of a variety of programs and services to farmers.

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CHAPTER I

OVERVIEW OF THE BRITISH COLUMBIA

FARMERS' INSTITUTE

The existing record of the history of adult education in Canada, and particularly in British Columbia, is a sparse one.¹ The history of education is the history of youth education and, with some notable exceptions,² it is the history of public schooling. To illustrate, to historians of British Columbia education, the term "agricultural education" is identified more with the school garden program of the public school system from 1914 to 1923 than with any of the adult education activities of the Department of Agriculture, the Farmers' and Women's Institutes or the agriculture extension work of the University of British Columbia. All of these programs were begun before the end of 1915 and have operated continuously ever since. In view of the number of British Columbians who have been involved in adult agricultural education, research in this area would seem to be one of the conspicuous omissions from our history of education.

As many of the agricultural communities of British Columbia have been transformed to urban and suburban centres, the presence of these agencies has diminished

and their contribution to the founding of adult agricultural education in this province has been overlooked. Also, as often happens with programs which promote and facilitate economic change, or attempt to ameliorate its effects, their origins and the efforts of their founders are often forgotten as the programs win general acceptance and become institutionalized.

Such would seem to be the case with the British Columbia Farmers' Institute and its founder, James R. Anderson. If he is known at all, Anderson is remembered because of his father, who was active in the Hudsons' Bay fur trade, or for his writing of basic works on the flora and fauna of B.C.³ The Farmers' Institute is referred to only briefly in local histories and in academic studies⁴ of agricultural development and educational history, even though research which attempts to trace the development of provincial policy on adult education has cited the Agricultural Societies Act of 1873, the educational work of the Department of Agriculture begun in 1891, and the Farmers' Institute and Co-operation Act of 1897 as significant in the history of the provincial government's role in funding adult education in British Columbia.⁵

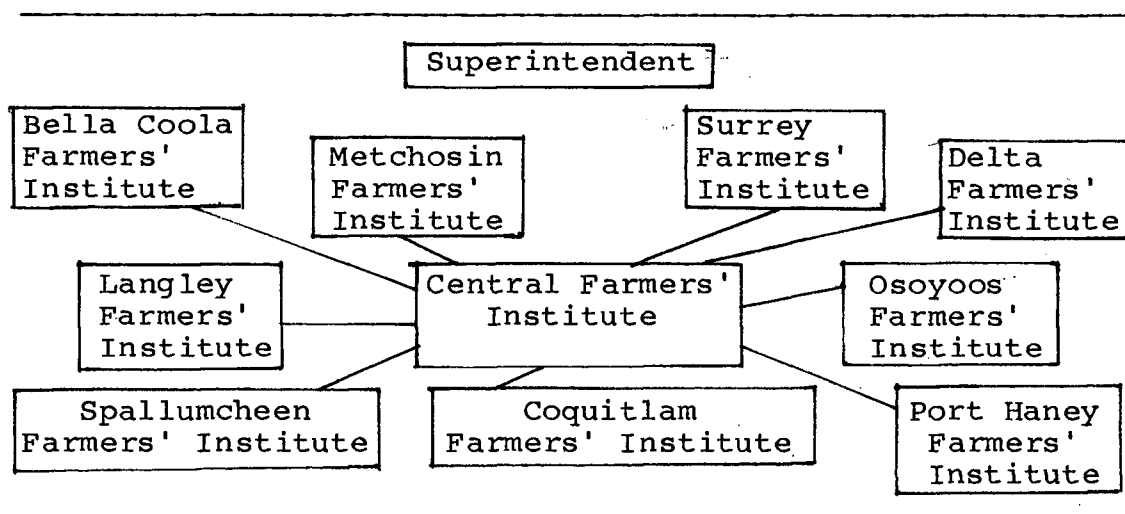
Structure and Function of the B.C. Farmers' Institute

The first institute was formed at Surrey in 1897, the result of political and economic forces, on the one hand, and the demands of local farmers, on the other.

Created by the 1897 act of the British Columbia legislature, the Farmers' Institute has since that date continued to function in rural areas of the province, administered by the provincial Department of Agriculture through the office of the Superintendent of the Farmers' Institute. Both the provincial organization and its local branches are called Farmers' Institutes. The founding legislation provided that a new institute could be created when at least fifteen potential members indicated to the superintendent that they wished to form one. After World War I the structure of the provincial Farmers' Institute changed through the addition of a district level based on geographical regions of B. C.

Figure 1

The Early Structure of the
B.C. Farmers' Institute



The formation of the Central Farmers' Institute, a body comprised of delegates from the local institutes, was also provided for in the founding legislation. The

Central Farmers' Institute met annually for a three day conference to debate and select resolutions to be forwarded to the Department of Agriculture or the appropriate level of government.⁶ The Minister of Agriculture has always addressed the gathering and in the early years of operation was present during much of the proceedings.

Initially, the purpose of the Farmers' Institute was two-fold: to provide scientific agricultural knowledge to farmers and to promote co-operation among farmers for the purchase of farm supplies and equipment and for the marketing of their products. Over the years, the function of the Farmers' Institute has evolved in relation to the changing needs of the farmers, the structure of the provincial Department of Agriculture and provincial and federal policies on agriculture. The Annual Reports of the Department of Agriculture suggest that the Institute has had significant impact on the development of agriculture and rural community life in B.C. In a practical way the Institute assisted farmers with clearing land, dyking, drainage, and irrigation. It provided seed, feed, fertilizer, stumping powder, and other farm necessities to local Institutes for co-operative purchase by their members. The Farmers' Institute also undertook an ambitious educational program. In its first decade of operation it was the primary agent of adult agricultural education, and it was only with the expansion of the Department of Agriculture

in 1909 to include separate branches of horticulture, livestock, dairy, and poultry that the Superintendent of the Farmers' Institute was relieved of total responsibility for the administration and provision of agricultural education in the province. Shortly thereafter, the federal Agricultural Instruction Act of 1913 provided funds to the province for agricultural education purposes. In 1915, relying on the federal funding, the UBC Faculty of Agriculture began its work in agricultural extension.

The educational program of the B.C. Farmers' Institute utilized methods and techniques which were being developed around North America wherever agricultural extension was being conducted in connection with experimental farms and agricultural colleges. Fundamental to agricultural extension is a system of transportation and communication by which knowledge is delivered to the learners. Few regions in North America could pose a greater challenge to program organizers than did the province of British Columbia. Its participants were dispersed around a large territory, divided from one another by climate and topography and the resultant
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diversified interests.

During the founding years of the Farmers' Institute, transportation was difficult and modern methods of communication were in their infancy. In spite of these considerable barriers, the Farmers' Institute launched and sustained an active educational program. If

the elements of the program design and implementation procedure which made this possible can be identified, we may gain some valuable insights into basic techniques of providing education to adults under adverse circumstances.

Outline of the Study

None of the existing literature which mentions the Farmers' Institute has offered reasons for the initial involvement of the provincial government in agricultural education, described the nature of the Farmers' Institute educational program and the extent of its acceptance by farmers, or assessed its effectiveness in providing agricultural education. This study explores the origin and early development of the Farmers' Institute, as it sought to educate farmers in scientific agricultural methods so that the agricultural production of the province might be developed and that farming might become a feasible economic enterprise for rural settlers.

It examines the context of the founding of the Institute and shows how the acceleration of the same forces which created the institute was responsible for a rapid expansion in the range of agricultural education services within the first two decades of the Institute's existence. This expansion and the specialization of services forced a substantial change in the focus of the Institute. By the end of its first decade, the Farmers' Institute was changing from its early position as primary agent of

agricultural education to a co-ordinator of educational services and facilitator of programs of economic assistance to farmers. The study demonstrates that it was the Farmers' Institute which pioneered the provision of organized, systematic group instruction in agricultural education in this province, and through its network of local institutes, laid a foundation for future extension work in agriculture.

As a publicly funded program of adult education, the Farmers' Institute was born of a complex interaction of economic, political, and social forces. The second chapter of this study examines these forces as they operated at the provincial and federal levels. It also reviews the state of adult education in the province and places the founding of the Farmers' Institute in British Columbia in the context of the agricultural education movement which was sweeping North America. Chapter III examines the emergence of the Farmers' Institute from the early educational activities of the Department of Agriculture under James R. Anderson, the first statistician and Deputy Minister. It describes the provisions of the Farmers' Institute and Co-operation Act, the early campaign which was conducted to form local branches of the Institute, and the problems which the organizers confronted.

Chapter IV explores the program design utilized by the early Farmers' Institute: the nature of the learners, the content, the instructional methods and techniques, the devices and human resources available, and the evaluation

of the learning. This chapter concludes with a summary of the outcomes of the initial stage of the Farmers' Institute as a program of adult agricultural education. Chapter V describes how the Farmers' Institute was altered by the growth and development of agriculture and the accompanying demand for increased agricultural education by the province's farmers. It examines the restructuring of the Department of Agriculture, the contribution of the Agricultural Instruction Act to agricultural education in B.C., and the beginning of agricultural extension work at UBC. The records of membership and attendance of the Farmers' Institute in its founding period are discussed in relation to the changes which were taking place in agriculture during that time. The thesis concludes with an assessment of the contribution of the Farmers' Institute to the early period of agricultural education in B.C.

Sources

Although secondary sources make only brief reference to the Farmers' Institute, standard history texts and articles have provided information on the prevailing economic, political and social conditions of the late 1890's and early 20th century. Local histories contain valuable biographical information about specific pioneer farm families and census data describes the general characteristics of the farm population, agricultural production, and population growth. Beyond coverage of the occasional large farmers' gathering, the newspapers consulted have not proved to be a useful

source of information on agriculture. Issues related to mining, forestry and fishing dominated the news in the papers examined.

This study relies heavily on the "Annual Reports of the Farmers' Institutes" found in the British Columbia Sessional Papers and the Annual Reports of the Department of Agriculture. The reports particularly relevant to this study, those for the years between 1891 and 1920, are a rich source of information on the early operation of the Department of Agriculture, and the first phase of the Institute's operation. They contain reprints of information bulletins, reports on agricultural conditions, local institute meetings, and speakers' tours, verbatim accounts of the proceedings at the annual Central Farmers' Institute, and statistics on publications, membership, attendance, staffing, and the formation of new institutes.

An additional primary source which provided considerable insight into the operation of a local institute are the minutes of the Surrey Farmers' Institute, the only minutes located for the founding period of the B.C. Farmers' Institute. These minutes were kept in the standard minute book supplied by the Department of Agriculture and contain accounts of regular meetings, directors' meetings and the annual general meetings. They appear to be a fairly complete record although in some cases there are discrepancies between the "Annual Report of the Farmers' Institute" and the minute book as to the

number of meetings which were held. The detail in which the minutes are recorded varies from a full commentary on the meeting to a brief listing of the speakers, topics, attendance and the motions passed. Unfortunately, since no other minutes were located for the founding period, it was impossible to make comparisons between Surrey and other institutes around the province.

An additional primary source which was consulted were the James R. Anderson papers in the Provincial Archives. This source provided much interesting information on the life of Anderson with the unfortunate exception of his working years, first as an accountant and later in the employ of the Department of Agriculture. His diaries contain little more than dates and times of meetings, mention of social engagements, and comments on the weather. One speech to an institute organizing meeting and several letters received upon his retirement as Superintendent are the only papers related to the Farmers' Institute.

FOOTNOTES

1

See Gordon Selman, "Historical Writing in English About Adult Education in Canada," in Papers Presented to a Conference on Research in Adult Education (Vancouver: Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education, 1980).

2

For example, Jean Barman, Growing Up British in British Columbia: Boys in Private School, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1984).

3

J. R. Anderson was the son of A. C. Anderson, the subject of the article "Alexander Caulfield Anderson, fur trader and scholar" by H. H. Bancroft in Historical Essays on British Columbia, ed. J. K. Friesen and H. K. Ralston. J. R. Anderson is author of Trees and Shrubs: Food, Medicinal and Poisonous Plants of B.C., published by the Department of Education in 1925 for use in the public schools, and British Columbia Farmers' Foes and their Enemies, a booklet on insects pests, published by the Department of Agriculture, 1895[?].

4

David Jones, Agriculture, the Land and Education, unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of British Columbia, 1978; Margaret Ormsby, "Agricultural Development in British Columbia," Agricultural History 19 (January 1945), pp. 11-20 and "The United Farmers of British Columbia: An Abortive Third-Party Movement," British Columbia Quarterly 17 (January - April 1953), pp.55-73; B. E. Wales, "The Development of Adult Education", Journal of Education (1964), p. 5.

5Paul Dampiere, Towards a Public Policy for Adult Education in British Columbia: A Review, Occasional Paper #6, (Vancouver: Pacific Association for Continuing Education, 1978), p. 3-4; Gordon Selman, "A Chronology of Adult Education in B.C. before 1914," Journal of Education 18 (1971), pp. 115-122.

6

In 1916, the Central Farmers' Institute was renamed the Advisory Board of the Farmers' Institute. Annual meetings are still held in Victoria.

Cole Harris, "Moving Amid the Mountains," BC Studies, 58 (Summer 1983), pp. 3-39. Harris describes the relationship between the geography, the transportation system, the economy and social development of British Columbia.

CHAPTER II

THE SETTING: POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, AND SOCIAL FORCES

The origin of any publicly funded program of adult education can be understood only within the context of the more general political, economic and social forces out of which it emerged. Throughout North America, in the last half of the 19th and early 20th centuries, programs of agricultural education were an integral part of government policy on economic development and land settlement. The years under examination, the late 1890's through 1915, were a time during which governments attached growing importance to agriculture. These years coincided with an era in the history of adult education which produced both new forms of education and a new awareness in adults that education was a means to self-improvement and increased opportunity in a rapidly changing world.

This chapter examines the forces at the national and provincial levels which advanced the development of agricultural education and outlines early government funded programs of agricultural education in the United States and Canada. Finally, it places the founding of the farmers' institute in British Columbia in the context

of expanding educational services for adults in the province of British Columbia.

The National Context

Canadians in the closing years of the 19th century were pre-occupied with nation-building. The economic and political forces at work within the nation and around the world were generally conducive to policies which supported land settlement and the development of agriculture. The world-wide economic depression of the early 1890's had eased and the mood of the times was optimistic. By mid decade, the trend of the post-Confederation years, which had seen emigration exceed¹ immigration, began to reverse. A growing market for hard wheat made Prairie settlement desirable and in 1896 the newly elected Liberal government embarked on a strenuous program to encourage immigration.

Prior to that election, Sir Donald Smith, a principal financier of the Canadian Pacific Railway, had been appointed high commissioner for Canada in the United Kingdom, and in this capacity he had begun a promotional campaign to attract desirable British immigrants to the agricultural areas of Canada. The quality of the newly arrived British immigrants was the subject of an article in the Montreal Witness:

Instead of stunted, pale-faced creatures, the products of the streets of large cities, who never saw a tree or cow in their lives, of whom we have had far too many samples in the past, most of the immigrants this season, so far, are splendid specimens of the farm labourers class. There is

also noticeable a considerable sprinkling of the better class of farmers, men with means to invest; but chiefly there is knowledge of the conditions which await them, and fitness for meeting them.²

The article noted that the majority of "the better class of farmers" mentioned were destined for British Columbia where they were hopeful of making "a sudden fortune" in the newly developing agricultural industry. The end result of an invigorated immigration policy was an influx of 1,550,000 immigrants between 1901 and 1911, the vast majority coming from Britain, Europe and the United States. There was a further increase of 1,400,000 in the 1911 to 1921 period, most of whom arrived before the outbreak of World War I.³

Immigration and settlement were closely linked to the interests of the railway companies in Canada. The Canadian Pacific Railway had been completed, making it possible to satisfy both domestic and foreign markets for agricultural products. The railway would benefit both from the transportation of immigrant settlers and the freight that would be generated by a farm population. The railway also promoted travel and migration of settlers from the eastern provinces and elsewhere to the West. As settlement in the Canadian West grew, so did the demand for branch lines of the railway to aid further settlement and marketing of farm products.

A political issue of the time which caused much consternation among farmers was the continuation of the protective tariffs by the traditionally free trade Liberal party.⁴ Eastern manufacturing interests

prevailed, led by the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, to the dismay of Prairie farmers who were not appeased by Laurier's removal of tariffs on binder⁵ twine and barbed wire. However, the debate engendered by the tariff issue was instrumental in the subsequent organization of farmers and their eventual recognition by the federal government as a strong and growing constituency of voters.

By 1910, farmers were organizing as a political movement, primarily in Ontario and on the prairies. The Ontario group initiated a large demonstration in Ottawa when 800 farmers presented a petition to the government. Although Laurier granted them a courteous hearing, neither Liberal nor Conservative party could support the farmers' position. More than one farm leader concluded that a national farmers' party would be necessary in⁶ order to advance their interests at the federal level.

The polarization of farming and manufacturing interests at the turn of the century was a reflection of the transformation taking place in Canadian society. Cities were growing at a tremendous rate. For example, in the ten year period ending in 1901, Montreal's population grew by 108,556 to 328,172; Toronto reached⁷ 209,892; and Winnipeg grew by 16,701 to 42,340. Many urban dwellers endured overcrowded, makeshift housing which lacked proper sanitary facilities and services such⁸ as garbage collection. Leaders of the emerging social reform movement decried the division between rich and

poor that was apparent in the new urban centres. J. S. Woodsworth observed that "In country districts people are to a large extent on a level...."⁹ Farm leaders believed "that the greatest misfortune that can befall any country is to have its people huddled together in great centres of population."¹⁰

One consequence of rapid urbanization was a campaign launched to promote agriculture as a way of life more healthy and desirable than the squalor of urban areas. The key to the promotion of rural life was, of course, education.¹¹ Once individuals were encouraged onto the land, education would raise the standards of agricultural practice and enable the farmer to produce more food for the growing population. With the resulting improvement in his own standard of living, the farmer and his family would be content in their rustic setting. This condition would be mutually advantageous to both farm and city-dweller.

The Provincial Context

The impetus to agricultural education in B.C. also came from events and conditions at the provincial level. British Columbia was seriously affected by the economic depression of the early 1890's. Agricultural prices suffered as surplus farm products from Oregon, California and Washington flooded the market. The provincial balance of trade in agricultural products worried government leaders, officials of the Department of Agriculture and

local farm leaders. In the year 1891, British Columbia imported agricultural products to a value of \$1,730,000 and exported only \$93,000 worth. It was known that, with its varied growing conditions, B.C. could have produced most of the products which were being imported, given a more highly developed agricultural industry.¹² A further problem was the negative effect on agricultural development of land speculation. Large tracts of the best land were being held for investment purposes making it impossible for settlers to acquire arable land.¹³ This practice angered settlers such as Henry Thrift, who founded the Settlers' Association of B. C. in order to further the cause of those who wished to settle and farm the land.¹⁴

Nature had recently dealt harshly with the province's farmers. Following an unseasonably dry summer and a winter of heavy snows, there was disastrous flooding in the spring of 1894. The Fraser covered the rich farm lands of its lower valley, ruining the land for planting, destroying crops and livestock and forcing flood victims to seek refuge in the depressed city of Vancouver.¹⁵ Flooding was not limited, unfortunately, to the Fraser Valley. Interior rivers also flooded, wiping out homes and farms along their banks.¹⁶

The 1890's and the first few years of the new century were marked by serious financial problems for the provincial government which went far beyond the trade imbalance in agricultural products. In a fifteen year

period beginning in 1888 only two years did not add to the accumulated provincial deficit which by 1903 amounted to \$12,545,086.¹⁷ The provincial government had exhausted its credit, leading to the perpetual demand for an increased annual payment to the province by the federal government, under the terms of entry into Confederation in 1871.

By the mid 1890's world economic conditions began to improve, creating a brighter future for B.C. exports, including agricultural products. The discovery of gold in the Yukon brought thousands of new consumers. The growth of urban centres in British Columbia and on the prairies increased demand for agricultural products. By 1901, British Columbia had six centres with a population over five thousand, with Victoria having 21,000 and Vancouver 26,000 residents.¹⁸ The need to develop an agricultural industry was apparent to the government and its Department of Agriculture. The increasing demands of the domestic market suggested that farming could become a viable occupation for rural British Columbians. The possibility of a foreign export market for the province's agricultural goods remained strong. There was every justification for concerted government action to promote agriculture within the province.

Although agriculture had never been a major source of income for the province, nor had it employed as many people as did mining, lumbering or fishing, a Minister of Agriculture, W.J. Armstrong, had been appointed in

1873. During the first decades following B.C.'s entry into Confederation, some significant legislation had been passed. In 1873, the Drainage, Dyking and Irrigation Act provided for co-operative endeavors under a government appointed commissioner. The Agricultural Societies Incorporation Act of 1873 provided for the incorporation of agricultural societies making possible the complicated network of co-operatives, institutes and societies which later developed as agriculture expanded in the province. Legislation regarding cattle branding, thistles and other noxious weeds, and the pasturing of sheep in the Gulf Islands had been enacted. A general system of taxation of all land was begun in 1876. The Land Act was amended in 1884, introducing a land classification system whereby good quality land would be sold by the section at a higher price than non-arable land.

The decade of the 1890's saw additional important legislation affecting farmers. The Horticultural Board Act provided for the inspection of nursery stock and fruit to control disease and insects. The Horticultural and Fruit-Growers' Association was incorporated by a special act in 1890, and in 1896 an act provided for the formation of co-operatives for the production and marketing of farm products. This was followed in 1897 by similar legislation to incorporate associations of milk, cheese and butter producers, The Farmers' Institute and Co-operation Act, and in 1898 by the Agricultural Credit

Associations Act, which allowed for group borrowing of government funds by farmers' associations which in turn could make loans to individual members.

By the late 1890's, the government had established the legal basis for the development of an agricultural industry. What it needed now was an active campaign to assist the settlement of rural B.C., and the establishment of farming as a financially sound occupation for rural residents. Immigration campaigns launched by both federal and provincial governments were already bringing new settlers to the province. But many of these intended farmers lacked experience in farming or confronted conditions and forms of agriculture completely new to them. While the Department of Agriculture had produced quantities of literature on the agricultural potential and conditions in the province, the times required a more active approach. The organization of a farmers' institute with its dual educational and economic role was the reasonable next step in the promotion of agriculture.

Agricultural Education in North America

The origin of the Farmers' Institute in B.C. must also be viewed within the context of the tremendous growth in agricultural education occurring across North America. The first widespread and systematic efforts by North American governments to provide adult education were in programs of agricultural education. ¹⁹ Beginning in the last half of the 19th century, adult education was

a response to expanding agricultural technology and scientific knowledge and was linked to policies which promoted large scale immigration and settlement of the West.

Agricultural education in North America has taken many forms since it was first regarded as something more than an art to be learned under the watchful eye of an elder family member or through conversation with a neighbour.²⁰

Among the first efforts to provide agricultural education were those of the agricultural societies which were formed as early as 1785 in the United States²¹ and 1789 in Canada. Their aim was to improve farming practice through education and thereby improve the lives of the agrarian population. The societies became common in both the United States and Canada, peaking in popularity around 1860 in the United States²² and approximately twenty years later in Canada.

In addition to providing written material and lectures on agriculture, these societies promoted the idea of state and later federal funding to agricultural education. As public funding in the United States became available for agricultural education programs, a number of state agricultural colleges were built during the 1850's. Outstanding among government supported efforts in agricultural education was the Morrill Act, passed in 1862 in the United States, which provided for land grant institutions to promote technological improvement in agriculture. The colleges developed methods of taking

information to farmers, a practice which was later to be called agricultural extension. One method which the colleges used was the holding of two to three day institutes for farmers in a variety of locations. These institutes became an increasingly popular form of agricultural education and they soon evolved into government sponsored and regulated farmers' organizations whose purpose was the educational and economic betterment

²³
of the farmers. Beginning in 1887, agricultural experimental stations were attached to these land-grant colleges which had spread across the United States. The state-sponsored farmers' institutes facilitated the work of the colleges, becoming so popular that by 1880 they had been established in twenty-six states, and by 1900 in
²⁴
forty-seven.

In Canada, the Ontario government had, in 1873, purchased land for an experimental farm in Guelph, from which the Ontario School of Agriculture began in 1874, patterned after agricultural schools in Ireland with their attached model farms. The president of the school, which was later called the Ontario Agricultural College, was James J. Mills, who with S. C. Woods, provincial Commissioner of Agriculture, was instrumental in founding the farmers' institute in Ontario in 1884, the first
²⁵
Canadian farmers' institute. As in the United States,

the Ontario Agricultural College provided speakers for the institute meetings so that the farmers' institutes came to provide an organizational basis for the extension

work of the college. Again like the government operated farmers' institutes in the United States, the Ontario Farmers' Institute took over or replaced many of the agricultural societies and associations.²⁶ By 1902, 24,000 had joined local institutes and, in that year, 125,000 people attended educational events sponsored by them.²⁷

In 1886, the federal government passed the Experimental Farm Station Act. The first dominion farm was established at Ottawa, with branch farms located in Nova Scotia, Manitoba, the North West Territories and in 1889, at Agassiz, B.C. The results of the work carried on at the farms was published for distribution to farmers and provincial departments of agriculture.²⁸ Travelling dairy schools, which had been operated as early as 1891 by the Ontario Agriculture College were adopted by the federal Department of Agriculture and arrived in B.C. in 1901.

The task of disseminating information generated by the farms and agricultural colleges was greatly assisted by the growing popularity of reading for educational or recreational purposes and by the availability of cheap paper. In rural areas, deprived of the popular entertainment and organized social life of the cities, it was not uncommon for a farmer to subscribe to two or three weekly papers, one of them likely to be an agricultural weekly.²⁹ In fact, one of the opponents of the Ontario School of Agriculture had been William

Weld, publisher of The Farmers' Advocate, who feared that the school might remove his readership among Ontario farmers.
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General Programs of Adult Education

In this period of changing economic and social conditions, education was seen as a means of individual and community improvement. Expanding urban centres provided increasing opportunities for self-improvement through adult education. Malcolm Knowles has portrayed the period from 1860 to World War I as marked by the diffusion of organizations, and the eagerness of adults
31
to participate in them. Welfare agencies, settlement houses, voluntary associations, trade and manufacturing associations, and trade unions promoted and provided educational services for their members. Libraries were established and evening classes for adults operated out of schools and universities. This period also saw the formation of literary societies, mechanics' institutes, and national organizations such as the YMCA, the YWCA, and the National Council of Women, all of which included a strong educational component.

Because B.C.'s population was comprised of recent immigrants to the province, they brought with them a knowledge of the adult education movement which existed elsewhere in North America and Britain. Some had participated in agricultural education programs in the United States or eastern Canada or had attended adult

night schools. Earlier in the century, mechanics' institutes had existed in Victoria and New Westminster. Literary societies and mechanics' institutes had been publicly funded from 1871 to 1878 and the provincial Bureau of Mines had offered a lecture course in Vancouver, Victoria and New Westminster in 1893. The idea of an adult education program, be it of general interest or specific training for agriculture, was not, therefore, totally unfamiliar to the potential participants living at that time in B.C. Nor was interest lacking at the official level, given the priority accorded improvement in agricultural production and techniques. The organization of a farmers' institute was quite consistent with the trends existing both in British Columbia and in Canada.

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The Annual Report of the Experimental Farms for 1897 is a document of nearly five hundred pages, illustrated with photographs, charts and diagrams, which describes and summarizes the experimental work of the farms.

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32

Examples are Henry Bose, a founding member and promoter of the Surrey Farmers' Institute who attended an evening college at Moorfield, England before his emigration to Canada (British Columbian, March 30, 1946) and Martin Burrell, an early correspondent for the provincial Department of Agriculture and federal Minister of Agriculture, had been a regular speaker to farmers' gatherings in eastern Canada before he moved to B.C. (Ottawa Journal, January 28, 1926).

CHAPTER III

THE EMERGENCE OF THE FARMERS' INSTITUTE

The several factors leading to the founding of the Farmers' Institute in B.C., which were discussed in Chapter II, coalesced in the early work of the first departmental statistician and Deputy Minister of Agriculture, J. R. Anderson. This chapter shows how the Department of Agriculture, through its system of collecting information on agricultural conditions, provided both political and farm leaders with convincing evidence in favour of a farmers' institute. It discusses the provisions of the Act which brought about the formation of the Institute in 1897 and describes the initial organizing campaign.

The Early Operation of the Department of Agriculture

The first Minister of Finance and Agriculture, W. J. Armstrong, had been appointed in 1873 but it was not until 1891 under J. H. Turner that the Department of Agriculture became active. In that year, J. R. Anderson was appointed statistician and so began a seventeen-year formal association with the department and with agricultural education in British Columbia. An accountant and businessman by profession, Anderson's

interest in agriculture dated back to his early childhood spent in various Hudson Bay forts in the Pacific Northwest. His father, A. C. Anderson, a Hudson's Bay factor, had recognized the agricultural potential of the region and had successfully established farms in several forts under his command.¹ As a teenager, J. R. Anderson studied agriculture in school in Oregon and was taught fundamental horticultural skills by his father on their farm at Cathlamet. Anderson's life-long interest was natural history and he thus brought to the department a prodigious knowledge of the province's plants and animals and direct experience of life and travel in the remote interior sections of the Pacific Northwest.

Upon Anderson's appointment to the department, he immediately established a system of local correspondents who would complete an annual questionnaire on the agricultural conditions in their particular area. The questionnaires routinely sought information on the quantity and quality of stock and crops raised, the preferred breeds and varieties, the prevalence of insect pests and disease, meteorological data, the availability and cost of farm labour, the local markets for farm products and the prices received. Issues of current interest such as land clearing costs and methods would have an entirely separate questionnaire. Other topics such as the availability and price of farm land or opinions on the teaching of agriculture in the public schools were periodically

3
included. Correspondents varied from the ordinary settlers, to government agents and officers in the smaller centres, to farmer activists who were leaders in local and provincial organizations and politics. Although Anderson complained of inadequate responses, he frequently received lengthy and detailed reports on agricultural conditions enlivened with the writer's comments on farm issues.

The shortage of good quality and inexpensive land for agriculture was a popular theme in the reports. In the first Annual Report he completed for the department in 1891, Anderson estimated that only ten per cent of the land which was owned was cultivated, creating a situation which forced settlers on to land not necessarily suited to agriculture. 4
Again in 1895 and 1896, the availability and cost of arable land was mentioned. R.L.T. Galbraith, the Fort Steele correspondent, reported that Kootenay settlers were anxiously awaiting construction of the Crows' Nest Pass Railway in the hope that markets would follow the opening up of the coal mines in the East Kootenays. He also noted that the railway would not dispose of the land except in large quantities. Settlement could not proceed until small parcels of land became available at prices settlers could afford. Another Kootenay correspondent from Tobacco Plains also complained that the good land belonged to the CPR and was not for sale. 5

There was a shortage of accessible farm land

across the province. No government land for pre-emption was left in the Lower Fraser Valley municipalities of Langley, Surrey and Richmond.⁶ Prices on improved land in the Fraser Valley varied from \$2.50 to \$25.00 an acre.⁷ On Vancouver Island the meteorologist from the Dominion Weather Station at Sproat Lake claimed that "The land being held by speculators here [in the Alberni Valley] does a great deal of harm in not only holding the country back but in keeping out good legitimate settlers".⁸

Correspondents used the reports to Anderson to advance their own particular interests and he used them occasionally to express his personal opinions. H.T. Thrift and Henry Bose, who reported from Hazelmere and Surrey Centre, were personally interested in the public school system and lobbied for the inclusion of agriculture in the curriculum. Anderson reported in 1897 that in response to their suggestion, he had approached the Minister of Education and an agriculture text was on order from the publisher. He stated that this measure would "...undoubtedly lead to directing the mind of the rising generation towards agricultural pursuits, from which they are so apt in the present day to be led to other more alluring walks of life."⁹

As statistician, Anderson was also responsible for the compilation of data on imports and exports. In his first report he noted that imports of agricultural products such as pork, flour, apples, plums, prunes, eggs, butter and cheese amounted to \$1,729,970 with a

duty of \$178,411. As he systematically gathered data on climate and growing conditions around the province, Anderson was able to make a strong case for the argument that B.C. could, given an improved agricultural industry, be self-sufficient in much of its food requirements and provide a living to increased numbers of farmers.

The principal object of the department in its early years was to make available to intending settlers the information which Anderson compiled and generated. Through the wide distribution of copies of the Annual Report, Anderson circulated factual information along with the suggestions and opinions of the local correspondents. The reports thus contained statistical information, descriptions of local conditions, and the proposed solutions of Anderson and various correspondents for problems confronting farmers and the agricultural industry of the province.

One solution which Anderson favored was the promotion of co-operatives for marketing farm produce. He believed that

By the lack of co-operation in the past farmers unquestionably have been placed under a great disadvantage, as compared with the facilities afforded in other lines of business which includes information as to profitable markets, the imposition of freight rates, the exactions of middle-men and the many other considerations which enter into and effect the profits of the producer.¹¹

This perspective on the management of farm business was doubtless informed by Anderson's years of experience in the import trade in Victoria where he had been both a

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partner and an accountant in several firms.
Consistently supportive of co-operative systems of
business for farmers, Anderson brought to his task as
Deputy Minister and later Superintendent of Farmers'
Institute a commitment to the betterment of agriculture
by making farming an economically sound business venture
for the individual farmer. He was knowledgeable of
procedures in use around the world and was eager to
implement new methods into B.C.'s developing
13
agricultural industry.

Anderson's personal interest and knowledge of
horticulture made him particularly concerned about the
obvious need for information by fruit growers who were
the most rapidly expanding sector of agriculture during
the 1890's. He lamented the lack of knowledge of
planting, pruning, fertilizers, orchard mulching and
14
insect control. By 1895, the Victoria Fruit Growers'
Association was holding regular educational sessions
where presentations were made on local fruit-growing
practice. The Board of Horticulture also sent its members
on trips to fruit growing areas where they visited
individual orchards to examine conditions and give
information to the farmers.

The Movement Toward the Farmers' Institute

It would appear from the Annual Reports that
there was no significant demand on the part of the
province's farmers for a formal government-sponsored mass

organization. At the time of the founding of the Farmers' Institute the province contained eighteen agricultural associations whose concern was the sponsorship of annual fairs and exhibitions. There were also producers' organizations; the North-West Fruit Growers, the Dairymen's Association and the B. C. Horticultural Society and Fruit Growers' Association were the three most established groups. They included some educational activities in their meetings and availed themselves of the literature produced by the department.

The first mention of the Farmers' Institute in the Annual Reports is in the combined report of 1895 and 1896, which was written in 1897 after the Farmers' Institute and Co-operation Act had been passed. The Manitoba Central Farmers' Institute had approached Anderson, who polled the secretaries of the agricultural associations to determine their interest in the formation of a farmers' institute. He reported little response.¹⁵ It seems likely that these organizations already received the most obvious benefits that would come from institute membership and, furthermore, they tended to exist in the major population centres of Victoria, Vancouver, and New Westminster and so enjoyed an easier access to information of any kind than those farmers living in the less populated rural section of the province.

However, at the organizing meeting of the first farmers' institute at Surrey, in August 1897, Anderson spoke to the meeting on behalf of the Hon. J. H. Turner,

the Minister of Agriculture. In summarizing the history of the introduction of the Farmers' Institute Act, he revealed that it was "very much at the instance of the officers of the Farmers' Alliance of B.C. that the subject of the Farmers' Institute had been first taken up."¹⁶ This is consistent with H. T. Thrift's account of his own lobbying efforts on behalf of the farmers of the lower Fraser Valley. Thrift, along with two Surrey farmers and a farmer from each of the South Vancouver and Duncan areas, formed the Farmers' Alliance for the purpose of publicizing the plight of the farm population and lobbying government members and the provincial cabinet. They had met with Hon. J. H. Turner to discuss various measures which would benefit farmers before the enactment of the farmers' institute legislation. Thrift was a founding member and first secretary of the Surrey Farmers' Institute and was also instrumental in¹⁷ organizing the Settler's Association in 1900.

It has been suggested that farmers' institutes were an attempt on the part of conservative governments to detract from a growing farmers' movement in eastern¹⁸ Canada and on the prairies. In British Columbia, the encouragement of the farmers' institutes would have been consistent with the provincial campaign to encourage British settlement in the Okanagan. As one means of bringing capital into a financially troubled province, the government had advertised in Britain and had been successful in attracting wealthy Englishmen to the

Okanagan Valley to become orchardists. This campaign was also based on the hope that settlement of the Okanagan by a "better class" of British settler would counteract the growing strength of the labour movement in the Kootenay mining industry.²⁰

It would seem, however, that the creation of the B.C. Farmers' Institute was predominantly an extension and consolidation of the existing functions of the Department of Agriculture. Through his contact with the federal Department of Agriculture personnel, many of whom were graduates of the Ontario Agricultural College, and his friendships with agriculturists from state colleges in Washington and Oregon, Anderson was fully informed of the success of farmers' institutes elsewhere in North America.

The Farmers' Institute and Co-operation Act

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When the Farmers' Institute and Co-operation Act was drafted, many of the original objects of the provincial Department of Agriculture were included in its statement of purpose. The two main foci of the Act were education and co-operation. A popular belief of the time, already stressed by Anderson in the Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, was that what stood in the way of material gain by farmers was their ignorance of co-operative methods of purchase and production.²² Farmers as a group were repeatedly berated for their individualistic and competitive natures and their failure

to work together in the manner of successful businessmen. Co-operation among farmers was encouraged by providing for the incorporation of groups of farmers under the Companies Act of 1897 for the purpose of establishing plants for the processing of agricultural products, for the buying and selling of farm produce and for the formation of a credit association. The second main function of the act was education, which grew directly out of the department's ongoing function to gather and disseminate information pertinent to agriculture. The information generated by the department on the provincial balance of imports and exports of agricultural products had been compelling evidence to support those who argued for concerted action in support of agriculture. And, as the department promoted the prospects of rural B.C. to new settlers, it was creating a greater need for expanded educational programs.

The Act clearly specified the objects of the Farmers' Institute as the dissemination of information on agriculture and the encouragement and improvement of agriculture, horticulture and arboriculture. The Act provided for the position of Superintendent of Farmers' Institutes and designated three major divisions within the province--New Westminster, Vancouver Island and the Interior--with the divisions sub-divided into districts which would contain the individual institutes. The procedure for the formation of an individual institute was outlined. The Act specified that a minimum of

fifteen farmers must petition the Superintendent. The first meeting for the purpose of organizing must be advertised locally and in the B. C. Gazette thirty days in advance of the meeting date. On payment of the annual membership fee of fifty cents, members at the organizing meeting were eligible to stand for election to the executive.

Meetings for lectures and discussions on the theory and practice of farming were to be conducted. A local institute was required to hold two regular meetings per year for which the Department of Agriculture arranged the speakers and paid the salary and any transportation costs. In addition, at least two supplementary meetings were to be held for which the local executive would arrange speakers and the branch would assume any expenses involved. The institutes would circulate bulletins and periodicals to all members and would obtain and distribute seeds, plants and animals to individual farmers. Through the financial support of the Department, the institutes were expected to encourage scientific experimentation and award prizes for essays which documented these rudimentary research projects.

Regulations under the Act detailed the educational function of the institutes. Meetings were to be well advertised with the speaker's name and topic given. Special posters for this purpose were provided by the Department of Agriculture. Agendas would be circulated in advance and copies of speeches were to be sent to the

Superintendent. The general or informational meetings were to be non-partisan and non-sectarian, and there was to be no advertising of a commercial nature. In addition to the tasks related to the local farmers' institute, secretaries were to assume the role of local departmental correspondent and executive members were expected to recruit new members. The secretaries were to be recompensed by the Department of Agriculture for the considerable amount of work which their position entailed.

The Early Organizing Period,
1897 -1905

During July 1897, Anderson invited various farm leaders to a conference to discuss the new legislation and how the Farmers' Institute should be implemented. Among those who met with Anderson were H. T. Thrift, from Surrey; W. H. Hayward of Metchosin who was later to serve as chairman of the Royal Commission on Agriculture; G. H. Hadwen of Duncan, on the executive of the Fruit-Growers' Association; and Robert McBride who was to become the secretary of the second farmers' institute formed in Richmond.

In planning the organization and implementation of the institute system, the promoters of the farmers' institute met with many challenges. The greatest obstacle was the geography of the province. Each agricultural region in B.C. is separated by mountains or ocean from its neighbouring regions creating tremendous

physical barriers to communication. Transportation from one area to another depended on the railway or the steamship service along the coast and in the interior water routes. Service between the Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island was generally good but farming communities like Bella Coola received only periodic service. Rail service to main centres in the Interior was efficient but outlying districts were isolated unless linked by water transport. Travellers frequently encountered roads made impassable by snow, flooding, or spring break-up. Transportation difficulties interfered with both the speakers' arrival for meetings and the farmers' attendance.

The geography of the province also creates tremendous diversity of climate and soils from one region to the next. The interests of B.C. farmers were frequently unique to the region in which they lived. This circumstance set up barriers to the formation of a sense of unity among farmers based on mutual interest in production and marketing. It also complicated the difficult task of scheduling speaking tours where climate and vegetation dictated the type of farming but could change dramatically within a few miles of travel. The task of organizing the farmers of British Columbia was formidable. To assist Anderson in the creation of local institutes, the group attending the summer conference suggested hiring an organizer. A student from the Ontario Agricultural College, T. F. Paterson, was

employed for a three month period. He and Anderson embarked on a demanding itinerary which included thirty-one meetings at locations on Vancouver Island, the Lower Mainland, Kamloops, and the Okanagan between October 22 and December 15, 1897. An additional ten meetings were conducted in communities on south Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands during January 1898.

At the meetings both men would address the farmers, Paterson telling of the success of the farmers' institute in Ontario and Anderson explaining the new Farmers' Institute Act and the objects of the institute. The response of farmers to the campaign and the idea of the institute was mixed. According to Anderson in his subsequent reports, two groups of farmers welcomed the Institute: those who saw themselves as "professional" farmers needing more knowledge and skills, and those who were already active in farm organizations and looked to the government for assistance in developing an industry which they saw as essential to the future of the province.²³ Those who resisted the campaign were farmers who placed little value on formal or "book-learning". Resistance was based on the suspicion that the organizers were preaching theory without an appreciation of its practical application.

Farmers, too, had considerable limitations on their time and energy and resented a long trip which would cut into their work day. The widespread problems connected with isolation and inadequate transportation

were familiar to Anderson from both his childhood experiences and his extensive travels around the province in his capacity as statistician and Deputy Minister of Agriculture. He was also well aware of the attitudes of settlers living in isolated rural areas and praised his young assistant, Paterson,

whose clear and forcible arguments and lucid explanations of the great good effected in Ontario since the adoption of the Farmers' Institute system went very far in convincing our people of the advantages to be derived by taking the opportunity of organizing under the Act. His uniform courtesy and forbearance also under circumstances very often the reverse of pleasant, I heartily commend.²⁴

While Anderson could be bluntly critical in his reports, he was respectful of the knowledge farmers had derived from their practical experience in the varying agricultural conditions of the province: "There is much latent talent amongst the farmers of the Province which only requires encouragement to be developed, and such persons often times make the most efficient speaker."²⁵

This attitude was also reflected in his frequent claim that the success of the local institutes depended on the organizing skills of their executives and the commitment of their members.²⁶

The only contentious issue which seems to have emerged in the early organizing period was the formation of the Central Farmers' Institute, a provision of the 1897 Act. Included in the first Annual Report of the Farmers' Institute is a letter from Hayward, the Metchosin farmer and politician who had attended the summer conference. Hayward made specific suggestions

regarding the organization of local institutes, pointed out the need for funds to pay local farmers to do this, and urged the formation of the Central Institute as an aid to organizing at the district level.²⁷ Anderson maintained that the priority was to organize the local institutes, and delayed calling a meeting of the Central Farmers' Institute until 1899. He may have been swayed in this decision by the earlier events in Ontario when the meetings of the Central Institute became so hotly politicized that they were disbanded.²⁸

By the end of 1899, there were nineteen institutes operating with only the Surrey Institute having been formed before the campaign began. Three institutes existed in the Okanagan, nine in the Lower Fraser Valley and seven on Vancouver and the Gulf Islands, all of which were in the area included in the initial organizing campaign.²⁹ It was not until 1901 that Anderson embarked on a further campaign when he and his assistants, D.C.Anderson and G.W.Clemons from the Ontario Agricultural College, successfully organized an institute in the Lillooet district.

Two early institutes, Surrey and Bella Coola, were organized entirely on the initiative of local farmers. They provide examples of how farmers could use the institute system and its supporting legislation for their own advantage. After the organizational meeting of August 1897, the Surrey Farmers' Institute held meetings in four different locations in the district

before the end of that year. Anderson and Paterson spoke at two of them promoting scientific agriculture and the institute system. Local speakers also spoke on a range of topics: silos, drainage, the use of machinery in drainage, the value of co-operation and interest rates on farm mortgages. Outside of the presentations and discussions on them, little business is recorded in the minutes.

In 1898, six meetings were held in various locations, with local farmers doing most of the presentations. The most popular topic of local farmers' addresses was road conditions, which was the subject of a motion to be forwarded to the provincial government regarding the improvement of the Yale wagon road. A travelling library was also being organized and local teacher, A. H. P. Matthew, who was an institute member, was taking subscriptions for this service at twenty-five

³⁰
cents per person. The recorded minutes indicate that presentations by visiting speakers were on scientific agricultural topics. In June 1901, a special meeting was held to discuss the purchase of binder twine, the location of a provincial magazine for the storage of stumping powder in New Westminster and a proposal from

³¹
Mutual Fire Insurance Company. The 1904 secretary's report to the superintendent indicates that in 1903 the institute had purchased clover seed and binder twine for
³²
its members.

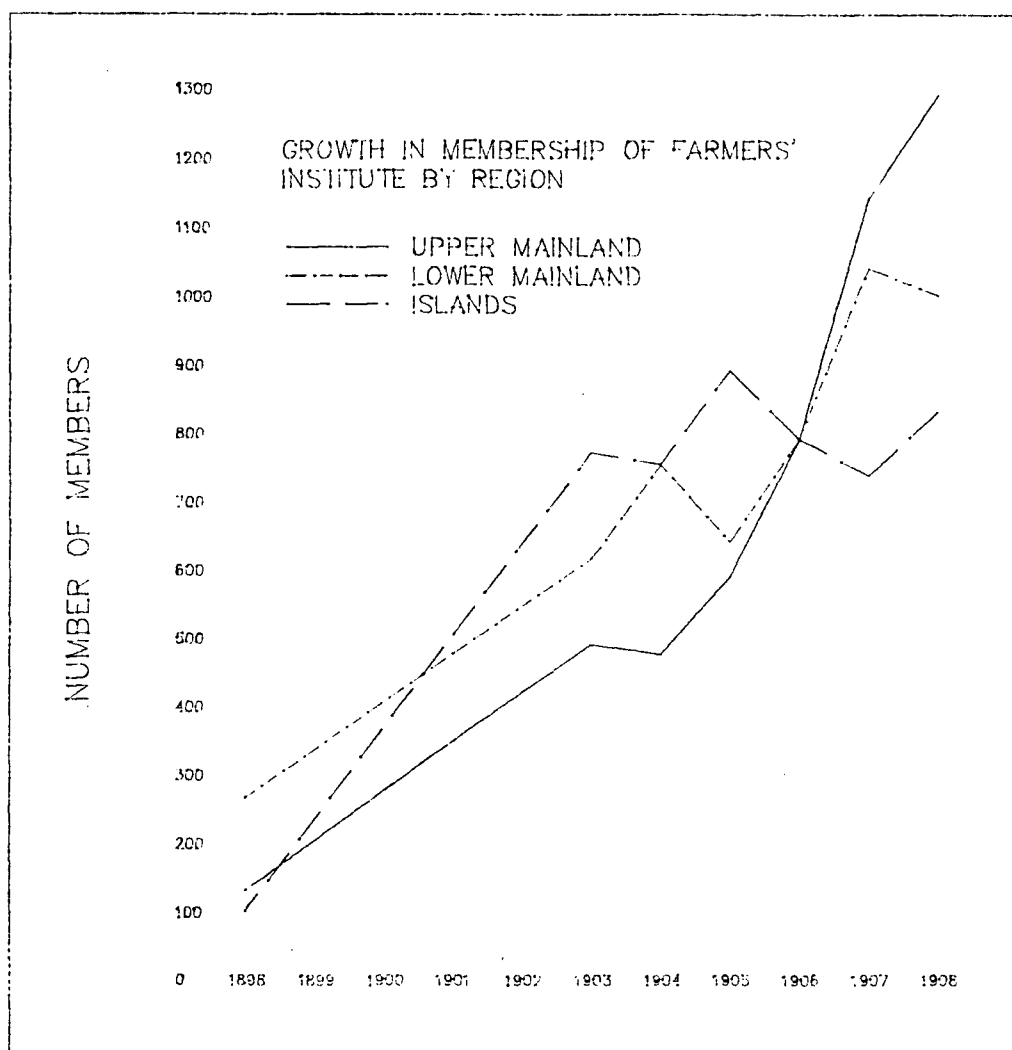
In 1900 the Bella Coola colonists approached

Anderson about the formation of an institute. Since the settlement was not within any district authorized in the founding legislation, it was not until a fourth institute division was created by Order in Council in 1902 that the Bella Coola Farmers' Institute was formed. This institute enjoyed a consistent rate of increase in membership and was well attended. The Bella Coola farmers' chief interest initially was the clearing of land for orchard planting and they were consequently supportive of the move by the Central Farmers' Institute to have the government supply stumping powder at reduced rates.³³ They were also interested in the supply of departmental publications available to them as Farmers' Institute members. The members of this institute were often called on to address their meetings since the transportation of outside speakers to them was costly and steamship service was infrequent.

It would appear from the reports that Anderson's expectations for the early growth of the Institute were not met. Acknowledging that sparse population and inaccessibility made organizing in the Cariboo and Kootenay areas difficult, he criticized the Okanagan, a district which was "one of the richest in the Province, accessible by rail, well settled with prosperous farmers, and aptly termed 'The garden of British Columbia'..." and found "no reasonable cause to assign for the apparent supineness of its inhabitants for neglecting to take advantage of the Farmers' Institute

34
Act." Several years later, the Lower Mainland statistics for 1903 indicated a drop in average membership, the number of meetings and attendance. Anderson found this unacceptable in a rapidly growing and fertile part of the province and suggested 35 transportation problems as a possible explanation.

Figure 2



While the growth of the Institute did fluctuate in the first years of its existence, an analysis of membership in the three main divisions during the

initial organizing period reveals a comparable rate of growth (see figure 2). In 1904, the total number of meetings rose to two hundred twenty-five and attendance climbed to 7,171, both substantial increases, but there was only a slight increase in membership. Anderson recommended greater diligence on the part of secretaries in maintaining paid up memberships in the local institutes. By then, however, he had received positive comments from visiting speakers on the apparent success of the Institute in B.C. and observed that in comparison to farmers' institutes elsewhere in Canada and the United States, the British Columbia Farmers' Institute was making good progress, especially when one considered
36
the difficult geographic features of the province.

FOOTNOTES

1
James Robert Anderson, Add MSS 1912, PABC.

2
AR 1891, pp. 735-736.

3
AR 1891, p. 736; 1901, p. 68, 98, 100.

4
AR 1891, p. 732.

5
AR 1897, pp. 1048-9.

6
Pre-emption was the system of land acquisition whereby a nominal fee was charged for the right to settle a parcel of land. Title was acquired upon the satisfaction of a residence requirement, the completion of improvements to the land, and payment of the purchase price.

7
AR 1897, p. 1055.

8
AR 1897, p. 1079.

9
AR 1897, p. 1020.

10
AR 1891, p. 851.

11
AR 1897, p. 1018.

12
Anderson, Add MSS 1912

13
AR 1894/95, p. 1601.

14
AR 1891, p. 732.

15
AR 1897, p. 1019.

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- 17
Thrift, Reminiscences, n. p.
- 18 Carol Bacchi, "Divided Allegiances: The Response of Farm and Labour Women to Suffrage," in A Not Unreasonable Claim, ed. Linda Kealey, (Toronto: Women's Press, 1979), p. 104.
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- 21
British Columbia. Statutes, 1897, (Victoria: Queen's Printer, 1897), ch. 13.
- 22
AR 1895-96, p. 1018. Also, Anderson, Add MSS 1912, vol. 17, file 11. Speech to the organizing meeting of the Richmond Farmers' Institute, August 2, 1897. PABC.
- 23
ARFI 1902, p. 81. A local correspondent advocated the provision of skills and knowledge so that farming might be seen as a profession comparable in "tone" to medicine and law. See also AR 1905, p. 15.
- 24
ARFI 1898, p. 703.
- 25
ARFI 1898, p. 705.
- 26
ARFI 1903, p. 5; 1908, p. 7.
- 27
ARFI 1898, p. 786-7.
- 28
W. C. Good, Farmer Citizen. (Toronto: Ryerson Press), p. 92.
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ARFI 1900, p. 1070.

30

Minutes of Surrey Farmers' Institute, August to November, 1897.

31

Ibid., meeting of June 26, 1901.

32

ARFI 1905, p. 16.

33Ibid., pp. 16-7.

34

ARFI 1900, p. 1070.

35ARFI 1903, p. 5.

36

ARFI 1905, p. 6.

CHAPTER IV

THE EDUCATION PROGRAM OF THE FARMERS' INSTITUTE, 1897 - 1908

In its first years of operation, the Farmers' Institute consolidated and expanded the educational activities already begun by the Department of Agriculture. The Institute introduced group instruction as it brought farmers together to hear speakers and to discuss the information being presented. In this manner the members contributed to the growing body of scientific knowledge specific to local agricultural conditions in British Columbia. This chapter focuses on the educational program of the Institute in its formative years. Beginning with a description of the learners, it examines the content of the program, the system of delivery, and teaching techniques. An outline of the means by which the program was evaluated, and the outcome of the early years of the agricultural education program conclude the chapter.

The Nature of the Learners

When the Farmers' Institute was first established in British Columbia, only a small part of the population actually lived on farms. The 1901 census lists 5,938 occupiers of farms out of a total provincial population

of 178,657. The farm occupants were located primarily in the New Westminster and Vancouver districts which included the lower Fraser Valley and Vancouver Island, but a population of just over two thousand "occupiers of farms" was scattered through the Cariboo, Okanagan and¹ Kootenay regions of the province.

Farm dwellers were predominantly of British origin, some of them having arrived in B.C. after living² in the United States or Eastern Canada. As local histories make clear, settlers from the USA and Eastern Canada often had experience in a trade or business before arriving in B.C. Some had worked on the construction of the C.P.R. or had worked in mining or forestry before³ taking up farming. The British immigrants who came directly to B.C. to farm were generally of middle class origins and many successfully transplanted their gentile⁴ country lifestyle to the Okanagan and Vancouver Island. Overall, regardless of class and occupational background, the population of B. C. over five years of age in the⁵ 1901 census had a 75 per cent literacy rate.

In the regulations governing the Farmers' Institutes, there is no mention of an age requirement for membership. It was a common practice to welcome anyone in the community to meetings, whether they were members or not. Frequently women and children attended, partly for social purposes but also for the educational value of the meeting.⁶ Some institutes favoured the holding of meetings in schools to facilitate the children's

7
participation in some form of agricultural instruction.
The welcome accorded women was consistent with the
designation of certain kinds of farming to them.
Dairying, for example, was at that time in B. C. moving
from a cottage industry run by women to the co-operative
creamery and dairy run by men. A similar change was to
8
happen later in poultry.

The Content of the Program

The early promoters of the Farmers' Institute, who
inevitably assumed leadership positions within local
branches, shared the belief that successful farmers could
be created by the provision of scientific knowledge and
skills. Anderson, as superintendent, was the main
spokesman of this belief. He described the successful
farmer as "a man who has studied the various causes which
affect plant and animal life, the most approved methods
of manufacturing products, and all the incidental
subjects pertaining to his occupation, and who acts in
9
conformity with the teachings thus acquired." The desire
to have educated farmers was echoed by local farmer, J.
M. Webster, when he addressed the Port Haney Farmers'
Institute. He stated that "the government had all but
coerced the farmers into educating themselves in the
modern and therefore more profitable methods of farming."
He challenged his fellow members to take full advantage
of the services and information provided by the
10
government through the Farmers' Institute.

A leader in the newly formed Bella Coola Farmers' Institute spoke of the "constant study, patient experiment, and tireless industry" that is demanded of the successful farmer. He advocated scientific farming in order to raise the status of farming as an occupation. "To make farm labour honourable, pleasant and profitable by making it intelligent should be the aim of every farmer in British Columbia, as elsewhere." ¹¹ These excerpts exemplify the attitude of farm leaders who were also more likely to see farming as a business which required the same degree of planning, organization, and financing as any other serious venture.

The precise content of the agricultural education program of the Farmers' Institute was determined by the need for information and skills on the part of the farmers and the current state of scientific agricultural knowledge. Scientific agriculture was in its infancy and it was the hope of the professional agriculturists that farmers could be trained in the methods and spirit of scientific inquiry while they were acquiring the knowledge being generated in the expanding North American system of agricultural colleges, experimental farms, extension programs and government departments of agriculture. ¹² In a period of rapid growth in knowledge, institute members had direct access to the most current information available through their contact with speakers who were employed in agricultural study and experimentation at the Ontario Agricultural College, at

colleges in the western United States, and with the Dominion Experimental Farms or the federal Department of Agriculture.¹³ Institute members themselves became involved in crop experiments which would generate knowledge of local conditions. Surrey farmers engaged in flax growing experiments to determine the feasibility of pursuing a hemp industry in that area.¹⁴

The subjects addressed by speakers at institute meetings changed to reflect the growth in the organization and trends in agriculture. The first presentations that most farmers heard on the organizing tours would have been on the value of the farmers' institute and its success in Ontario, co-operation, and the B.C. legislation. The government sponsored speakers attempted to address the specific needs of a particular area. For example, drainage was a major problem in Surrey and early speakers addressed that issue. Various aspects of dairying were also popular in the first years of the Surrey Institute. When local speakers addressed that institute, inevitably road conditions came up, suggesting that local politics may, indeed, have entered institute business.¹⁵

By 1903, topics of institute presentations were primarily in the category of scientific agriculture. The list includes stock improvement, diseases of stock, methods of soil cultivation, diversified vs single crop farming, forage crops, silos and ensilage, breeds of poultry, propagating fruits, and the planting and care

of orchards. Several talks dealt with the business aspect of farming: the farm as an investment, the organization and management of a creamery, the packing and sale of apples. The merits of farm life and developing an appreciation of rural life in children¹⁶ comprised a third small category.

As B.C. farming became more diversified, talks were featured on poultry, bee-keeping, sheep, hogs, various field crops, seed quality, building construction, fertilisers, land-clearing, and different aspects of milk and cream production and marketing. Women's presence in the institute is reflected in such titles as "Bacteria: Their Relation to Health and Disease," "Different Cuts of Meat: Their Selection and Preparation," "Hygienic and Economic Values of Food," "Simple Home Remedies without Recourse to the Patent Medicine Man or the Doctor," and¹⁷ "A Girl's Possibilities." Many of these talks, especially those ranked as "good" on the Annual reports to Anderson, were subsequently published for distribution to the members.

Methods

Prior to the formation of the Farmers' Institute, the educational work of the Department of Agriculture had relied almost entirely on individual methods of transmitting information and skills to the farmers of the province.¹⁸ The relatively high literacy rate of the farming population, the distribution of agricultural activity among several diverse geographical regions of

the province and the sparse population outside a few centres made the printed word the most efficient method of dissemination of information. The department handled large amounts of correspondence with farmers which supplied the department with information about agricultural conditions around the province. The department also published its Annual Report, bulletins, circulars and mimeograph letters. The individual approach did not cease with the formation of the Farmers' Institute. Indeed, the demand for publications increased since members were entitled to free copies in return for their annual membership fee. ¹⁹ As well, large quantities of publications were generated by the publication of the lectures at the local institute meetings and the proceedings of the annual conference of the Central Farmers' Institute.

Group methods of instruction were the desired outcome of the organization of the local institutes and took the form of meetings. Members of a local institute would gather in community halls, schools or farmers' homes. After a business meeting, one or two speakers would give lectures and lead a discussion on the topic. Refreshments were often served and frequently entertainment was provided by members.

With the exception of the election of officers, the first annual meeting of the Surrey-Langley Farmers' Institute was typical of early institute meetings. It was held in the afternoon of January 27, 1898 at Surrey

Centre and, as often happened, the expected guest speaker was unable to attend. However, the Dominion Dairy Commissioner, J. C. Marker had agreed to replace the scheduled speaker, A. C. Wells, a prominent dairyman from Chilliwack. Other speakers were W. H. Ladner, of the neighbouring Delta Farmers' Institute, and orchardist, E. Hutcherson, also from Delta, who was reported to be "in splendid trim, and gave a most excellent paper on fruit culture and orchard work."²⁰

At an evening meeting the same day, Hutcherson spoke again, followed by S. H. Shannon, a local hog grower. The president, C. D. Moggridge, conducted a discussion on Shannon's "Swine Husbandry" paper. Although its location is not recorded, the evening meeting would likely have been in a different location from the afternoon gathering. In his address to the meeting, Moggridge promised to provide speakers on topics of interest to the women, especially at evening meetings, and to intersperse the talks with entertainment. For the two meetings that day, the secretary recorded a combined²¹ attendance of ninety, which included many women.

Outside of regular meetings, probably the first group activity in which institute members engaged was the travelling dairy school which arrived in B.C. in 1901. Run by the Dominion Dairy Commissioner, J. W. Robertson, it was Anderson who arranged the itinerary and did the advance publicity. The school was held in four locations in the province for five to ten day periods and was

attended by ninety-six students. In addition to instruction in the business aspects of dairying, the dairy instructors gave information to farmers on the best methods of caring for milk and cream, the advantage of mechanical cream separators, the value of pasture land in maintaining the quality of farm land, and the merits of year round dairy activity.

Techniques

While meetings were the format for the learning activities of the Farmers' Institute, the lecture, discussion and demonstration were the techniques most frequently used. In meetings, a lecture or talk was inevitably followed by a discussion and, where appropriate, a demonstration followed to illustrate the practical application of the information delivered by the speaker. Underlying the development of these techniques was a commitment to the belief in the capacity of every member to contribute to a better knowledge and practice of agriculture. The Surrey fruit-grower, C. D. Moggridge, summarized the philosophy of the Institute:

Whatever our special line may be we are none of us so good at it that we cannot become a little better, and few of us are so bad, I hope, that there is not some point which another may profitably learn from him.²²

The procedure which he recommended was that each presentation should be followed by a discussion "designed to bring out questions, criticisms and suggestions from any one present...."²³ Anderson agreed with Moggridge,

recommending that presentations always be written first to eliminate irrelevancies. He thought it necessary that speakers "excite a discussion, and by that means not only draw the retiring farmer out of his shell, but to bring out the most salient points affecting the particular locality..."²⁴

If local speakers lacked confidence before an audience, Anderson recommended they treat their talks as the opening statement in a discussion to which everyone could contribute. A local dairyman, Theodore A. F. Wiancko, in reporting on a speaking tour, stated his belief "that a meeting is not a success unless the remarks of the speaker are thoroughly criticised and discussed."²⁵ Guest lecturers from the Ontario Agricultural College must have shared his opinion. Of their 1901 speaking tour, they noted increased interest and an improved level of discussion, compared to earlier trips, and commented, "These meetings were up-to-date and would compare favourably with some of our best meetings in Ontario."²⁶ Adult educators and learning psychologists continue to debate the relative value of lecture and discussion techniques. Twentieth century research would confirm the consensus of the farmers' early opinion that a lecture without a rousing discussion²⁷ was a missed learning opportunity.

Within the literature of adult education, the development of the demonstration as a teaching technique is generally attributed to the field of agriculture

extension. Because of its practical nature, it was useful in reaching farmers who would resist "theory" when contained in books but would accept it when linked to everyday practice. In the farmers' institute, the demonstration was used along with the lecture to convey skills such as stock judging, pruning, grafting, ploughing, poultry killing and dressing, and crop seeding. It was also part of long term experiments to demonstrate the value of crop rotation, fallowing, irrigation of orchards, and to test different varieties of plant or breed of animal.

The effect of the long-term demonstration procedure was the farmers' increased awareness of their potential to improve the quality and quantity of their products. To promote friendly competition among farmers and between institutes, the provincial Farmers' Institute encouraged the local institutes to organize field crop competitions and agricultural fairs in areas where no agricultural association had formed for that purpose. The Department of Agriculture allotted sums of money to be used as cash prizes and the Institute offered training in the judging and presentation of farm products.

Resource people

Initially, resource people to supply lectures, lead discussions, and give demonstrations were scarce in B.C. Anderson was forced to rely on the Ontario Agricultural College, the federal Department of Agriculture, and American agricultural colleges in the

western United States. Predominant among the speakers were agriculturists from Ontario, men like D. Drummond, T. G. Raynor, John Jackson, and D. C. Anderson, who all spoke on a range of topics, and G. R. Cotterelle, a poultry expert. When the Central Farmers' Institute requested women speakers, the superintendent arranged a lecture tour which included Laura Rose and Blanche Maddock in 1906. The women spoke on topics of interest to women--health care, bread-making, cuts of meat, child-care--but were both considered to be experts in dairying and usually also presented lectures on different aspects of milk production, and butter and cheese-making.

Increasingly, it was found that agriculturists from the nearby American colleges were better informed on agricultural conditions in B.C. than were their eastern Canadian counterparts. Professor E. R. Lake from the Oregon Agricultural College was credited by the Salmon Arm Institute secretary with "having done more for the fruit industry [of Salmon Arm] than all the literature²⁹ that has ever been read on the subject." Professor Lake had been invited by the Department of Agriculture to tour the Okanagan and had lectured and demonstrated methods of pruning to the institutes there. Dr. J. Withycombe of the Oregon Agricultural College and H. L. Blanchard, a poultryman from Port Hadlock, Washington also appeared on speakers' lists.

Anderson endeavored to create a roster of local speakers from the membership of the institute. Not only

would this save the cost of transporting speakers from Ontario several times a year, but also it would create, he hoped, a sense of mutual respect and unity among the local branches of the institute.³⁰ The problem Anderson encountered was the reluctance of many knowledgeable people to make public presentations, even though they were considered to be the local authority on a particular aspect of farming. It was only with some difficulty that he convinced the Victoria veterinary surgeon, Dr. S. F. Tolmie, who later became premier, to give lectures to local institutes.³¹ However, it soon became the practice in the meetings of the local institutes for experienced members to make presentations. Among the local speakers were B. E. Maynard of Victoria who spoke on soils and fertilizers; H. Bose of Surrey, who was experimenting with hemp growing; E. A. Atkins, a Coquitlam poultryman, and J. T. Collins of Salt Spring Island who addressed the issues of farm labour and the values of co-operation and institute work.³² Because women were welcomed at institute gatherings, it was recommended that they be asked to serve as speakers, especially since it was suggested that "lady speakers...could probably handle the chicken question better than men."³³ A Mrs. Johnson, speaking on poultry, is listed among the speakers for 1906, the same year that Laura Rose and Blanche Maddock first conducted speaking tours in B. C. Like the outside expert agriculturist, the local speakers were expected to send copies of their talks to the department for

publication in the Annual Report or in a bulletin.

Devices

As scientific agricultural information became available, Anderson had, even before the Farmers' Institute was formed, established a library in the Department of Agriculture. He acquired reports of federal, provincial, and state departments of agriculture, publications from abroad, and from the experimental farm systems. These materials were supplemented by the data he had been collecting as statistician for the department, most of which was published in the department's Annual Reports. This library was open to the public but in a practical sense could serve only farmers in the Victoria area.

Along with the print materials, Anderson assembled a collection of equipment for use in the educational activities of the institute. His interest and knowledge in horticulture fired an avid campaign to acquire specimens of native plants, weeds, seeds, and insect pests from around the province. The library also contained a microscope and slides of disease-causing spores which were used to illustrate lectures. Anderson advised the use of "ocular presentations" and was pleased to report that he had located in Portland a manufacturer of a good quality lantern with which to show the lantern slides in the department's collection of "ocular
35
aides."

Evaluation

The success of the Farmers' Institute was evaluated at several levels during its early years of operation. The individual meetings were assessed, the knowledge and attitude of the farmers was subjectively appraised over a period of several years, and the development of agriculture was observed at the community and provincial levels. The annual report of each local institute to the Superintendent contained information as to membership, attendance and response to the speaker. Anderson was adamant about the completion and return of these reports each year, and the failure of the secretaries to comply with the outlined procedure was a frequent topic in his annual address to the Central Farmers' Institute.

36

Another perspective on local institute meetings was contained in the speakers' reports to Anderson upon completion of a tour. These reports commented on the attendance, the response to the presentation, the quality of the questions raised in the discussion and the general tone of the gathering. Since many of the first speakers were from the Ontario Agriculture College, the Ontario Farmers' Institute meetings became an accepted standard by which to measure the progress of the B. C. Farmers' Institute.

Anderson himself was keenly aware of the rate of progress of the Farmers' Institute in its formative years. He scrutinized the reports from speakers,

concluding that "the close questioning of the speakers by the audience, as compared to that of the earlier meetings, is indicative of great advancement in thought, to say nothing of the improvement in agricultural methods."³⁷

Actual achievement in agricultural development was measured by the statistics on production, exports and imports which were collected by the Department of Agriculture. While the growth in production cannot be solely attributable to the function of the institute, there is a likely correlation between the organizing and educational activity on the part of the institute and the rapid increase in the quantity and quality of agricultural products.

The provincial data gathered during the first years of the institute's activity shows considerable growth. In his annual address to the Central Farmers' Institute, the Minister of Agriculture, Capt. R. G. Tatlow, remarked on the growth in production which was already apparent in the fruit and dairy sectors. He announced that the 1904 fruit crop of 3,010 tons represented an increase of over 1000 tons over 1903 and a value of half a million dollars. The fourteen creameries had produced³⁸ 1,210,000 pounds of butter.

The following year Tatlow reported a forty per cent increase in fruit production. Congratulating the farmers on their co-operative methods in the dairy industry, he announced that since the previous year

butter production had increased by 200,000 pounds and that there were now sixteen creameries in operation, more than double the number in existence in 1902. Tatlow also took the opportunity to relay to the farmers the complimentary remarks of W. A. Wilson, judge of the dairy section in a recent Dominion Exhibition: "I am convinced that its [the B. C. exhibit] high and uniform quality is largely, if not almost wholly due to the education...the Provincial Government has been pursuing."³⁹

Another measure of the success of the Farmers' Institute was attendance. Accurate records of provincial membership, attendance, numbers of meetings, and numbers of speeches were all kept by Anderson (see Appendix 1). The numbers attending every meeting were recorded in the minutes and were included in annual reports to the superintendent who was then able to determine the numbers of farmers attending all meetings of the institute within the province. Because attendance at farmers' institute gatherings was not limited to members of the institute, the attendance figures given here in Appendix 1 are not, therefore, an accurate indication of the number of institute members attending educational events. If the Surrey Farmers' Institute attendance figures are representative of other institutes, less than half of those people who attended meetings might have been institute members. In other words, of the 5,673 who attended meetings in 1903, less than 2800 were members, if the Surrey ratio of members to non-members was typical

of attendance elsewhere in the province.

Reports of meetings written both by local secretaries and by speakers offer explanations for low attendance. The most frequent reasons given were that the meeting interfered with planting or harvest. Other reasons included illness and poor weather or road conditions. Occasional speakers cited poor organization, lack of advance publicity or inappropriate choice of speaker to explain poor attendance.⁴⁰ One speaker, a dairyman from Sardis, observed that "The class of farmers that we are most desirous of reaching are the ones whom the least excuse will keep from attending...."⁴¹ Another group of farmers were criticized by speakers Thomas McMillan and H. G. Reed in their report on a tour through southern Vancouver Island, Saltspring, Surrey, and Delta in the late summer of 1904. They reported to Anderson:

From all we could see in our journey through various districts the pressure of farm work is not so great as to prevent afternoon sessions being held. Even the farmers themselves, generally, seem to have plenty of time to hunt and shoot, and if they have the required interest in their own calling, they can certainly afford an afternoon at the Institute.⁴²

This comment supported Anderson's own commitment to holding afternoon meetings which met with on-going resistance from farmers who were reluctant to give up their working hours for meetings. By introducing cattle judging to the content of speakers' programs, Anderson broke down the resistance to daytime meetings and prepared the way for the later innovation of two or three

day short courses.

Outcomes of the educational
program, 1897- 1908

In spite of the difficulties which the Farmers' Institute encountered in its early years of operation, considerable progress in agricultural education had been made by 1908, when Anderson retired as superintendent. Membership had grown to 3,372 and there were 33 local institutes. The distribution according to district was nine institutes on Vancouver and the Gulf Islands with 840 members; eleven institutes in the lower Fraser Valley with 1012 members and thirteen institutes with 1520 members in the Interior.⁴⁴

Anderson had succeeded in his goal to have local people deliver lectures at regular meetings and he had won the farmers over to daytime meetings making possible the introduction of short courses, a highly popular feature of institute programming in later years. The dissemination of literature, always dependent on government financial support, continued with 26,000 publications being sent to farmers in 1908.⁴⁵

Anderson retired from the Department of Agriculture because of ill health in 1908, ending a seventeen year period of employment as statistician, deputy minister and superintendent of Farmers' Institutes.⁴⁶ During this period, Anderson had guided the emergence of the Farmers' Institute from the varied educational activities of the fledgling Department of

Agriculture. In its formative years, the Farmers' Institute had implemented a system which provided access to up to date scientific agricultural information. It also created a means by which farmers could organize themselves for greater economic gain through co-operative purchase, production and marketing schemes.

FOOTNOTES

1
Census of Canada, 1901, vol.2, p. 2. Occupier is defined as a holder of a farm (a parcel of land over five acres) by way of ownership or by fee payment.

2
Ibid., p. 2.

3
Sheila Nickols, ed. Maple Ridge: A History of Settlement, (Maple Ridge: Canadian Federation of University Women, 1972); Fern Treleaven, The Surrey Story, (Surrey Museum and Historical Society, 1970); Donald Waite, The Langley Story: An Early History of the Municipality of Langley, Maple Ridge: Don Waite Publishing, 1977), pp.59-162.

4
Jean Barman, Growing Up British in British Columbia, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1984), pp. 18-21.

5
Census, 1901, vol.4, p. 324.

6
ARFI 1900, p. 73; 1908, p. 18; Surrey Farmers' Institute Minutes, 1897-1907. Meeting of November 15, 1906.

7
ARFI 1903, p. 53; 1905, pp. 66-67.

8
The implications of such changes for farm women are discussed in Marjorie Griffin Cohen, "The Decline of Women in Canadian Dairying" in The Neglected Majority: Essays in Canadian Women's History, vol. 2, ed. Alison Prentice and Susan Mann Trofimenkoff, (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1985), pp. 61-83.

9
ARFI 1898, p. 787.

10
ARFI 1900, p. 1072.

11
ARFI 1904, p. 27.

12
See Lawr, p. 185 for an explanation of the state of scientific knowledge at the time.

13
ARFI 1903, p. 7; 1905, p. 7-8; 1907, p. 7. Lists of speakers, their home towns, and lecture topics were

included in the Annual Reports during the early years of the Institute.

14 Surrey Farmers' Institute. Minutes of meetings, December 12 and 13, 1905.

15 Surrey Farmers' Institute. Minutes of meetings, November 16, 18, 21, 1898; Thrift, Reminiscences, n.p.

16 ARFI 1903, p. 7.

17 ARFI 1907, p.6.

18 The distinction between methods, techniques and devices used in this chapter is that made by Coolie Verner. See "Basic Concepts and Limitations" in Learning and Society, ed. J. R. Kidd, Canadian Association of Adult Education, 1963.

19 ARFI 1898, p. 791.

20 Ibid., p. 788.

21 Ibid., p. 789.

22 Ibid., p. 791.

23 Ibid., p. 791.

24 ARFI, 1900, p. 1069.

25 ARFI 1906, p. 16.

26 ARFI 1902, p. 10.

27 Coolie Verner and Gary Dickinson, "The Lecture, An Analysis and Review of Research," Adult Education 17 (Winter 1967), pp. 85-100). The authors summarize the findings of numerous studies on the effectiveness of the lecture as a technique and include a list of guidelines for its selection. See also Paul Bergevin, D. Morris and R. M. Smith in Adult Education Procedures, New York:

Seabury Press, 1963. The authors agree with Verner and Dickinson that the lecture is inappropriate when changes in attitude, values, and behaviour are a specific learning objective. They commend discussion as a technique which is conducive to problem-solving, leadership development, and oral expression.

28

Burton Krietlow, Rural Education: Community Backgrounds. (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954), p. 221.

29

ARFI 1905, p. 8.

30

ARFI 1897, p. 705.

31

ARFI 1903, p. 6. Tolmie's lack of confidence as a speaker is also mentioned in Anderson's Memoirs, Add MSS 1912, vol. 9, PABC.

32

Ibid., p. 7. Also ARFI 1907, p.7

33

ARFI 1904, p. 47.

34

ARFI 1909, p. 72. Local speakers were eventually paid a small sum for each manuscript.

35

ARFI 1907, p. 29.

36

ARFI 1907, p. 27; 1908, p. 5.

37

ARFI 1904, p. 6.

38

ARFI 1905, p. 29.

39

ARFI 1906, pp. 43-44.

40

ARFI 1905, p. 11; 1907. p. 47.

41

ARFI 1906, p. 16.

42

ARFI 1905, p. 14.

43

ARFI 1907, p. 28.

44

ARFI 1909, p. 7.

45

Ibid., p. 7.

46

In his memoirs, Anderson claimed that the Minister of Agriculture, Capt. R. G. Tatlow, had used the occasion of Anderson's illness with pneumonia to have him "retired" from the department.

CHAPTER V

THE DIVERSIFICATION OF B.C. AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION, 1909 TO 1915

By the end of the first decade of the 20th century, the B. C. agricultural industry enjoyed a newly elevated status within the province's economy. The promotion of B.C. products abroad had served the dual purpose of encouraging immigration to the province and advertising B.C. fruit. Nationally, the tide of immigration generated by the expansionist policies of the Laurier government created a fresh demand for agricultural education to facilitate western settlement and development based on farming. The result in B. C. was a range of agricultural education innovations which included university extension and an improved service from a significantly larger Department of Agriculture. This chapter describes the growing momentum of support for agricultural education which derived its strength from both national and provincial issues. It examines the 1909 restructuring of the provincial Department of Agriculture, the Agricultural Instruction Act of 1913, and the origins of university agricultural extension in the Faculty of Agriculture at UBC. The continued operation of the Farmers' Institute and the changes in

its function are examined and explained in relationship to the expansion of agricultural education resources. The study concludes with an assessment of the contribution of the Farmers' Institute during its formative years, 1897-1915.

The Continued Momentum for Agricultural Development

Throughout the first decade of the new century, national policies favouring land settlement and the development of agriculture enjoyed continued support. The flood of immigrants, many intending to farm but lacking the necessary knowledge and skills, roused a deep concern in the hearts of many Canadians.¹ The urbanization of the Canadian population continued at an even pace. Urban dwellers grew by half to 3,280,444 in 1911, while rural dwellers had increased by only seventeen per cent from 3,349,516 in 1901 to 3,924,394 in 1911.² The rising cost of living caused politicians and farm leaders to speculate on the future capacity of the country to produce its own food as the numbers of farmers declined in proportion to the whole population.

At the national level, concern about the steady increase in urban population led to an idealization of rural life which ignored the reality of many settlers' existence.³ At its best, the rhetoric which promoted rural life saw agriculture as the basis for a thriving nation, with farmers prospering along with other workers.⁴ It was an expression of the myth of the land

and Canadian agriculture which prevailed throughout the period of large scale immigration and settlement of the west.⁵ The likelihood that a promoter would claim rural origins as the best guarantee to develop future leadership potential and "...men of giant intellect, physically rugged and morally sound" was as great in 1910 as it had been a decade earlier when T. F. Paterson, one of the key organizers of the Farmers' Institute,⁶ addressed B.C. farmers.

The impact of national and provincial immigration policies was felt in B.C. as thousands of immigrants, many of them from Britain, took up farming in the Okanagan and on Vancouver Island with Americans arriving⁷ mainly in the Fraser Valley and Kootenay areas. Compared to the whole of Canada, where the rural population increase between 1901 and 1911 was 574,878 and urban increase was 1,258,645, the B.C. rural population increase was 100,318 and urban increase was 113,505. In other words, the ratio of rural to urban increase in Canada was forty-six per cent while in B.C. it was⁸ eighty-five per cent.

The 1911 census revealed that 24,000 British Columbians were employed in agriculture, more than in⁹ lumbering, mining, or fisheries. The total occupiers of¹⁰ farms had grown from 6,739 in 1901 to 18,467 in 1911. Many of these new farmers were devoid of any farming knowledge or skills, and those who had farming experience frequently encountered conditions for which they were

unprepared. Changing trends in agriculture created a further need for information as ranchers became orchardists or dairymen, and poultrymen began commercial egg and chicken production.

This decade of growth in the farm population saw an accompanying expansion in the size and variety of farm organizations. One of the first agricultural organizations in the province, the B.C. Fruit Growers' Association, had a membership of 876 by 1914. There were also the Dairymen's Association, the Stockbreeders' Association, the Poultry Association and two bee-keepers associations, all operating with the assistance or¹¹ sponsorship of the Department of Agriculture. Like the Farmers' Institute, they held annual meetings in Victoria where agricultural issues specific to their interests were discussed. Farm organizations of another type which began to appear in this era were the producer co-operatives, principally for the marketing of dairy products and fruit. The Department of Agriculture assisted these co-operatives through loans amounting to the sum of \$162,100 during the period between 1901 and¹² 1913.

The extent to which the Farmers' Institute was an impetus to these organizations is not clear. However, it was instrumental in the formation of the Women's Institutes in B.C. in 1909. Laura Rose had proven to be a highly popular speaker on her first speaking circuit¹³ for the Farmers' Institute in 1906. On a fall tour in

1909 she addressed a meeting of the Surrey Farmers' Institute at Tynehead on the subject of women's institutes and domestic science. Sufficient women were present that evening to enable the Tynehead Women's Institute to be formed. The following day she addressed the meeting of the Farmers' Institute at Surrey Centre and the few women in attendance agreed to recruit more members for the Surrey Centre Women's Institute which was subsequently formed on November 9, 1909.¹⁴ The Women's Institute spread rapidly around the province as a result of Rose's 1909 tour and by the end of that year fifteen institutes existed.¹⁵

All of the government-sponsored farm organizations held annual conferences in Victoria, often on consecutive days. The result was an enlarged network of farm leaders and a substantial lobby on behalf of agricultural interests and rural communities. The annual Central Farmers' Institute, to which delegates from each local branch were sent, had been meeting each year since 1899. The delegates brought with them motions to be debated by the conference and later conveyed to the appropriate level of government. While the majority of the motions related to legislation pertaining to agriculture and rural community development, a significant lobby on behalf of improved agricultural education in the province developed.

The demand for an increase in Department of Agriculture personnel began when a dairy instructor was

requested in 1905.¹⁶ The Central Institute passed motions requesting more publications, further resource people, laboratories, agricultural libraries and experimental farms. It repeatedly lobbied the government for an agricultural college for the province.¹⁷ Delegates also submitted motions to support the inclusion of land for an experimental farm in the endowment for the university when it was first discussed in 1906.¹⁸ The Institute had pressured the government into funding scholarships for B.C. students attending agricultural schools outside B.C. until such time as one existed within the province.¹⁹ The repeated request of the institute members for more staff was finally realized in 1908 when four graduates of the Ontario Agricultural College were hired by the Department of Agriculture.

While agricultural organizations multiplied and greater importance was attached to agricultural education, the province's agricultural production was also growing. In 1911, provincial agricultural exports exceeded imports for the first time on record.²⁰ The principal increases in production during the decade had been in fruit, milk and poultry. Dairying, with its related industries, and the poultry industry typically expanded near the new and growing urban centres with the improvement of transportation facilities providing easy access to this dependable market, particularly for Fraser Valley farmers.

Orchard acreage had grown from 7,502 acres in 1901

21

to 33,618 acres in 1911. The number of poultry had more than doubled during the decade with over a million birds in 1911.²² The number of milk cows showed an increase from 5.18 to 7.11 per one hundred acres of improved land.²³ While government leaders and department officials congratulated themselves and the farmers on the sizable improvement in agricultural production, they were aware of the continued importation of farm products and the still undeveloped potential of the province to supply even more of its own food supply.

The appointment of the Royal Commission on Agriculture in 1912 was an indication that agriculture had come of age in a province long dominated by forestry, mining and fisheries. The commission was chaired by W. H. Hayward, an early institute promoter who was the member of the provincial legislature for Cowichan. When the report was filed with the legislature in 1914, it hailed the dramatic increases in agricultural production which had occurred.

The Report of the provincial Royal Commission on Agriculture in 1914 also contained specific recommendations with respect to education. It recommended that the government establish farm training schools, provide nature study and agricultural education in public schools, and provide district instructors of agriculture who would be available to farmers in the main agricultural centres of the province, a system which had been successfully implemented in Ontario.²⁴

Reorganization of the Department of Agriculture

As agriculture assumed a more prominent position among the province's industries, so did the Department of Agriculture among government ministries. The department was completely restructured in 1909, the result of perpetual demands for more services to farmers and the growing commitment by government to develop the agricultural potential of the province. The staff had been expanded by the hiring of four graduates of the Ontario Agricultural College in the previous year. Assistant horticulturists, B. Hoy and M. S. Middleton, were appointed to offices in Vernon and Nelson. R. M. Winslow, horticulturist, and Morley Jull, poultry specialist, had headquarters in Victoria. With the opening of the Vernon and Nelson offices, a decentralization of the educational services of the department took place.

Additional staff were acquired in 1909 and the department was divided into branches with trained specialists at the head of each branch. While a few years earlier, J. R. Anderson had simultaneously filled the role of Deputy Minister, statistician, and Superintendent of the Farmers' Institute, these jobs were now held by different men, and the role of Superintendent diminished in size to the extent that it was only a part of the job of R. W. Hodson who was also head of the dairy and stock branch.

The new divisions of the department each assumed responsibility for educational activities and the production and distribution of literature specific to their branch, measurably decreasing the educational role of the Farmers' Institute and the Superintendent's responsibility for agricultural education. The expansion and decentralization of the department continued as new agricultural areas were opened up in the province. By 1914 there was a permanent staff of forty-five including a horticulturist and agriculturist for the newly developing northern British Columbia, an instructor in soils and crops, and an assistant dairy instructor. The most significant feature of the restructuring of the department was the recognition that the educational needs of the provinces' farmers were too great and too varied to be served by a single organization under one administrator.

The Operation of the Farmers'
Institute, 1909 to 1915

As other branches of the department took over much of the actual provision of scientific agricultural information, the superintendent's role shifted its focus to the economic betterment of farmers. In the 1912 Report, Superintendent William E. Scott wrote under the sub-heading Co-operation:

This is the primary object of Farmers' Institutes, and I would again urge upon you the necessity for active co-operation amongst the members of each institute. In union there is strength, and in order for farmers to secure the price which they should for their produce, concerted action is imperative....Co-

operation in marketing your produce and securing your supplies is the secret of success, and I trust that this phase of Farmers' Institute work may be taken in hand by all institutes in the Province.²⁵

In addition to encouraging co-operation, the Superintendent was responsible for the administration of the government sponsored co-operative purchasing schemes. The Department of Agriculture made wholesale purchases of feed, seed, breeding stock, stumping powder, fertilizer, machinery and other supplies for resale to local institutes at reduced prices.

In the years immediately following J. R. Anderson's retirement, the dramatically increased size of the department allowed the new superintendent to co-ordinate activities using the resources of other branches of the department. Beginning in 1910, two day short courses became popular with institute members and were conducted by experts within the department. The short course system soon developed beyond the original horticultural and dairy courses so that by 1914, when farmers were polled by the Superintendent to determine their wishes for the coming season, they requested information on gardening and marketing, livestock, crops,
26
poultry, cattle and sheep.

Another innovation begun in 1910 was the sponsorship of fruit-packing schools. Originally held exclusively in the Okanagan, they were subsequently offered in other fruit-growing centres of the province. In 1911, attendance at thirty schools was 390 and the

number of schools was increased to fifty the following year. It was estimated that eighty per cent of all fruit sold in 1912 was packed by pupils of the departmental²⁷ packing schools. Field-crop competitions among the local institutes with prize money supplied by the Department also became an established institute activity during this period and local institutes undertook the sponsorship of boys' and girls' competitions in potato-growing.

The superintendent continued to be responsible for the extensive circulation of agricultural information. In 1912, over 140,000 bulletins, reports and circulars were sent out, mainly to Farmers' Institute members. The number of institutes continued to grow and reached 136 in 1915. The organization of institutes had extended to the north central region following the completion of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway. The number of members peaked in 1915 at 8353 before the negative impact of the first World War began to be felt (see Appendix 1). During World War I, the Institute was to suffer a serious setback as both farmers and department personnel left for active service overseas and markets for a number of agricultural products declined.

The Agricultural Instruction Act, 1913

In the 1911 election, R. L. Borden's conservatives came to power. A key election issue and one which had mobilized a growing protest from the country's farmers was reciprocity. Martin Burrell, who was a former

Department of Agriculture correspondent for the Grand Forks area, was appointed federal Minister of Agriculture. In this capacity he introduced and led the debate on a proposal to provide the provinces with ten million dollars over a ten year period for the purpose of agricultural education. The annual amount for each province would be decided jointly by federal and provincial officials and roughly based on population. In the debate on the first reading of the bill, Burrell emphasized the value of education to agricultural production and cited comprehensive agricultural education programs in Europe to support his position. He also advocated the promotion of the rural life style to balance the urbanization of the Canadian population. In the debate, no one protested the intent or the content of the bill.

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The passage of the Agricultural Instruction Act in 1913 had a tremendous impact on agricultural education delivered by the Department of Education, the Department of Agriculture and the new Faculty of Agriculture at UBC when it was established in 1915. The amounts received by British Columbia are shown in Appendix 2 and the distribution of funds by provincial authorities for the year 1914 is shown in Appendix 3.

Although the Agricultural Instruction Act was not universally acclaimed as having a major impact on agricultural education in every province, in British Columbia the injection of federal money heralded an era

of co-operation between the university, the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Education in the provision of agricultural education.²⁹ It has also been credited with making possible one of the most productive periods in the history of both the Faculty of Agriculture and the Department of Agriculture.³⁰ It marked the beginning of the school garden project under the supervision of J.W. Gibson, funded the publication services of the Department of Agriculture and provided the new Faculty of Agriculture with sufficient funds to engage in agricultural extension work around the province.

The Founding of the Faculty of Agriculture

When the University of B. C. opened its doors in September, 1915, it included courses in agriculture among its offerings. The first Dean of Agriculture was Dr. L. S. Klinck who had attended the Ontario Agricultural College before doing his graduate studies at Iowa State College. During his graduate work he was influenced by Perry Holden who was the first Superintendent of Extension at Iowa State and a pioneer of extension methods aimed at a large population.³¹ Dr. Klinck's belief that the function of a university was "to extend the boundaries of achieved knowledge and to promote the extension of higher learning"³² was entirely compatible with that of UBC's first president, Dr. F. S. Wesbrook who promoted the concept of the "people's university"

and, accompanied by Klinck, travelled around the province to determine the best means by which the university could serve British Columbians.

Klinck and his first faculty members began at once to do extension work since students were not admitted to degree programs until 1917. They gave public lectures and served as instructors in Department of Agriculture short courses and the Department of Education summer school for public school teachers of agriculture. All Faculty of Agriculture extension work was funded under the terms of the Agricultural Instruction Act, or the "Burrell grant" as it was commonly called. The Burrell grant to the Faculty of Agriculture amounted to an average of \$23,000 per year and was used for specific
33
extension projects.

The tradition of extension work which was begun in the infant Faculty of Agriculture was to continue long past the end of the ten year duration of the Burrell funding. The vigour with which it was introduced had a considerable impact on the education programs of the Farmers' Institute as local institutes came to rely on the UBC Faculty of Agriculture as a source of lecturers for their meetings. The topics which the UBC faculty addressed indicate a trend toward scientific agriculture which was later formalized into policy when representatives of the Departments of Agriculture and Education, and the Faculty of Agriculture met in 1917 to work out a division of responsibility among the three

educational agents. The Faculty of Agriculture assumed responsibility for directing agricultural research and the provision of instruction in courses where underlying scientific principles were emphasized. It was to be the task of the Department of Agriculture to do all illustration and demonstration field work, undertake all work aimed at increased agricultural production, and to continue all agricultural publications. This delineation of the roles of the Faculty of Agriculture and the Department of Agriculture reinforced the change in focus of the Farmers' Institute from an educational to an economic one.

Early Agricultural Education and the Farmers' Institute

In the years between the founding of the Farmers' Institute in 1897 and the beginning of agricultural extension work by the Faculty of Agriculture at UBC in 1915, agriculture became one of the three major industries in B.C. Writing of the state of agriculture in the British Columbia Yearbook of 1897, R. E. Gosnell described the B.C. farmer as having "struck rock bottom." "Having disabused his mind of many fallacies current a few years ago," he was ready to pursue farming on a business-like basis. And, by 1914 the value of agricultural production actually surpassed the value of production in the mining and forestry industries.

More than a change in farmers' attitudes had taken place between 1897 and 1914 to account for the tremendous

growth which occurred in agriculture. Thousands of immigrants arrived in B.C. during that period, many of them settling in rural areas to pursue farming. Agricultural societies, co-operatives and producers' associations were born and a significant farmers' lobby emerged, although mainly as a part of the government-sponsored associations.

Agricultural education was promoted by both the provincial and federal governments during this period. The Farmers' Institute was created, to provide an organizational structure for the assorted promotional and educational work of the fledgling Department of Agriculture. As the Department expanded between 1909 and 1914 and federal money was provided for agricultural education, increased numbers of expert agriculturalists assumed responsibility for the delivery of scientific agricultural information to the province's farmers. The decentralization of the educational services made possible by the location of specialists in the various agricultural regions also provided direct contact between farmers and experts in scientific agriculture. The opening of the university with its philosophic commitment to extension work and the readiness of its Faculty of Agriculture to undertake such work also contributed to a wider range of agricultural education resources in B.C. by the end of 1915.

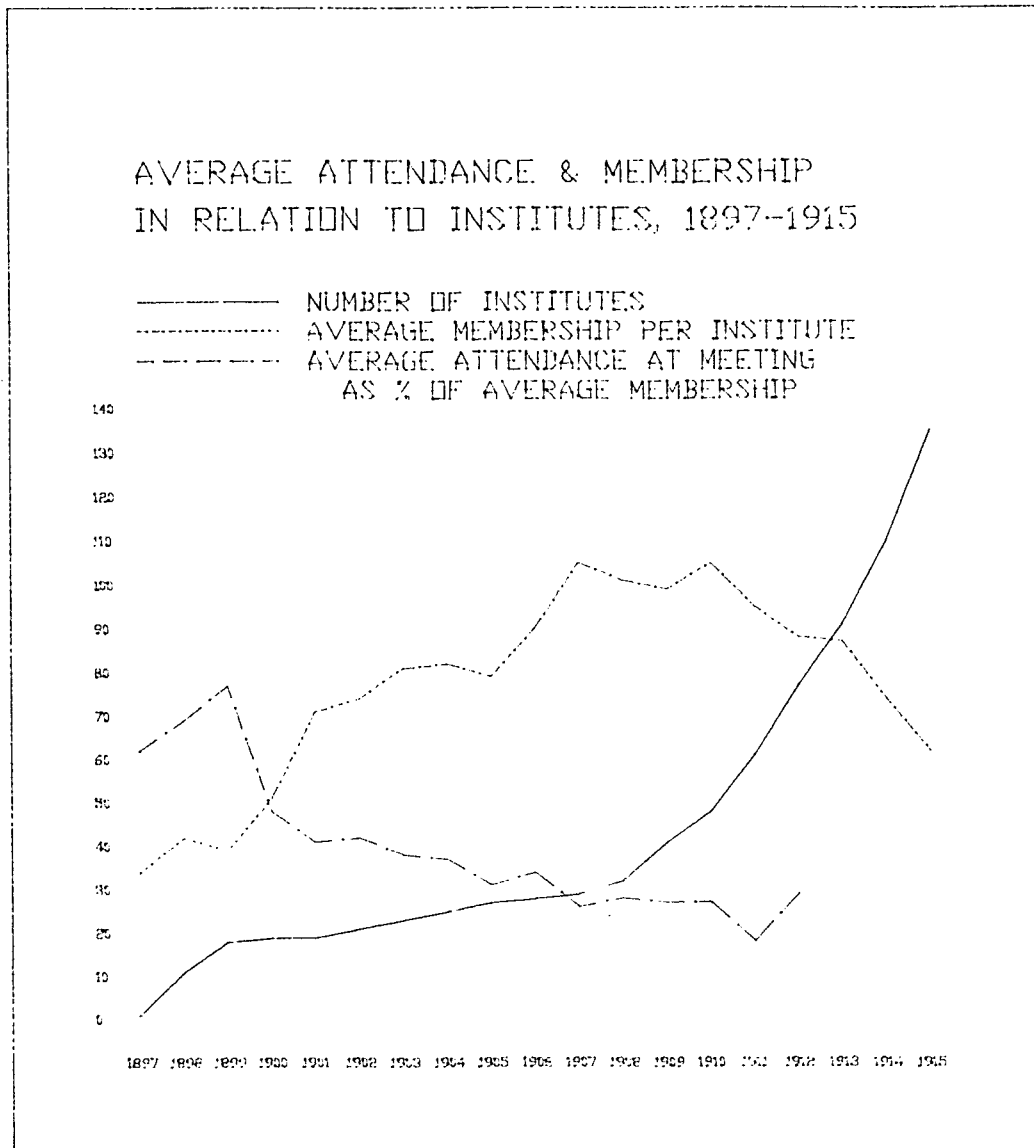
The operation of the Farmers' Institute in 1915 reflected the changes in the provision of agricultural

education. As the Superintendent had stated in 1912, its main purpose had become the promotion of co-operation among farmers.³⁷

An examination of the record of attendance and membership during the 1897 to 1915 period also suggests that the nature of farmers' participation in the Institute may have precipitated the changes which had occurred in the function of the Institute.

Membership and the number of institutes showed steady growth in the early years (see appendix 1). Both began to accelerate in 1907-1908, when a number of events occurred which may offer an explanation for this phenomenon. Additional staff were hired in 1908 and 1909 allowing the restructuring of the department and a decentralization of services. J. R. Anderson retired, and with the new staff and new superintendent, a revitalization of the organization may have taken place, even though there is no indication in the reports of any discontent with the administration of the Institute prior to this time. Letters to Anderson upon his retirement would indicate that he was held in high esteem by the members of the branch institutes.³⁸ It may also be that the idea of the farmers' institute was becoming a familiar part of the agricultural scene and increasing numbers of farmers were informed of the benefits of membership.

Figure 3



Even as membership and the number of institutes grew at an increasing rate, average attendance showed a slow but steady decline (figure 3). It must be remembered that attendance indicated all people who were present and was not limited to the number of members who were present. The rate of attendance would be even lower if it represented only attendance by members. There are

several likely explanations for the decline during a period of increasing membership. One possibility is that farmers may have originally joined the Institute for reasons other than to participate in the meetings. For payment of membership, a farmer was entitled to free publications from the department, economic assistance through the group purchase schemes of local institutes, and reduced rates on stumping powder.

A further possibility is that the additional organizations which had come into existence were competing with the Farmers' Institute for farmers' time. For example, with the advent of the Women's Institute in 1909, many women who had formerly attended the Farmers' Institute may have ceased going to meetings. In a similar manner, if an institute had taken advantage of the provisions for its incorporation as a co-operative, members may have been occupied with the running of a co-operative organization which would have been seen to be a more pressing need than their attendance at institute meetings.

Farmers were also being encouraged by the Institute to attend the short courses offered in a variety of locations by district personnel. They also visited the district offices for information and could arrange, for example, to have the district horticulturist visit their orchard for advice or a demonstration. In short, the widening range of educational services available to farmers during this period relieved the farmers of an

earlier dependency on the Institute when it may have been the only source of scientific agricultural information. By 1915, Farmers' Institute meetings were no longer the most efficient means of acquiring up to date information and the original educational function of the Farmers' Institute was altered, at least partly by circumstances of its own creation.

Conclusion

The most visible achievement of the Farmers' Institute as a government-sponsored program of agricultural education was the systematic provision of information and practical skills to farmers in a period where there was an obvious need for education but no other available agency or institution to provide it. A less tangible but no less important contribution to the development of agricultural education was the system of branch institutes which developed. The organization of local institutes in farm communities established a basis for future agricultural extension work by both the Department of Agriculture and the UBC Faculty of Agriculture.

Integral to the design of the program of the early Farmers' Institute was the involvement of the farmers in various aspects of the educational program. Once an institute was formed, the responsibility for the recruitment of members and the program content rested largely with the executive of the individual group. This policy was consistent with the established pattern of

reliance by department officials on local farmers for accurate information on agricultural conditions. It also allowed local initiative to develop in the running of the educational program and other aspects of the Institute's work.

As they acquired knowledge to improve their own farming practice and reported on their experience of conditions often unique to their geographic location, farmers had the opportunity to develop, perhaps in spite of themselves, what Douglas Lawr has called, "the spirit of scientific inquiry" in relation to the science of agriculture.³⁹ The favoured teaching techniques of group discussion and demonstration by their very nature enhanced the learning and increased the likelihood of active participation in the educational component of meetings. The use of local speakers gave members opportunities to develop skills in analysis, organization, public speaking, and group leadership.

Ironically, in some ways the success of the Farmers' Institute may have led to a diminution in its status as educational agent. Institute members displayed in their local meetings and at the Central Farmers' Institute a growing appreciation of the value of agricultural education and demanded more services. These demands were met by a dramatically expanded and restructured Department of Agriculture and the new Faculty of Agriculture at UBC, both of which had been the subject of numerous resolutions from institutes around

the province. New personnel in the Department and the UBC Faculty of Agriculture, all of whom had university degrees in agriculture, took over much of the educational work carried out at the local level by the Farmers' Institute. The Institute continued to play a role in agricultural education, but its role had changed from primary agent to co-ordinator of agricultural education programs, with scientific agricultural information and much of the organizational impetus provided by other agents.

FOOTNOTES

1

Brown and Cook, pp. 195-6

2 Census of Canada, 1911, vol.1, Table x, Rural and Urban Population. p. 526.

3

E. O. S. Scholfield, Add MSS 491, PABC. Quoted in Canadian Women on the Move, 1867-1920, ed. Beth Light and Joy Parr, (Toronto: New Hogtown Press and OISE), 1983, p. 167.

4

House of Commons, Debates, January 24, 1913, p. 2149-2150.

5

David C. Jones, "The Zeitgeist of Western Settlement: Education and the Myth of the Land," in Schooling and Society in Twentieth Century British Columbia, ed. J. Donald Wilson and David C. Jones, (Calgary: Detselig, 1980), p. 72.

6

ARFI 1900, p. 1076.

7

Census, 1911, vol. 2, Table xv, Birthplace by districts, p. 378.

8

Calculated from Census, 1911, vol.1. Table x, p. 526.

9

R. E. Caves and R. H. Holton, "An Outline of the Economic History of B. C. 1881-1951," in Friesen and Ralston, p. 154.

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Census, 1911, vol. 4. p. xii, Table 6. Tenure of Farm Lands.

11 AR 1915, p. 8

12

AR 1915, p. 53.

- 13
ARFI 1907, p. 29.
- 14
Surrey Farmers' Institute, Minutes of Meetings, 1907-1918, meetings of 9 and 10 November, 1909.
- 15
Douglas, p. 7.
- 16
ARFI 1905, p.88.
- 17
ARFI 1906, p. 63; 1907, p. 42; 1911, p. 30.
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ARFI 1906, p.63.
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ARFI 1911, p.58.
- 20Margaret Ormsby, "Agricultural Development in British Columbia," Agricultural History 19 (January 1945), p. 14.
- 21Census, 1911, vol. 4, p. xxiv. Table 15. Land in Orchards, Small Fruits and Vegetables.
- 22
Ibid. p. xxiv. Table 66. Number of Poultry.
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Final Report of the Royal Commission on Agriculture, Sessional Papers, 1914, p. 36.
- 25
ARFI 1912, p. 8.
- 26
AR 1915, p. 71.
- 27
AR 1913, p.8.
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House of Commons, Debates, January 24, 1913. pp. 2146-2159.

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Eagles, p. 15.

31

Ibid., p.12

32

Harry Logan, Tuum Est: A History of the University of B. C. (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 1958), p. 81.

33

F. M. Clement, The Faculty of Agriculture in the University of British Columbia. Statements read before the Senate, September 20 and November 12, 1926. Wesbrook Papers, University of British Columbia Archives.

34

William C. Gibson, Wesbrook and his University, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 1973), p. 176.

35

R. E. Gosnell, British Columbia Yearbook, (Victoria: Queen's Printer, 1897), p. 270.

36

Canadian Annual Review, 1921. p. 889.

37

ARFI 1912, p. 8. In 1897, at the organizing meeting of the Richmond Farmers' Institute, Anderson had stated that the main purpose of the Institute was to provide education to farmers. Add MSS 1912, PABC.

38

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39

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Appendix 1

Early Growth of the Farmers' Institute, 1897-1915

Year	number of institutes	number of meetings	attendance	membership
1897	2	7	163	73
1898	12	...	...	528
1899	19	111	3,527	765
1900	20	93	2,369	1,031
1901	20	144	4,372	1,432
1902	21	183	6,043	1,591
1903	24	175	5,673	1,969
1904	25	225	7,171	2,062
1905	27	230	5,892	2,183
1906	27	220	7,431	2,481
1907	28	226	6,861	2,970
1908	33	284	8,661	3,372
1909	41	314	9,105	4,120
1910	49	248	7,451	5,226
1911	62	375	7,024	6,070
1912	77	445	11,577	6,901
1913	92	...	...	8,144
1914	111	...	...	8,353
1915	136	...	...	8,415

Source: Annual Report, Department of Agriculture, 1915,
p. 50; 1916, p. 18.

Appendix 2

Yearly Grants to British Columbia Under the Agriculture Instruction Act

Year	Amount	Year	Amount
1912/13	\$27,335	1918/19	\$74,449
1913/14	47,335	1919/20	69,199
1914/15	52,799	1920/21	69,199
1915/16	58,266	1921/22	69,199
1916/17	63,733	1922/23	69,199
1917/18	63,949	1923/24	61,843
		Total	\$726,505

Source: Howard Fluxgold, Federal Financial Support for Secondary Education and its Effect on Ontario, 1900-1972, p. 13.

Appendix 3

Dispersal of funds under the Agricultural Instruction Act for fiscal year ending March 31, 1914

Short courses in connection with Women's Institutes	\$2,500
Short courses in connection with Farmers' Institutes	5,000
Demonstration work in crop growing	7,500
Demonstration dairy-farm work	5,000
Demonstration work in horticulture	5,000
Cow-testing Association work	2,500
Instructors or Inspectors for agricultural instruction	7,500
School gardens: supplying seed, instruction	1,000
Demonstration field-work	2,500
Stock-judging competitions	1,000
Fruit-packing competitions	1,000
Publications	2,500
Miscellaneous	4,334
Total	\$47,334

Source: Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture,
1913, p. 53.