PROTECTIVE SERVICES FOR CHILDREN

Changing Patterns in Children's Protective Services in the United States and Canada, 1874-1954, and in the Children's Aid Society of Vancouver, B.C., 1901-1954

by

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ABSTRACT


This study is concerned with protective services for children as they have been developed in the U. S. and Canada over the past eighty years. An effort has been made to discover general trends amidst variety. Canadian developments are compared with those in the U. S., and one agency, the Children's Aid Society of Vancouver, B. C., is reviewed as an example that lends concreteness and meaning to the broader picture. Questions are raised in regard to future operations of the Vancouver society, but are not answered.

The history of protective services in the U. S. and the analysis of trends has been developed from an examination of the literature on protection and related topics. Canadian children's aid societies are an integral part of the developing protection movement, and writings of early leaders in the Canadian CAS movement have been consulted. The account of the Vancouver agency has been developed from an examination of various records of the Society, and has relied heavily on a history written by Anne Margaret Angus. Interviews with former executives and board members were another source of information. The writer was employed for three years as a staff member, and this, too, contributed to an understanding of the Society.

The New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, the first social machinery created for purposes of child protection, was organized in 1875. The idea spread rapidly. In the 1890s and early 1900s, Canadian communities began organizing children's aid societies to act as protection agencies. Although trends are similar to those in the U. S., there are some special characteristics. Canadian children's aid societies made extensive use of placement in free family homes while protection agencies in the U. S. were depending almost exclusively on institutional placements. In Canada, from the beginning, there was an integration of protection services with other services in behalf of children that was longer delayed in the U. S. Canadian protection agencies have been given continuing guardianship responsibility when the courts have deprived parents of their children; other patterns have been followed in the U. S.

The Children's Aid Society of Vancouver, B. C., is a representative example of Canadian protection agencies. When it was organized in 1901, the protection of children was the primary motivation. Later, as the burden of caring for children increased, the original purposes of child protection were somewhat forgotten. During World War 1 and the early 1920s, as problems multiplied and the quality of care deteriorated, a ferment of new ideas in child welfare was at work. Eventually, difficulties of the Society and disagreements as to its future course contributed to a decision that the community should take a look at itself and its child-caring practices. Thus the B. C. Child Welfare Survey of 1926-27 was brought about. Extensive changes in the functioning of the Vancouver CAS were recommended. During the years from 1927 to 1931, recommendations were carried out and the agency was effectively reorganized. In the succeeding years there has been no radical change in direction or focus - only growth in size and a refinement of practices. Recently questions have been raised regarding the future functions of the Society and future provisions for the protection of children in the Vancouver community. Various changes have been advocated, and a careful consideration of alternative possibilities and of future directions will be needed.
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PROTECTIVE SERVICES FOR CHILDREN

Changing Patterns in Children's Protective Services
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CHAPTER I

NORTH AMERICAN PROTECTION PATTERNS: DEVELOPMENTS IN THE UNITED STATES

The nurturing and protection of children is one of the primary functions of society today, and must continue to be if society itself is to survive. Normally it is parents who carry the major responsibility for the protection of their children, and most parents discharge this responsibility to the best of their ability, knowledge and resources. In its broadest sense, the protection of children is accomplished by any measures which contribute to the well-being of families and communities, enhancing the opportunities for the wholesome development of children or diminishing the dangers and harmful influences to which they may be exposed. Although, in this broad sense, measures for the protection and welfare of children are those which supplement and assist parents in carrying out their primary responsibility for the care, support, education and training of their children, a few children are in need of a more specific form of protection. Relatively, only a small number of parents are so incompetent, or so callous, indifferent and neglectful of the welfare of their children, that their responsibilities must be taken over by society; yet so long as ignorance and disease, vice and crime, feeble-mindedness and brutality of all kinds continue to exist, there will continue to be numbers of children in every community who suffer from the lack of parental protection and care, and who are in need of protection from some other source.

A. The Doctrine of Parens Patriae

Social machinery for the protection of children whose natural guardians, the parents, fail thus to provide protection or are themselves the
source of abuse or immoral and degrading influence is a recent development in the history of civilization. Throughout the centuries, although most parents have loved and protected their children, exploitation and neglect have been widespread practices, too, and even child murder has been prevalent in many places. In Roman times fathers had an absolute authority over their offspring which included the right to sell, mutilate, and even to kill their young, and parental authority extended throughout the life of the father. Centuries later, under British common law, fathers had nearly as absolute an authority over their children until they attained majority, provided that the family did not become paupers dependent on public charity.

It was the doctrine of parens patriae which led to a gradual modification of the absolute authority of fathers and introduced consideration for the welfare of the child in decisions of the chancery court in Britain and, later, in statutory provisions and court decisions on this continent as well. The doctrine of parens patriae regarded the king (later, the state) as a kind of super-parent to the subjects of the realm, with a particular responsibility to those who were legally incompetent (infants

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1 Two court cases frequently cited as examples are: (a) "Shelley v. Westbrooke". Jacob Chancery Reports 1821-22, 266 (1817). The poet Shelley applied to have his children delivered to him after his wife's death, and the Court denied the petition because of his avowed atheism. (b) "The Wellesley Children, Infants, Under the Age of Twenty One Years, By the Honorable Philip Pusey, Their Next Friend v. Duke of Beaufort" Russel Chancery Reports I (1827). A father was denied his petition to gain custody of his three children after their mother was deceased because of the questionable influence of the woman with whom he was associating. "Under these circumstances, I can never suffer the daughter to go under the care and custody of Mr. Wellesley, so long as there is any connection between him and a woman so abandoned as Mrs. Bligh appears to be. I cannot consent to separate the boys from the daughter."

and lunatics) and who were without adequate natural guardianship.

Although the super-parent authority and responsibility of the state to provide for the guardianship and protection of children had been a gradually developing concept over a period of centuries, it was not until the last quarter of the nineteenth century that machinery was created for the state to exercise its super-parent authority in behalf of children, except in those few situations affected by the authority of the chancery court to give consideration to the welfare of the child when contested custody rights between individuals for children possessed of property were brought before it. The New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, incorporated in 1875, was the first social machinery which provided a means for seeking out the children in need of the protection of the state as super-parent, and for initiating action in their behalf.

B. Machinery for the Protection of Children: 1874-1954

Beginning of the New York SPOC

The story of the New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, and of all agencies for the protection of children, begins with Mary Ellen, a twelve-year-old girl who entered the public eye in 1874. Mrs. Charles Wheeler, a church worker in New York City, had learned of the shockingly brutal treatment that Mary Ellen was receiving from her foster parents, and she undertook to do something about it. Mrs. Wheeler went to the police; but, since no law had been broken, they were helpless. She talked to her pastor and her attorney, but received no encouragement. As a last resort, the determined lady approached Mr. Henry Bergh, president of the New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, urging protection for Mary Ellen under the laws enacted to protect animals. After much consideration, the animal society accepted responsibility and Mary Ellen
was brought into court, with the result that her foster-mother was sentenced to a year in the penitentiary and Mary Ellen went to live with her benefactor, Mrs. Wheeler. As a result of the publicity given the action of the animal society in behalf of Mary Ellen, so many other children's cases were brought to the attention of the society that it was impossible for the staff to handle them. With this evidence of need, counsel for the SPCA, Commodore Elbridge T. Gerry, the society's president, Mr. Bergh, and others associated with them petitioned the New York legislature, which, in 1875, chartered the New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, the first such society in the world.

Spread of the SPCC and Humane Society Movement

Apparently those who conceived the plans for the first SPCC had found an answer to a question that was concerning humanitarians everywhere. SPCCs underwent a mushroom growth, and within five years there were thirty-three societies for child protection in the United States and fifteen in other parts of the world. Some were organized as SPCCs, acting in behalf of children only, and others were Humane Societies, protecting animals and old people as well as children. The London Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children was organized in 1886, with the blessing of Queen Victoria. It was later renamed the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children; developing more than 1,000 branches throughout England, it became the largest SPCC in the world.

Rescue and Punishment

The prevalence of physical cruelty was the immediate occasion for the organization of SPCCs, as it was for the animal protection societies. Quite naturally their purposes and methods were much the same. They attempted to secure effective protective laws and then to see that those laws were enforced. Publicity, warning and prosecution of the more flagrant cases of
cruelty were the methods they relied on. The early SPCC regarded itself as an adjunct of the police department and the right arm of the court, rather than as a charitable society. The New York SPCC, for example, did not concern itself with the social causes leading to child abuse and neglect, except as they might be incidental to the individual case, and steadfastly refused to become allied with the charitable societies of the community. The society was primarily concerned with the rescue of children suffering from brutal treatment or living in degrading surroundings, and presented such evidence to the courts that those responsible for the conditions might feel the heavy hand of the law. Furthermore, the New York Court of Appeals, in January, 1900, upheld the contention of the society, in resisting supervision by the State Board of Charities, that it was not "charitable, eleemosynary, correctional or reformatory in its nature", but was, as it contended, "a subordinate governmental agency", and observed that the subsidy paid the society by New York City was for "doing work that would otherwise devolve upon the police department". 1

Protection of Society

Society's protection of itself has been an important motivation in the development of both charitable and anti-cruelty societies. The very title of the classic by Charles Loring Brace, The Dangerous Classes of New York and Twenty Years Work Among Them, is eloquent expression of a concept of social organization and interrelationships that was prevalent throughout the nineteenth century, and the idea is further developed in the introductory words:

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My great object is to prove to society the practical truth . . .
that the cheapest and most efficacious way of dealing with the
"Dangerous Classes" of large cities, is not to punish them, but to
prevent their growth; to so throw the influences of education and
discipline and religion about the abandoned and destitute youth of
our large towns; to so change their material circumstances and draw
them under the influence of the moral and fortunate classes that
they shall grow up as useful producers and members of society, able
and inclined to aid it in its progress.1

Many organizations were engaged in many and varied activities to prevent
the growth of the criminal classes. If Mr. Brace and others who participated
directly in such activities as the establishment of industrial schools for
the training of idle youth, newsboys lodgings, night school classes in the
YMCA, and placing-out societies for children who were orphaned or abandoned
were motivated primarily by their concern for the children and youth whom
they served, they still justified their organizations and their requests for
financial assistance from the community at large with emphasis on the value
of these activities in the prevention of crime. Orphaned and abandoned
children could be rescued from evil influences and protected by the activities
of one or another of these charitable ventures, but it required the anti-
cruelty legislation and the creation of agencies with special authority and
responsibility to act in behalf of children who were not orphaned or abandoned,
but who were nevertheless exposed to vicious and criminal influences because
of their immoral and dissolute parents. And so, along with humanitarian
motives, communities were acting also for their own protection when they
followed the precedents begun in New York with the organization of the first
SPCC.

If the early SPCCs stressed the ethical basis for their activity and
placed less emphasis on their value to society as a means of preventing crime

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1 Brace, Charles Loring, The Dangerous Classes of New York and Twenty
Years Work Among Them. Wynkoop and Hallenbeck; New York; 1880; p.1.
than did the children's aid societies and other charitable organizations of the time, this can be traced to the close association of the SPCCs with the societies that were for the protection of animals. Anti-cruelty societies in behalf of animals were necessarily advocated on ethical grounds, rather than as crime-prevention, and the movement in behalf of children (and sometimes of old people) followed much of the tradition of the animal societies. It was as the societies for the protection of children developed separately from those for animals and built up their own traditions that the emphasis on prevention of crime and the protection of society was increased.

Whichever justification for the anti-cruelty society was emphasised, it is not to be wondered at if the early efforts regarded neglectful parents as a lost cause, and depended on prosecution and punishment of the more flagrant cases, fear of punishment resulting from publicity in regard to the prosecutions, and rescue of children from the demoralizing influences of bad parents as the tools to be used.

Prevention of Family Breakdown

It was the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, organized in 1878, that pioneered in developing a much broader concept of the protection of children than that involved in rescue and punishment. Questions as to the responsibility of the society in the prevention of cruelty and neglect had troubled the directors of the society for many years, and in 1907, with the appointment of C. C. Carstens as general agent, new ideas were put into effect. Agents of the society discarded their police badges, and the society began to judge its efficiency by the number of rehaboritions enabling children to remain in their own homes, rather than by the number of successful prosecutions. This radical
departure was such a shift from the previous focus of protective and humane societies that it stirred up much controversy, and the Massachusetts Society was the focal point of much criticism from its kindred societies in the years that followed.

**Institutional Care of Rescued Children**

Since the emphasis of the early societies was on rescue, none of them undertook responsibility for the continued care of children. Except for temporary "shelter care" during investigation, all of them turned the children over to the care of the institutions incorporated for the care of children. According to Homer Folks, writing in 1902:

> By a vigorous enforcement of the laws authorizing the commitment of vagrant, begging, and various other classes of exposed children, they have largely increased the numbers of children becoming wards of public or private charity. Usually they have not cooperated to any extent with placing-out societies, perhaps because of being continually engaged in breaking up families of bad character, but rather have become the feeders of institutions, both reformatory and charitable. The New York Society during 1900 placed six children in homes or situations; during the same period 2207 children were, upon its recommendations, committed to institutions.

From the standpoint of those administering "child rescue" there was, perhaps, a certain "advantage" in this singleness of emphasis, although it was doubtful advantage to the children so "rescued". So long as those agencies engaged in the rescue of children had not the responsibility of providing for their continued care, they were not deeply involved in the difficult decisions of weighing the limitations of an understaffed and overcrowded institution against the disadvantages of a neglectful home.

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Awareness of Need for Family Ties

In the early emphasis on rescue of children from undesirable surroundings, there was evidence of a complete lack of understanding of the meaning of family ties, or of the importance which belonging in a family group holds for normal child development. Social awareness was developing, however, and one of the resolutions of the White House Conference of 1909 on the Care of Dependent Children emphasized the importance of conserving family ties and providing home care for all children.

Home life is the highest and finest product of our civilization. It is the great molding force of mind and of character. Children should not be deprived of it except for urgent and compelling reasons. Children of parents of worthy character, suffering from temporary misfortune, and children of reasonably efficient and deserving mothers who are without the support of the normal breadwinner, should, as a rule, be kept with their parents, such aid being given as may be necessary to maintain suitable homes for the rearing of the children... Except in unusual circumstances the home should not be broken up for reasons of poverty, but only for considerations of inefficiency and immorality.

In 1919 the Washington and Regional Conferences on Child Welfare reaffirmed the conclusions of the White House Conference of 1909 and resolved further:

5. Removal of Children from Their Homes. Unless unusual conditions exist, the child's welfare is best promoted by keeping him in his own home. No child should be permanently removed from his home unless it is impossible so to reconstruct family conditions or guide and supplement family resources as to make the home safe for the child, or so to supervise the child as to make his continuance in the home safe for the community. In the case of removal, separation should not continue beyond the period of reconstruction.


Since the White House Conference of 1909, the importance of preserving the child's own family has been reiterated many times and in many places. Modifications of the practices of social agencies aimed at preserving the child's ties with his own family, or alternatively, when the first cannot be accomplished, of severing natural ties and providing the child with permanent substitute family ties, have made steady progress. The casework services to families for the prevention of neglect and the strengthening of family resources to avoid separation, pioneered by the Massachusetts society, have become increasingly a part of the protective services that communities provide in behalf of children.

Integration with Other Services

As protection of children has ceased to be synonymous with the rescue of victims and the punishment of offenders, as the quality of substitute care and the meaning of family ties and permanent belonging have been given consideration, and as skills have developed for helping neglectful parents to assume their responsibilities; so protection has ceased to be a narrow and isolated function. A few of the SPCCs have modified their functions to include broader services for children even when they have retained the old title. Various children's agencies have added protective services to their programs, including investigation of complaints, preventive casework with families, and the rescue and removal of children from families when this becomes necessary. Family-service agencies, too, have become important in the field of child protection, primarily through the value of family casework services in preventing family break-down. School social workers (earlier designated as visiting teachers), too, have assumed responsibilities for child protection in those situations coming to light through the public schools.
The Juvenile Court as a Protection Agency

The juvenile court, initially conceived in order that the delinquent child might receive the same kind of protection from the state in its role as "super-parent" as that which was the due of neglected children, developed certain procedures and administrative machinery that were equally applicable in the protection of neglected or abused children who had not been guilty of any delinquency. When the juvenile courts hired probation officers who were charged with the responsibility of investigating social situations and causes of delinquent behavior, it was inevitable that at times this responsibility should be extended to include similar investigations in behalf of supposedly neglected children. Supervision of the child in his own home following a decision of the juvenile court judge might be as applicable in the protection of the neglected child as in the education and control of the delinquent child. Moreover, the distinction between the neglected and the delinquent child became obscured as increasing emphasis was placed on the treatment needs of the child involved rather than on the offenses committed. Because of recurring situations in which the child's own home was determined to be detrimental, or was unavailable, the juvenile courts in many areas developed their own child-placing programs, under the supervision of probation officers, although, in other places, the courts made use of the child-caring agencies available in the community.

In the years immediately following enactment of the first juvenile court law and the establishment of the first juvenile court in Cook County, Illinois, in 1899, the idea spread rapidly, not only in the United States, but throughout the world. Early in the history of the juvenile court movement, there were high hopes that this was an agency that would solve the problems of child protection as well as those of child delinquency. As experience accumulated, however, it was gradually recognized that the juvenile court
had certain limitations in carrying out the social and administrative functions of planning for the care and treatment of both neglected and delinquent children, inherent in the fact that it is organized as a court with judicial authority and headed by a judge whose primary qualification is his legal knowledge. Grace Abbott has stated it thus:

A small percentage of the cases involve decision as to the custody of children, commitment against the wishes of parents and the juvenile to an institution or foster home, and present an "issue" for the judge to settle. The judge's legal training and his experience in private practice and in political and civic undertakings cannot be said to have prepared him to decide what the treatment of the individual delinquent should be. On the contrary his training and experience predispose him to believe that the authority of the court and a lecture by him will cure deep-seated causes of anti-social conduct. His understanding of conduct problems and knowledge of treatment is that of the average layman, and no more.

Child Welfare Units of the Public Welfare Agency

In many urban centers of the United States, where the court has developed effective administrative machinery, psychiatric consultation, treatment facilities, and a probation staff with casework skills, the court has continued to carry broad responsibilities in child protection as well as in the treatment of the delinquent child. Since the 1930's, however, with the U. S. Children's Bureau spearheading efforts to develop protective and other services for children in rural as well as in urban areas, child welfare units as part of the public welfare organization have been created or expanded, and these have played an increasingly important role in developing services for the protection of children. The expansion of protective services to children in recent years has taken place largely in such child welfare units of the public agency.

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Law Enforcement Agencies

Law enforcement agencies, too, have refined their methods and expanded their activities in the field of protection for children and youth. The addition of policewomen to the staff of law enforcement agencies and the training of officers for special juvenile work are two examples of this expanded service. Thus, some of the responsibilities which were once carried by the SPCCs are now a part of the regular duties of the law enforcement agency.

Public Financial Support

In the early days of the humane movement, the protection of both children and animals was supported almost entirely by private philanthropy. Eventually, however, many of the SPCCs and humane societies received grants from governmental bodies in partial support of the services which were supplementing those of police departments. As increasing responsibility for the protection of children has been assumed by agencies or departments of government,—juvenile courts, child welfare units of public welfare departments, and law enforcement agencies,—more and more of the support for protective services has come from public funds. There is a logic in public support for protective services, since authority for these services derives from the role of the state as "super-parent", and it is a concern of the state that welfare of the child be given the preferential consideration when it appears to be in conflict with the rights of natural parents.

C. Evolution of Terms

In the seventy-odd years since the Mary Ellen case led to the creation of the first social machinery for the protection of children, and the forty-odd years since the Massachusetts SPCC pioneered in developing a program for
the prevention of cruelty and neglect, society has been increasingly resourceful in creating programs for the promotion of family and community well-being, for preventing the exploitation of children and for diminishing other causes of family breakdown. As communities have devised ever broader programs to protect families and children, the very terms protection and prevention have lost the clarity of meaning which they once held.

Protective Services

It is generally accepted social work usage, however, to define as protective services for children those services in behalf of children which are initiated, by someone other than the parents themselves, because of community concern that the children are not receiving that minimum of care and protection which the community regards as essential for all children. The authority of the protective agency, whether by law, charter or community assent, stems from the will of the people to safeguard the welfare and rights of children, and, because of that authority, parents are not free to withdraw from the protective services offered, just because they "do not want help".

Preventive-Protective Services

Community efforts to prevent cruelty, neglect and abuse by preventing family breakdown fall into two categories. The generalized programs of child and family welfare, together with law enforcement and other measures for the promotion of healthier family and community life, form one category of the preventive efforts of the community which should greatly lessen the need for the protective services above defined. Supplementing these generalized efforts, however, there is a therapeutic kind of preventive work, properly a part of a program of protective services for children, in which specific skills and resources of the community are focused on families that are already showing symptoms of breakdown to such an extent that their failure to meet minimum community standards for the care of their children is already a matter of
community concern. Thus, the preventive program of a protective agency comes into action after symptoms of pathology are in evidence, but, hopefully, while there is still sufficient strength in the family unit that it can be mobilized to prevent further breakdown and, eventually, to accomplish positive rehabilitation. The term, preventive-protective services, is used hereafter in distinguishing these from the more generalized efforts of the community to promote the well-being of families and children. Thus, preventive-protective services might be compared with such special public health measures as the immunization of persons who have been exposed to a particular disease, which may supplement broader public health measures directed to the community as a whole.

Although, by definition, preventive-protective services are initiated by the concern of persons outside of the family, such services, skilfully offered, can lead to a relationship in which parents participate willingly in order to receive assistance in planning for and exercising responsibility toward their children. The helping process often becomes indistinguishable from other counselling and casework services; hence, it is at the point of initiation that protective services aimed at keeping families together are differentiated from other services in behalf of children.

Rescue

Rescue involves the removal of a child from parental control and custody without the consent of parents, and is essentially a last resort. The removal of a child to some kind of foster placement is not to be thought of as rescue when the plan is one in which the parents participate voluntarily, even if contact with the agency was first initiated by the complaints of outsiders who were concerned for the welfare of a child. Only when legal authority is involved in the removal is such separation of a child from his parents to be defined as rescue.
Child Welfare Services

The many other services for children which are equally important in preventing family breakdown and in protecting children from abuse, neglect or other harmful conditions are hereafter referred to by the broader term of *child welfare services*. Such child welfare services include, but are not limited to, the protective services above defined. Foster day-care for the children of working mothers, institutional and foster-family care for children who must be away from their own families temporarily, visiting-homemaker services, psychiatric services for children, and family casework are some of the child welfare services that promote the welfare of children and strengthen and supplement the resources of parents in their role as guardians and protectors of the young.

D. Rescue of Children

Helps to parents such as those provided by the financial assistance of the public welfare agencies, child welfare services such as those enumerated, together with preventive-protective services, and law enforcement activities to eliminate some of the exploitation and degrading or immoral influences to which children may be exposed, all serve to reduce the number of instances in which children must be removed from neglectful homes. Even when all of these services are effectively provided, however, there still remain some instances in which prevention is not possible. In these situations, the authority of the state as "super-parent" must be used to intervene and rescue children from parents whose problems of personality cause deeply rooted or unchangeable patterns of incompetence, indifference or viciousness, and make them incapable of caring for and protecting their children.
Processes Involved

In each instance where preventive services are not enough, and where rescue may become necessary, three processes are essentially involved: investigation, decision and guardianship. Complaints or other evidences of probable neglect must be investigated. Decisions to modify or terminate the rights of the parents as natural guardians must be made by an agency vested with the necessary authority. If the child is separated from his parents, some substitute agency or persons must be granted guardianship, with the responsibility that this involves for care, control, treatment, planning and education. The three functions of investigation, decision and guardianship may be carried out by one, two or three separate agencies, but in those instances where direct protection of the child rather than assistance to the natural guardians is the real need, the three functions are inseparable parts of one process.

Patterns of Agency Participation

In programs of child protection a wide variety of patterns have developed in the division of responsibility for these three processes. The entertainment of complaints together with investigation and action to bring the matter to the attention of a court may be carried out by a police department, a social agency or by probation officers of the court itself. There is a uniform assumption in most western countries, including the United States and the British Commonwealth, that only a court can exercise the authority of the state as super-parent, and make decisions limiting or terminating the authority of the natural guardians. In the Scandinavian countries, however, even this authority is vested in Child Welfare Councils.

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Depending on the administrative machinery available and according to the decision of the court, guardianship may be exercised by the court itself with custody and care delegated to others, it may be granted to a social agency, or it may be placed with individuals.

E. Broad Trends

In spite of the variety of patterns that have developed for the participation of police, court, and social agency in the processes of protecting children, certain broad trends in the development of these services are evident. Increasing emphasis has been placed on prevention as opposed to rescue, and casework methods have replaced punitive police methods. Protection for children has ceased to be an isolated function for an anti-cruelty society, and it has been integrated into broader programs of services for children and into general programs of law enforcement. Protective services have been increasingly made available in rural as well as in urban areas, and there has been increasing public responsibility, both financially and administratively.

F. Frontiers of Progress

These, then, are the trends observable in the nearly eighty years since the Mary Ellen case, and the creation of social machinery for the protection of children whose own parents fail them in this regard. Current frontiers of progress are primarily in two areas: refinements of skill in preventive casework with families who "do not want help", and the extension of child welfare services to areas which have not previously been served. Without examining either of these frontier areas in detail, illustrative examples can be cited from recent literature.

Recent changes in Pennsylvania are an example of the extension of
services to areas heretofore unserved. Although Pennsylvania has had numerous and effective private agencies serving the needs of children in many areas of the state, it was not until 1950 that the Pennsylvania Bureau of Children's Services was created, as one step in a move toward more comprehensive coverage of the entire state. When the bureau was created in 1950, there were many counties with no provision for protective services for children, and twelve counties that had no method of providing child care.

**Improved Casework Techniques**

For understandable reasons, protective agencies have often been slower to adapt modern casework techniques to their particular tasks than have the agencies serving those who were ready and able to ask for help. Marguerite Gane, Executive Secretary of the Children's Aid and Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children of Buffalo, New York, wrote in 1942:

> While some private agencies were cooperating in the development of the use of these newer casework techniques, most protective societies remained off in their own corners, feeling it easier to warn, threaten, punish, or rescue. Because of this, today we find ourselves handicapped. We have waked up to the fact that the troubles of our clients are different in degree, not in kind, from those whose problems can be met by family and child placing agencies, but that those agencies, since the depression, have become more and more selective in the persons to whom they offer casework help.

Miss Gane describes the American concept of casework as having outgrown the concept of the strong helping the weak, the rich sharing with the poor, the good rescuing the bad. In situations involving the protecting of children, however, these outdated concepts have had a particular tenacity.


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Service: A Case Illustrating Casework with Parents, has recognized the skepticism which limits the application of casework techniques in the giving of protective service:

Although there is increasing recognition that an agency giving protective service in behalf of children can and should use the casework method, in actual practice it is considered highly questionable whether a parent against whom a complaint must be lodged is capable of change. The skepticism is rooted so deeply that recently at an institute on casework in a protective setting one of the participants after listening to a discussion of work with the parents of the seriously neglected child, which resulted in very necessary changes, ventured, "It sounds good but I can't believe it."  

When minimum community standards for child care and protection are not being met by parents, it requires clarity of purpose, firmness, and much skill on the part of a caseworker if she is to assert the authority and concern of the community for the welfare of children in such a way that parents are helped to assume their own responsibility more adequately, not merely antagonized and further discouraged by their own inadequacies and their estrangement from the community as a whole. Claire Hancock, in discussing a case example from the Protective Services, Baltimore City Department of Public Welfare, concludes her discussion with the statement that the chief significance of her case material is in its "affirmation that an agency can carry authoritative responsibility for children without divesting parents of that responsibility", and she adds further: "To do so, however, is with full devotion to stay by the inherent principle of the casework method." 

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Barbara Smith, Supervisor of Protective Services in the same agency has written:

It is awfully hard for parents who are failing their children to take help and finally to become responsible fathers and mothers. It is also hard for social caseworkers to give this help effectively. It is hard, but to see a neglected child change before one's eyes into a loved child repays every bit of the effort and is worth all the skill that caseworkers can develop.\(^1\)

Alice Overton presented a paper before the National Conference of Social Work in June, 1953, reporting on an experimental project in preventive-protective service, sponsored by the New York City Youth Board and the Department of Welfare, New York City. The project was designed to serve only those families who refused help in meeting problems presented by their children, although the behavior of the children had become a matter of community concern. After two and one-half years of the project, Miss Overton was able to report:

In these two and a half years the families have taught us many things that should have definite value for the profession. We have learned to have more confidence in the capacity of individuals to change, no matter how severe the pathology. We have also learned to look diagnostically at the whole family. The family as a unit has cohesive power; the interaction between family members creates a mutually supportive quality that makes the unit stronger than the sum of the individual members. The need of each member to cling to his immediate natural group for support supplies a powerful motivating force with which to work toward strengthening the family. We did not see this at first because our observations were focused on individuals.\(^2\)

Further, Miss Overton's concluding paragraph:

The results we have had so far have given us confidence in the capacity of people for making adaptive changes. We are sure that, regardless of the extent of personality limitations of parents, it is important that family life be strengthened, that people stay out


of jail, do some productive work, and make the best social adaptation of which they are capable. We believe that we have learned—from the best source of all, the people themselves—what social work services these families want, need, and can use.¹

These quotations, then, serve to point out that here and there caseworkers are examining particularly the skills that are needed to keep families together in those situations where symptoms of family breakdown have become serious enough to create community concern for the children, and families are yet unwilling to seek help voluntarily. As further experimentation, and further training of workers and sharing of experiences, enables more and more caseworkers to meet the skill demands of preventive-protection work, more and more children can be protected within their own homes in ways that are beneficial to children, families, and communities.

Specialized Units

Although it has been mentioned above that the integration of protective services with other services in behalf of children has been one of the trends of progress within the past half century, this does not mean that separate protection units should necessarily be abolished. In rural areas, protective services are necessarily provided by the same workers who carry responsibility for other aspects of the child welfare program of the area. In urban areas, too, it is essential that there shall be an effective coordination between the protection program and the foster care program. In some instances a child is well served if his parents can be helped to voluntarily request temporary or permanent placement

¹Ibid., p. 309.
²Cf., p. 10.
for him; in rarer instances, when parents cannot be helped to act
responsibly toward their children, authority of the court is necessarily
called on to effect a rescue. In either case, the transition from the
pre-placement phase of the situation, to the actual carrying out of
separation,—removing a child from his parents to a foster care situation,—
is a crucial stage in the process of helping any child. If more than
one worker is involved, each must understand well the role of any other
workers, in order to help both child and family in the crucial transition.

There are some experts in the field of child protection who urge
the advantages, both in developing the requisite skill on the part of workers,
and in clarifying the service for parents, if the protection services of a
community are distinct and specialized. Such separation may be accomplished
by the organization of a protection unit within a more generalized agency,
or responsibility may be carried by a separate protection agency. In any
event, they are not advocating a return to the separation of the nineteenth
century when child protection officers thought of themselves as an adjunct
of the police department, and differed from the child placement workers of
the charitable agencies in philosophy as well as in practice. Those leaders
who advocate the advantages of separate protection units would see such
units functioning as part of a coordinated community program of services
for children. Common philosophy, common use of the casework method,
common concern for the total child in his total life experiences are an
essential ingredient in each step that may be involved, from the time a
complaint is first received until the time that services are no longer
needed.

G. Scope of This Study

Children's Aid Society of Vancouver, B. C., organized more than
fifty years ago, is but one of the hundreds of agencies in the United States and Canada which has been organized for the protection of children. Although each agency has a unique history, influenced by specific personalities and local community events, each, too, is a part of the broad movement of child protection services, influenced by the trends in national and world history, and by a developing philosophy of social welfare and an increasing knowledge of childhood needs and development. To understand the growth of one of these agencies,—the concerns that have motivated it, the controversies it has weathered, the problems it has faced, the achievements it has made and the issues yet to be faced in the months and years immediately ahead,—is to understand much in regard to the trends and growth of community responsibility for the welfare and protection of children. It is the scope of this study to present a history of the protective services provided by Children's Aid Society of Vancouver, as one example of changing emphases and patterns in programs of child protection on this continent. Although protection is only a part of the total agency program, it was the primary purpose for which the society was incorporated in 1901, and it has continued to be one of the basic functions of the agency. Other services of Children's Aid Society of Vancouver are given consideration only in terms of their relationship to the basic protection functions. Developments within the one agency are examined in relation to the broader history of protective services on the North American continent. Since developments in the one agency have been particularly influenced by developments elsewhere in Canada, attention is given to the early history of Canadian protective services, and to the unique characteristics of Canadian patterns in protection.
CHAPTER II

NORTH AMERICAN PATTERNS: CANADIAN VARIATIONS

Canadian legislation and machinery for the protection of children were delayed for somewhat more than a decade after the Mary Ellen case in New York had resulted in the organization of the first SPCC in the world. Canadian developments are an integral part of the North American history of protective services, and, in the early years, they reflect the same concern for the protection of society, the same association of child and animal protection, and the same simplification of the process of separating children from unfit parents that was prevalent elsewhere on the continent. Ontario legislation and patterns in providing protective services set precedents that were followed in other Canadian provinces; hence, Ontario developments have particular significance in the total story.

As has been indicated in the preceding chapter, certain common threads of philosophy have prevailed and common trends can be discerned, but there has been wide variety in the patterns of agency organization and participation that have been created to serve children who are inadequately protected by their natural guardians, the parents. In the Canadian provinces, with the exception of Quebec, however, there has been enough of similarity in the protection legislation and the machinery created to implement it, that it can be said that there is a "Canadian way" in child protection.

Specific activities for the protection of children in Canada were begun in Toronto in 1887.\(^1\) One can only speculate as to whether it is

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\(^1\)Only one reference to Canadian organizations for the protection of
accidents of history, or more basic causes, that have molded the particular patterns that Canadian communities have followed. J. J. Kelso, closely associated with the beginnings of protective services in Ontario, has thrown considerable light on the early history of the movement in his very personal account entitled: Protection of Children: Early History of Humane and Children's Aid Movement in Ontario. The close association of the movement with that for the protection of animals, the emphasis on the prevention of crime, a naive faith in the power of a little education and training or of even a brief moment of the inspiration of nature to guide children in the acceptable ways of society, are evident in Mr. Kelso's writing and are, perhaps, characteristic of his time. In contrast with the singleness of approach which characterized most of the SPCCs, however, one is impressed by the wide variety of approaches in which Mr. Kelso himself was involved, and by the comprehensive character of early Ontario laws for the protection of children. Because of the character of the legislation and institutions created for the protection of children in Canadian provinces, there was, from the beginning, an integration of services for children that was longer delayed in other places.


A. Toronto and Ontario Developments: 1887 - 1893

Mr. Kelso, for several years a reporter for the Toronto World, has described his interest in unfortunate children as having been initially aroused by two homeless and pathetic waifs who came into the World office in the fall of 1886 to beg by performing antics. Other information, however, would indicate that his concern for unfortunate children had developed even earlier, and had been responsible for his choice of newspaper work as a profession. The Deputy Minister of Welfare for Ontario, B. W. Heise, in a speech delivered before the Association of Children's Aid Societies in May, 1943, told something of Mr. Kelso's early background which he had gleaned from a variety of sources, and he quoted extensively from a letter which Mr. Kelso had written to him a few years before.

Mr. Kelso's parents were well-to-do in the North of Ireland until a destructive fire and business depression swept everything away. In 1874 they came to Toronto. During the severe winter months, J. J., then a little over 11 years of age, without letting his intentions be known, sought and found employment with a stationer. Mr. Kelso, in describing this period of his life says, "In a very special and peculiar way this burden (of social welfare progress) was laid upon me when quite a small boy. I went into business before eleven years of age and although I frequently returned to school after that time, . . . I became prematurely enlightened concerning the world and its need. Few would believe it, but when quite young, I had a great vision of better methods of dealing with neglected children through such progressive movements as the Juvenile Courts, aid for worthy mothers, supervised playgrounds, family home for every needy child instead of Orphanages and a number of other reforms that have since materialized. With the deliberate purpose of preparing myself for service I apprenticed myself to the printing business with a view to editorial work and finally became a reporter on various papers, The World, The Globe, etc., and of course my object in going into newspaper work was to . . ."

\[Ibid., p. 9.\]
educational propaganda for social reform.\textsuperscript{1}

The various activities in which Mr. Kelso participated, and which he has reported as part of the early history of the protection of children, included the organization of a Humane Society, organization of a Children's Fresh Air Fund and a Children's Christmas Treat, the regulation of newsboys and the prohibition of girls in street trades, prison reform conferences, agitation for the establishment of industrial schools and for the establishment of playgrounds, and finally, in 1892, the establishment of a children's aid society and a children's shelter.

**Organization of the Toronto Humane Society**

The first concrete step in the network of activities to protect children and to "prevent the development of criminal characters" was the organization of the Toronto Humane Society early in 1887. On February 19, 1887, Mr. Kelso read a paper before the Canadian Institute entitled: "The Necessity for a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty in Toronto". The objectives for such a society which he outlined in his speech included:

To stop cruelty to children; to rescue them from vicious influences and remedy their condition; [to stop] the beating of animals, overloading street cars, overloading wagons, working old horses, driving galled and disabled animals; to introduce drinking fountains, better laws, better methods of horseshoeing, humane literature into school and homes; to induce children to be humane; everybody to practice and teach kindness to animals and others.\textsuperscript{2}

A circular letter advising of a public meeting was sent out by Mr. Kelso, as secretary pro tem, two days after the speech, and the organizational

\textsuperscript{1}Heise, B. W., *History of Children's Aid Societies*, a speech delivered before the annual meeting of the Association of Children's Aid Societies, May 20, 1943.

\textsuperscript{2}Kelso, op. cit., p. 15.
meeting was held on February 21, 1887. Delegates from Toronto were sent to the annual meeting of the American Humane Association later that year, and the invitation of the Toronto delegation to hold the next annual meeting in Toronto was accepted.

**Legislative Enactment of 1888**

In March, 1888, the Ontario legislature passed "An Act for the Protection and Reformation of Neglected Children" which had been drafted by a socially-minded young lawyer, Mr. Beverly Jones, with the support and encouragement of fellow members of the Toronto Humane Society. It provided that neglected children under fourteen years of age could be committed to any society or institution willing to receive them, and also foreshadowed juvenile court legislation in its provision for the appointment of a special commission to hear complaints against youthful offenders apart from adult offenders. No machinery for seeking out children in need of such protection was created by the law, but it did legalize the curtailment of parental rights in its provisions for the committal of a neglectful child. It is interesting, too, that no provision for the punishment of neglectful parents was included in this first law.

**Children's Fresh Air Fund**

Later the same year the Children's Fresh Air Fund was organized, and the first excursion took place on June 27, 1888, for about 400 children. It was conceived of as a project to bring joy into the lives of unhappy children, but also as a means of preventing their development as criminals. Mr. Kelso writes:

... Little children in their helplessness and mute suffer-

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ing must constitute an irresistible appeal. They are the innocent victims of all social injustice. Crowded in wretched hovels in backstreets and lanes, they saw and learned but little that would make them better than their fathers. There were no playgrounds, and only a yearly Sunday School excursion to brighten their lives; and, studying these conditions the idea of the Fresh Air Fund occurred. Why not take them to the lakeside parks, the island, the country and village home, so that joy might be unconfined, and perhaps some life-long impressions gained from contact with nature, and association with good men and women who wished to be of service! Inspired with this thought a circular letter was sent to over 200 citizens on May 15, 1888.  

If, with our 1950 sophistication, faith in the lasting influence of a single or an annual excursion providing "contact with nature" and with "good men and women" seems naive and over-confident, it is still significant that Toronto citizens (and Mr. Kelso in particular) were approaching the problem of deprived and neglected children in so many different ways.

Toronto Meeting of the American Humane Association.

In October, 1888, before Toronto patterns for the protection of children and animals had become well crystallized, the American Humane Association held its annual meeting in the city. It seems probable that the deliberations of that body had considerable influence on a number of Toronto citizens, and the meetings may have had considerable effect on the community patterns that were eventually established. A newspaper column which appeared at that time is of interest, particularly in regard to the acclaim given the placing-out program of the Pennsylvania Children's Aid Society, when considered in the light of later developments in the Toronto program for protection of children. It was a children's aid society which was established four years later as the proper agency to act for the protection of Toronto's neglected children, and, in contrast with the

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1 Kelso, _op. cit._, p. 23.
practices prevalent in the SPCCs of the United States, the agency stressed the placing out of children in foster family homes.

No body of men are engaged in a nobler mission than the workers of the Humane Societies. The proceedings and deliberations of the delegates now sitting in convention at the Normal School building deserve our very earnest attention, as their work should command our heartiest cooperation. . . . That was an impressive declaration by one of the delegates, that not only could you be cruel to a child's body but you could be cruel to a child's mind and cruel to a child's future. They tell solemn truth when they declare that no child whose only crime is poverty should be sent to a criminal institution. And they ought to be heard.

It hardly seems possible that any system of State Discipline can be applied to children with the best results. For many, many years the child must carry the mark of State guardianship. The memory will go with him for years and will rise up to humiliate and perhaps to threaten in the very glow of life's best triumphs. Who forgets that a boy has been in the reformatory, and who in after years cares to inquire into the circumstances of a boy's youth and to excuse him when his record is whispered by envious rivals and malicious gossips. No reformatory could do for the homeless children the work of the Children's Aid Society of Pennsylvania. According to the reports made to the Humane Convention this society places in private families throughout the state the doorstep waifs, the orphans, the children forsaken and rejected who fall upon the support of the community. The gaol or the reformatory are not allowed to cast their shadows over their young lives. But they are reared well and honorably. They know the blessedness of family relations. The danger of surrender to inherited tendencies is not irritated and aggravated by constant contact with evil associations and vicious conditions. No discipline can be so potent as the family, and probably no better plan for the rescue of little ones abandoned to the world has ever been devised than that of the Children's Aid Society of Pennsylvania.

But there is a work to do among the children who are not abandoned to the mercy of strangers. Few of us know of the foul retreats of vice and want that exist even in Toronto. The hundreds who were taken out on the fresh air excursions during the summer months are now face to face with a long cold winter. . . . There is more occasion among us for our charity and our sympathy than most of us know, and we rush on in the keen pursuit of our various ambitions while want pleads at our elbows and children escape from hunger into crime . . . . We can well afford to give our earnest, anxious attention to the teachings
of the Humane Convention.¹

Prison Reform Conference and Prison Reform Commission

A further step was taken when a prison reform conference was held in Toronto in November, 1889, with Mr. Kelso as one of the active participants. Whatever other matters may have been discussed at the conference, Mr. Kelso reports only on the discussions of child neglect as a cause of criminal behavior, and the need for improved treatment of children as a basis for all true prison reform. An editorial in The Globe at about this time (cited, but not written by Mr. Kelso) indicates an acceptance of the need to act in behalf of children neglected by their parents, but also the fear that if the community does assume responsibility for such neglected children, parents will only be encouraged to further neglect. It concludes:

There are plenty of fathers in Toronto and elsewhere who are only too glad to get quit of the bother and expense incurred by the mere fact of their having children. Let this ever be kept in mind and in the midst of all this most commendable and angel-like caring for the little ones let law do its best to keep the selfish, unnatural fathers and mothers from going scot free and laughing at the idea of having got society in general or a number of kind hearted individuals in particular to shoulder their responsibilities. ... Society must, for its own protection, look after these unfortunate waifs and strays; but in any and every case let it do its best to make the fathers and mothers "toe the mark."²

A Prison Reform Commission was appointed by the Ontario Government in July, 1890, and the problem of preventing children from becoming criminals was recognized in its directive. Mr. Kelso writes:

All the moral forces of the community were now actively united in the demand for intelligent and progressive legislation

²Ibid., p. 50.
for the prevention of crime; and, in response to frequent solicitations, the Ontario Government decided on July 3, 1890, to appoint a Commission. The members were Mr. J. W. Langmuir, chairman; Hon. Charles Drury, Dr. A. H. Rosebrugh, Mr. A. F. Jury and Hon. T. W. Anglin, secretary. They were directed to investigate and report on the following subjects:

1. The causes of crime in the Province.
2. Any improved means which may be adopted in the Province for providing and conducting industrial schools.
3. Any improved means which may be adopted in the Province for rescuing destitute children from a criminal career.
4. Any improvement in the management of the County Jails of the Province, and with respect to the classification of prisoners therein.
5. The most fitting practical employment of prisoners therein.
6. The question of indeterminate sentences for offenders against Provincial laws.
7. Any improved way of dealing with tramps and habitual drunkards in the Province.

Mr. Kelso quotes from the report of the Commission which was presented to the government on April 8, 1891:

On most thoughtful consideration of this subject and careful analysis of the evidence taken in connection with that branch of the enquiry the Commissioners are led to the conclusion that the chief causes of crime in the community are: The want of proper parental control; the lack of good home training and the baneful influence of bad homes, largely due to the culpable neglect and indifference of parents, and the evil effects of drunkenness.

It was the almost universal opinion of all who gave testimony on this subject. And this is also the opinion of such writers as we have been able to consult, that the great majority of criminals begin their careers of vice and crime at an early age, and that where there are many juvenile offenders there will in time be many criminals, unless proper methods of prevention and reformation are employed.

Organization of the Toronto Children's Aid Society

When the report of the Prison Reform Commission was published, the time seemed opportune to Mr. Kelso for the organization of a

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1Ibid., pp. 66, 67.
children's aid society, "to wisely direct the legislation that was sure to follow", and, with the endorsement of members of the commission and other concerned citizens, a circular letter was sent out on June 23, 1891, calling a meeting for organization. The letter of invitation is of interest for the multiplicity of approaches it suggests, in contrast to an all-too-frequent faith in this or that panacea.

Toronto, June 23, 1891.

Dear Sir;

A public meeting at which your presence is requested will be held in the Y.M.C.A. Lecture Hall, on Friday evening, July 3rd, to discuss the advisability of organizing a Children's Aid Society and Fresh Air Fund combined. The need of a strong Society to deal with all matters affecting neglected or criminally disposed children has impressed itself upon many, and much good may be accomplished in this direction.

Among other matters that would receive attention from a Children's Aid Society, the following might be mentioned as objects that are desirable:

- The providing of adequate school accommodation for children of the very poor and the strict enforcement of school attendance.
- The establishment of kindergarten mission schools and the appointment of specially qualified women to gather in and train the neglected little ones under seven years of age.
- The establishment of a children's refuge, in which children falling into the hands of the police may be temporarily cared for.
- The separate trial of juvenile offenders and young girls.
- The appointment of a probation officer to ascertain and submit to the court the full particulars of each child brought up for trial, and to act in the capacity of the child's next friend.
- The establishment of industrial homes, so that every homeless or abandoned child may be trained for honest and useful citizenship.
- The thorough enforcement of the newsboy licensing regulations.
The prohibition of boys under sixteen years from living in the lower class of lodging and eating houses, thus saving them from association with doubtful characters.

The appointment of a Provincial inspector of juvenile institutions who would exercise a general supervision over all work of this character.

The formation of boys' clubs in connection with down-town churches and mission chapels, with a view to keeping boys off the streets at night.

The providing of playgrounds in the poorer districts.

The securing of a poor children's summer vacation home and picnic grounds along the lake shore.

J. J. Kelso
Convenor

About seventy-five persons responded to the circular, and the meeting proceeded with the business of organization. Mr. Kelso was elected as president. In October, 1891, the Society was incorporated.

The general objects of the society were set forth to be:

To care for and protect neglected children; to secure the enactment and enforcement of laws relating to neglected children or juvenile offenders; to provide free summer excursions and other means of recreation or leisure for poor children; and generally, to advocate the claims of neglected children upon the sympathy and support of the public.

With the Children's Aid Society launched, it was not long until arrangements were made for a shelter to provide temporary care of children. Mr. Kelso had been urging the need for a children's shelter since 1886, and the campaign had been taken up by the Humane Society after it was organized in 1887. Mr. Kelso does not indicate the exact date when the shelter was acquired, but it must have been some time in 1892. A report on rules for the shelter, prepared by a special committee and presented at a meeting of the Children's Aid Society on November 15, 1892, is of

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1 Kelso, op. cit., pp. 68-70. 2 Ibid., p. 74.
interest for the stress that is placed on the shelter care being used as a temporary measure only. An excerpt from the report states:

It was established as a temporary shelter for abused, neglected and deserted children, to be open to this class night and day without fee of any kind, but only affording shelter and protection until the children can be suitably disposed of either by compelling parents to do their duty toward their offspring or securing for homeless children, or those whom the courts decide should be removed from parental control, admittance to one of the public institutions provided for such cases.

It is therefore not desirable, in the opinion of your committee, that any child should be in the shelter longer than one month, except for very special reasons, and as a rule ten days should suffice to provide for a proper disposal of any child.¹

Second Prison Reform Conference

Mr. Kelso gives no indication as to whether few or many cases were brought to court under the act of 1883 "For the Protection and Reformation of Neglected Children", although he does indicate that the special commission, authorized by the act to hear complaints against juvenile offenders, came to naught. In any event a need for improved legislation had been recognized by the Humane Society, and securing "the enactment and enforcement of laws relating to neglected children or juvenile offenders" was one of the objects of the Children's Aid Society as set forth in the charter. In the month of November, 1891, after incorporation had been accomplished, a second Ontario Prison Reform Conference was called. A number of addresses stressed the need for better laws dealing with the care and protection of children, and arrangements were made to lay the matter before the Premier, Sir Oliver Mowatt. The request did not fall on deaf ears and, during the 1892 legislative session, the Honorable J. M. Gibson, was asked to take up the matter of protection

¹Ibid., p. 76.
legislation, and to see what he could do about producing a bill. Sir
John Gibson, in an address before the 25th Annual Meeting of the
Association of Children's Aid Societies, described his activities in
response to Sir Oliver's request.

I devoted a night or two to the subject, and then assured
Sir Oliver that I could not satisfactorily to myself, nor in
justice to the subject provide a bill for that session, but that
if he would allow the matter to stand over till the following
session I would bring in a bill. I had just given the matter
sufficient thought and study at that time to know that it was a
big subject and an important subject, and that the legislation
ought to be well considered and no measure introduced without
the fullest examination of material, and an examination and con-
sideration of all that would be involved in a proper measure.
I obtained his consent to allow the matter to stand, and during
the interval I did make this subject of Children's Aid and
children's welfare a subject of constant study. I read all I
could on the subject, and I thought a good deal about it to
familiarize myself with what was being done elsewhere. There
were very few countries in the world where anything was being
done, and in those countries even the legislation was crude.
Some features were good, but on the whole inadequate. In
England a year or two prior legislation had been introduced
providing for the prevention of cruelty to children, very good
legislation. That formed to a very great extent, with some
changes, the first few clauses of my bill. The rest was worked
out as best I could, some of it taken from legislation in other
parts of the world, some of it of an original nature, so as to
make the measure a consistent one from beginning to end. The
session of 1893 drew near and the legislation that we proposed
to bring down to the House was being submitted in Council. Some
of my colleagues were very much concerned and warned me that I
would get the Government into trouble, that I was introducing a
bill which provided for interference, that no legislation in the
world had ever warranted, providing measures which interfered
with the well known maxim that a man who has a family and a house
is the master of that home and can do as he pleases even to
cruelty to his children, and providing as this measure did for
taking children out of that home, interfering between parents and
their children, setting at naught that sacred relationship which
should and generally does exist between parents and their offspring,
I was warned that the probabilities were that I would get the
government into trouble in introducing such a measure. Those were
pretty strong expressions of opinion on the part of some of my
colleagues who had not made the matter a subject of special study
and in a sense did not know what they were talking about.

It was introduced. I made my speech saying that I knew what
I was doing, saying what had been done in some other parts of the
world in one way or another, and convinced the House that I was
thoroughly familiar with the proposed business of children's protection. . . . it turned out eventually that while there [were] some cautionary remarks delivered here and there as to what the effect of such a bill might be, no one would assume the responsibility of either moving an amendment or absolutely opposing the bill. . . . The bill was read a first time and it went through without any very material amendment.¹

The Ontario legislature met in February, 1893, and the legislation, "An Act for the Prevention of Cruelty to and Better Protection of Children"² was sanctioned by the Lieutenant-Governor in May of that year. Judge Helen Gregory MacGill has stated that the act was "based largely on Australian legislation"³ but does not explain further, and certainly the information quoted from the author of the bill indicates only that it was "some of it taken from legislation in other parts of the world".

Significant provisions of the act are: (1) penalties for ill-treating or neglecting children, and for causing children to beg or perform in public places; (2) provision that a child who is found to be neglected may be committed by a court to the charge of other relatives, persons, or a children's aid society, and the person or society shall have control as if he were the parent; (3) provision for the appointment of a Provincial Superintendent of Neglected Children to assist in the organization of children's aid societies for the protection of children from cruelty, and to perform other duties of inspection, keeping records, visiting boarding homes, etc.; (4) provision that the children's aid

¹Gibson, Sir John. Address given before the 25th Annual Meeting of the Association of Children's Aid Societies. Quoted by B. W. Heise in his address, History of Children's Aid Societies, presented by the May 20, 1943, Annual Meeting of the Association of Children's Aid Societies.


society, to the care of which any child may be committed under the provisions of the act, shall be the legal guardian of such child, and shall have the authority to place children in suitable family homes, under a written contract, or to bind out such children as apprentices; (5) provision that a parent may make complaint to a judge and the court may determine that it is for the benefit of the child to be returned to the control of his parent; and (6), a number of provisions in relation to juvenile offenders against provincial laws, relating to separate trials, forbidding the committal of children to gaols with adult prisoners, encouraging investigation by an officer of the children's aid society, and permitting the committal of children under the age of 14, convicted of crimes, to a children's aid society, industrial school or home for destitute or neglected children, in lieu of prison.

B. Extension of Protective Services in Province and Nation

Mr. Kelso was appointed as the first Superintendent of Neglected and Dependent Children under the act, and continued to serve in that capacity until 1934. He lost no time in encouraging the formation of children's aid societies throughout the province, and by the end of five years there were 33 Ontario children's aid societies in existence.

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1 The Ontario Department of Public Welfare was organized in 1930 and from then until his retirement in 1934, Mr. Kelso's office was "Superintendent of the Children's Aid Branch", within that department.

Annual reports of the superintendent do not indicate the number of children who were committed to the guardianship of children's aid societies during those early years, but the report on the number of children placed in foster homes each year is some indication of the increasing magnitude of the program in Ontario as societies were organized to serve increasing areas of the province. The number of children placed in foster homes each year from 1894 through 1898 was 79, 115, 194, 215, and 225. ¹

Manitoba was the first province to follow the precedents established in Ontario; legislation for the protection of children was enacted there in 1898, and the Winnipeg Children's Aid Society was incorporated. Mr. Kelso was in Manitoba and addressed public meetings and advised with community leaders when plans were being formulated.² In Winnipeg, as in Toronto, organization of a humane society had been accomplished prior to the establishment of a children's aid society, and there was apparently considerable difference of opinion as to whether or not a separate society for children was needed. A letter from the Most Reverend S. P. Matheson, which was read by the president of the Winnipeg Children's Aid Society at the fortieth anniversary celebration, indicates some of the partisanship which was shown at the organizational meeting of June 17, 1898.

I well recall the night the society branched out from the Humane Society of which I was president at the time. The cause of the children was championed by Dr. D. A. McIntyre, and that of other animals by Mr. Ross Sutherland, who, in his speech, kept dwelling on the loyalty to man, especially of dogs. Miss Forsyth who was an enthusiastic advocate of the latter species, had her fox terrier, her inseparable companion with her, and he was lying on my left as I occupied the Chair. After a good deal

¹Ibid., p. 22. ²Ibid., p. 20.
of animated discussion in which it was claimed that it would weaken the Humane Society to divide its forces into two sections, I called the members to a vote. I asked those in favor of a Branch in aid of children to go to my right, and those against it to "go to the dogs" on my left. A large majority, led by Dr. McIntyre, went to the right, and a small group led by Ross Sutherland and Miss Forsyth "went to the dogs", and so the Children's Aid was born. The Humane Society nearly "went to the dogs" for a time, but I am glad to know that both Societies are now flourishing.

Mr. Kelso extended his western trip to British Columbia, and addressed public meetings in Vancouver, Victoria and Nanaimo, and also addressed the Provincial Parliament of British Columbia on the subject of the protection of children and the need for children's aid societies, according to his annual report of 1898. Although Mr. Kelso was advised that there would not be time during that session of the legislature to take any action in regard to the protection of children, his visit doubtless had some influence in preparing the way and setting the patterns that were followed three years later in the westernmost province.

Functions of Canadian Children's Aid Societies

By 1919 all of the Canadian provinces, except Quebec, had passed legislation for the protection of children which authorized the establishment of children's aid societies to act for protection and rescue by investigating complaints, bringing cases of neglect to the attention of a magistrate, and accepting guardianship and responsibility for the

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2 Ontario Superintendent of Neglected and Dependent Children, op. cit. p. 20.
continued care and custody of children adjudged to be neglected.\(^1\)

Doubtless Mr. Kelso's energy as Ontario's Superintendent of Neglected and Dependent Children, and his missionary zeal in advocating the type of protection agencies and legislation already established in Ontario had much to do with the patterns followed in the other provinces.

Private and Public Responsibility for Protection Services

It was the intention when the Ontario legislation was enacted that enough district children's aid societies would eventually be established to carry out the protection responsibilities in all areas of the province, and this was actually accomplished in Ontario. In other provinces, however, with vast areas only sparsely populated, the establishment of district children's aid societies to service all areas of each province was an impossibility, and legislation eventually recognized this and provided that the Superintendent of Neglected Children (later the Superintendent of Child Welfare) should "exercise the powers of a children's aid society in the areas where there was no society." And so,

\(^1\) Statutes of Manitoba, 1898. Chap. 6, An Act for the Better Protection of Neglected and Dependent Children, pp. 8-11.
in the provinces of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia a pattern was established in which the responsibility for investigating complaints of neglect, and the acceptance of guardianship for children adjudged as neglected, was carried by the private children's aid societies in limited areas of the provinces, and by a department of the provincial government in the other areas.

In 1946, the Province of Saskatchewan carried the trend toward public responsibility even further, and legislation was enacted which provided that neglected children should be committed to the Minister of Social Welfare, who becomes the legal guardian of the person and the estate of the child, and that all children who were wards of the minister or a children's aid society when the act came into force should be wards of the minister. The act further gave the minister much regulatory authority over all children's aid societies, required each society to have a full-time paid superintendent whose appointment was subject to the approval of the minister, and made the appointment of social workers for the societies also subject to the approval of the minister.1 Although in no other province has the public responsibility for children been carried this far, in all of the provinces there has been an increasing amount of responsibility assumed by the departments of welfare in supervising and regulating children's aid societies, in establishing policies, and in providing for field services to serve rural as well as urban areas of the provinces. In the early years of the century, except in those cities where a children's aid society had been established, nearly all of the investigations of complaints and referring neglected

1Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1946. Chap. 91.
children to the courts for decisions were necessarily carried out by officers of the provincial police or the R.C.M.P., and a children's aid society or a superintendent of neglected children was not involved until after the court decision had been made.

Present Situation

Leaving Quebec out of consideration, the Canadian picture for 1953 can be summarized as one in which most areas of most provinces are served by a field service which takes responsibility for some preventive-protective work, for the investigation of complaints, and for bringing situations to the attention of a court when this is warranted. Children adjudged to be neglected may be made wards of a government official variously designated as the minister of welfare or the superintendent of child welfare. In most of the larger cities there are children's aid societies which assume responsibility for protective services including preventive work and rescue, and which may be given guardianship responsibility for children. Only in the province of Ontario are there children's aid societies to carry responsibility in rural areas as well as in the cities; there the participation of the government division of child welfare is on a regulatory, administrative, policy-making basis, rather than in direct responsibility for providing services.

C. Unique Characteristics of Canadian Patterns

Guardianship Responsibility: Public and Private Elements

The Canadian pattern for protection services differs from patterns established in the United States, primarily in the single factor that when children are rescued and separated from their natural guardians, guardianship responsibility is delegated to the government
official or the private children's aid society which is also charged with the investigating of complaints, whereas in the United States children are usually made wards of the court. Until recent years, writers describing the Canadian way in child protection have also stressed the combination of public and private elements, with public responsibility for the protection of children expressed in the judicial function of adjudicating complaints of neglect, public responsibility for the financial maintenance of children made wards of a children's aid society, and in the supervisory and regulatory functions of the superintendent of neglected children; but with private philanthropy and local control expressed in the private children's aid societies which carried the responsibility for the preventive casework, for investigation of complaints for bringing neglect situations to the attention of a court, and which accepted continuing guardianship responsibility for children committed to it by the courts. In Ontario this combination of public and private responsibility still continues, with every county served by a private children's aid society. In other Canadian provinces, however, with the recent improvements in the child welfare field service of the public agency increasing the effectiveness of services for children in rural areas, with no new children's aid societies being organized and with existing children's aid societies reducing their areas of operation as the public agency has become more competent to assume responsibility, and with Saskatchewan legislation transferring the guardianship responsibility for neglected children from the children's aid societies of the province to the Minister of Health and Welfare,—the trend toward increasing public responsibility for the protection of children is similar to that in the United States, and the dependence on the private
children's aid societies can no longer be designated as an essential part of the Canadian way in child protection,—only of the Ontario way.

The integration of child-caring functions with protective functions has been characteristic of the Canadian way from the beginning of its program, and is a natural development from the protection of children laws, with their provisions that the protection agency shall be granted guardianship of neglected children. Canadian children's aid societies were stressing the placing-out of children in free family homes from the beginning of their existence, while children rescued by protective agencies in the United States were, for the most part, being committed to institutional care. During recent years, Canadian children's aid societies and public child welfare agencies have depended primarily on supervised foster boarding care in private family homes for most of the children committed to their care, and this parallels developments in the United States.

Through the Eyes of Canadian Leaders

Even though, in Canada as elsewhere, practice has lagged far behind intent, there has been a justifiable pride in the child protection legislation of eight Canadian provinces, and a pride in the "Canadian way". Canadian leaders, writing for Canadian social work publications and for the League of Nations Child Welfare Committee in the 1930s, were particularly articulate in advocating the advantages and describing the characteristics of the "Canadian way" in child protection. They stressed expertness in guardianship as a feature of Canadian children's aid

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1 Cf. p. 8.
societies, and advocated the continuity of guardianship responsibility which accrued when children were made wards of a children's aid society rather than wards of a court. They emphasized that society's responsibility toward children in need of protection was best met when that responsibility rested, not only on paid servants of the state, but also on local and voluntary associations of private citizens banded together for the exercise of private philanthropy, as in the children's aid societies. Quotations from three of the Ontario leaders who played an important role in the development of Canadian agencies are of interest.

Nora Lea, Supervisor of the Protection Department, Toronto Children's Aid Society, writing in 1936 stressed the expertness in guardianship as follows:

A Children's Aid Society is basically a guardianship organization, and this is a point which should be born in mind in all considerations of its function. . . .

The guardianship of the Society is necessary for a child when its own natural guardianship is either non-existent as in the case of orphans, incapable as in the case of mentally defective or diseased parents, or undesirable because of cruelty and depravity on the part of the parent or guardian.

The Children's Aid Society is a specialist in guardianship being legally appointed to appraise and determine the suitability of a child's own natural guardians. Acting on the positive assumption that the child's own natural guardianship is the most desirable for him, the law wisely provides that parents cannot be deprived of this right except for good and sufficient reason, namely that they must be proven unfit guardians in a Court action. An information is laid and evidence produced to prove the child neglected under the terms of the Children's Protection Act. In the event of such conditions being proven, the child is found to be neglected, and the parent by order of the judge or magistrate is rendered not a parent in the eyes of the law and that function is committed to the Society, the Society assuming all the rights and responsibilities of a parent and liability for maintenance being placed by the state upon the municipality. . . . This function of guardianship exists wherever a Children's Aid Society exists.
but there are other functions which vary in different localities.  

Robert E. Mills, long the Executive Director of the Toronto Children's Aid Society, in a Canadian Welfare Council Publication of 1938, compares Canadian, Scandinavian and North American (United States) types of set up, and he, like Miss Lea, stresses the expertness in guardianship of the Canadian children's aid society, and also the separation of administrative and judicial functions and the combination of public and private elements provided under the Canadian way.

The assumption by a judicial body of purely administrative functions may be justified by necessity in the case of probation, but in the matter of child-placing and guardianship, it is open to serious questioning. The juvenile court, which is organized and skilled in judication, and possibly in probation, can hardly be expected to be equipped for, and skilled in, the techniques of child placing, and still less for the exercise of the long term responsibility, planning, supervision, and control that characterize effective guardianship.

Mr. Mills then describes the "North American type of set-up" wherein delinquent children are brought to the court by the police and neglected and dependent children by various social agencies, including societies for the prevention of cruelty to children. The court then commits the child to some organization.

The guardianship of the child becomes vested in the Court. When the particular organization to which the child has been sent has done its work and he seems to require something different, he is returned to the Court which hands him over to some other organization which seems to it to offer more nearly what is needed. . . . The Court may even itself engage in child placing.

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and the investigation and supervision of adoptions. . . . In such an arrangement the court combines exacting and specialized administrative responsibilities with its judicial one.  

Mr. Mills describes the Scandinavian type of local child welfare board and comments that the board appears to be plaintiff, judge and custodian in one.

The Canadian type of "set-up" has some of the characteristics of both of those already outlined. In each county or city there is a private organization called a Children's Aid Society which is under provincial government supervision and upon the board of which the municipal authorities are usually represented. The organization is the official body for child protection. By it "neglected" children are brought to the Juvenile Court and to it alone such children can be committed as wards by the Court. When such commitments are made, the court orders that the cost of maintenance be paid by the municipality. The Society specializes in guardianship. . . . In this system the judicial and administrative functions are carefully separated, and a combination of public and private elements is affected.

Dr. Charlotte Whitton, Executive Secretary of the Canadian Welfare Council from 1925 until 1942, has been particularly articulate in writing on child protection and in proclaiming the particular advantages offered by the Canadian way. An article published in 1941 in collaboration with Joseph Laycock states:

Canadian child protection legislation is peculiarly our own contribution to modern child welfare practice. The first Children's Protection Act was passed in Ontario in 1893. . . . Close to half a century's continuous use and amendment have welded it into a unique type of operative legislation adopted, adapted, and in force now by similar enactment in all the provinces but Quebec where a comparable enactment is projected. Canadians may well be proud of it for in scope and application it can stand the test of comparison in the British Empire and on the continent. Over a hundred thousand children have known its strength in the last score of years. It is the duty of Canadian citizens to assure its full usefulness within their own communities.
This Child Protection structure of ours rests firmly on two cornerstones:

1. Guardianship is the right and basic necessity of every child.

2. That assurance of this guardianship is a duty of the State, and that this responsibility is most likely to be widely and adequately assured if it rests not only upon a paid servant of the State, but is operative through the recognized, approved association of the most representative citizens of the community banded together in a Children's Aid or Child Protection Society working in continuous, vital partnership with the public authority, provincial and municipal.¹

Residence and Responsibility for Maintenance

The principle that full support of children made wards of children's aid societies is a government responsibility was eventually established in all of the provinces where protection legislation was in effect. It was established in Ontario prior to 1924, and it was considerably later before it became mandatory elsewhere that support orders against the municipalities of residence for the full cost of care should be included as part of every order committing a child to the guardianship of a children's aid society. In the earlier years maintenance orders were permissible, but not mandatory, and the amount of maintenance authorized was a limited amount which was far short of covering the full cost of care. In all of the provinces except Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland maintenance is a responsibility of the municipality of residence, as defined in the residence and responsibility act of the province, and only when parental residence is in unorganized territory is maintenance

a responsibility of the provincial government. This aspect of the child protection legislation is a survival from the precedents of Elizabethan poor laws which attempted to protect society from its paupers by fixing local responsibility and discouraging the movement of workers. It is a provision which has little validity in our own time, and one which makes it necessary for protection workers and judges, alike, to spend much time in determining and verifying municipal residence as a part of the committal process, whenever children are rescued from unfit parents.

Comparison with Trends in the United States

In Canada, then, as in the United States, the first groups of people to do something about their concern for children who were neglected and abused were those who were concerned, also, about mistreatment of dogs and horses, and the beginning of the child protection movement was closely tied in with the humane society movement. Even more than in the United States, advocates of protective societies for children urged the economy of their measures on the grounds of their value as preventives of crime, and two crime prevention conferences prepared the ground for enactment of the Ontario protection legislation of 1893. Although initiation of the movement for child protection was initially associated with that for the protection of animals, unlike many places in the United States, a separation of the two movements was accomplished almost from the beginning.

1In respect to the children of unmarried parents, there has been some modification of the practice of making maintenance a responsibility of the municipality of residence, in recent years. In both Saskatchewan and British Columbia the provincial government has begun to assume the responsibility for maintaining wards who are the children of unmarried mothers.
An integration of child placing services with protection services which was only slowly achieved in the United States existed from the beginning in Canadian children's aid societies, as the protection legislation of the Canadian provinces gave the societies responsibility and authority to investigate neglect, apprehend children and bring them before a court, and also to accept guardianship and continued responsibility for the care of the children. From the beginning, the Canadian children's aid societies advocated only temporary shelter care in an institution and planned that children should be placed-out in free family homes as soon as possible, whereas in the United States the protection agencies were the "feeders of institutions," and almost none of the children were placed out in family homes. Some of this difference can doubtless be explained by stating that Canadian children's aid societies inherited the traditions and ways of both the society for the prevention of cruelty to children and those of the children's aid society. The integration of functions theoretically created by the legislation and the multiple functions of the children's aid society was not always effective, however, for in the areas remote from the agencies, the investigations of neglect and abuse were necessarily carried out by police officers and the children's aid society began to function in the situation only after a magistrate had made a child its ward and someone had delivered the child on the doorstep of the agency.

In both countries the abandonment of free placing out and institutional care, in favor of supervised foster-family-boarding homes, has been only slowly achieved. In Canada, as in the United States, there has

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1 Cf. p. 8.
been a steady trend toward increasing public responsibility for the maintenance of children made wards of court or agency, for the financial support of preventive-protective work, and for supervision, regulation and policy-making on a provincial basis, and, also, toward public responsibility in carrying out the protective field work. There has been increasing emphasis on prevention as opposed to rescue, and increasing use of professional social workers to carry out the various responsibilities involved. As in the United States, there has been a gradual extension of protection and other child welfare services to rural as well as urban areas, although in each country there are states or provinces where the coverage is still far from complete.
CHAPTER III

VANCOUVER CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY: PROTECTIVE SERVICES

It was the beginning of the century when a handful of Vancouver citizens, motivated by the same concerns as their New York predecessors who had established the first SPCC in the world, and their fellow Canadians who had established children's aid societies in Ontario and Winnipeg, Manitoba, in the 1890s, decided that in Vancouver, too, there were problems of child neglect which called for action. They secured new legislation from the provincial legislature under which the Children's Aid Society of Vancouver, B.C. was incorporated in 1901, and then acted to obtain guardianship of a twelve-year-old girl who, according to the first annual report, had been "horribly abused by her mother when mad with drink". In the fifty-two years since this child was made the first ward of the Society, the agency has undertaken to assist many thousands of children. It has grown from the band of five concerned citizens who became the first directors and "officers" of the society, into a multiple-service, professional social agency with an annual budget of over $700,000, carrying responsibility on December 31, 1953, for services to 3360 children.

The services which the Vancouver CAS now provides include:

(1) investigation of complaints of neglect or abuse of children, (2)

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\(^1\) In accordance with the original petition for incorporation, the official name of the Society is "The Children's Aid Society of Vancouver, B.C." The shorter terms, Vancouver Children's Aid Society or Vancouver CAS are used hereafter in referring to it.
efforts to preserve and strengthen the child's own family and to prevent family break-down while the child remains in his own home, (3) acting as guardian for children committed to it by the court, (4) foster care for wards and non-wards who must receive care away from their own families for temporary or longer periods of time, (5) investigating adoptive homes and placing children for adoption, and (6) providing services to unmarried mothers.

Today there are three other agencies helping to carry responsibility for the welfare of British Columbia children who are in need of special services. The others are the Catholic Children's Aid Society, the Victoria Family and Children's Service, and the Child Welfare Division of the Provincial Department of Health and Welfare. The Vancouver CAS is the oldest of all these agencies and still carries responsibility for more children than either of the other private agencies. Hence, the history of the Society is a major part of the history of protection services in the westernmost Canadian province, as well as a revealing example of the general history of protection services for children on the North American continent.

A. Conception and Birth of the Society

Vancouver in 1901

When the Vancouver Children's Aid Society had its beginnings, Vancouver was a fast-growing frontier community of close to 30,000 population. It was only fifteen years earlier, in April, 1886, that the village of Granville, numbering about 2000 in population, became the City of Vancouver under a charter granted by the provincial legislature. With the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railroad lines linking Vancouver with the east in the following year, 1887,
newcomers had arrived in increasing numbers, and the population had redoubled within two years. By the time of the 1901 census, Vancouver had far outstripped both of the older communities of New Westminster and Victoria, and it was a thriving seaport and lumber center where those who had lived in the community for a decade could count themselves among the "old-timers".

Early Provisions for the Care of Children

Institutional facilities to care for children who were needy, orphaned or abandoned had been provided on Vancouver Island with the establishment of the British Columbia Protestant Orphan's Home, in Victoria, in 1873; but the City of Vancouver managed without any organized provision for the care of needy children until 1892. Up to that time, any homeless or orphaned children were cared for by one or another of the public-spirited women of the Women's Christian Temperance Union until relatives could be located or other plans made. In 1892, when the group was faced with the emergency of a family of seven children, orphaned and without any trace of relatives, they decided that this informal effort was not enough to meet the contingencies that were likely to occur. Accordingly, necessary arrangements were made and the Children's Home was formally opened on Thanksgiving Day, 1892, with seven children in care and Mrs. Penhale as matron. At

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1 A news item in the Vancouver World, January 20, 1892, reads: "The WCTU have a project in hand to organize an institution in the city for the maintenance of helpless and defenseless children. For two years they have felt the necessity of it, and are now about to take decisive action. . . . Many applications for home[s] for children have been received by the Union, and they think the time is now ripe to bring the matter before the public. They intend to call a mass meeting at an early date, and in the meantime will be pleased to receive any suggestions from the public."
the end of the following year, by which time the number of children in care had increased to nineteen, there was a need for larger quarters. In 1894 the organization was deeded property that had been the Alexandra Hospital for Women and Children, and became incorporated as the Alexandra Non-Sectarian Orphanage and Children's Home of Vancouver.

Elsewhere in the province, also, facilities to care for needy children were created. The Ridley Home at Prince Rupert was founded in 1895 and, five years later, the Providence Orphanage in New Westminster was founded by the Providence Sisters "for the purpose of caring for and educating homeless and dependent children from all parts of British Columbia".

Initiation of the Protection Program

In the course of their duties as board members for Alexandra Orphanage, some of the women became aware of instances of seriously neglected children, and felt concerned that there was no way by which such children could be removed from their own homes against the will of the neglectful parents. The Local Council of Women became concerned about the situation, and in 1901 the matter was brought to the attention of the Provincial Legislature by Captain Tatlow, M.L.A. from Vancouver, who presented the petition of the Local Council of Women. As a result, the Children's Protection Act of British Columbia was enacted, modelled on the act already in effect in the Province of Ontario. A few weeks later, due to the plight of a young girl in the Alexandra Orphanage, whose "cruel and unsuitable mother" was insisting upon having the child

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The institution is referred to hereafter as Alexandra Orphanage.
returned to her, the Children's Aid Society of Vancouver was hurriedly incorporated with power to act in relation to neglected children, and the return of the child to her mother was avoided. This child was the first ward of a children's aid society in British Columbia, the beginning of the procession of thousands of children for whom services have been provided, under the authorizations of the children's protection legislation of the province, by children's aid societies and by government agency. The Alexandra Orphanage agreed to act as a receiving home for the newly organized society for a few months until the agency could find quarters, and it also continued to care for those children whose parents voluntarily requested their admission to the Home.

Those whose vision and concern for children launched the organization of the Vancouver Children's Aid Society included many individuals. Prominent among them are members of the Local Council of Women, members of the Board of Directors of Alexandra Orphanage, Captain Tatlow, M.L.A. from Vancouver and A. E. McPhillips, M.L.A. from Victoria, who jointly introduced the legislation in the Provincial Parliament, and the four men who petitioned for incorporation of the Society and became its first directors and officers together with Captain Tatlow. These were Rev. E. E. McLaren, D. D., and Messrs. E. B. Morgan, D. Donaldson and C. J. South.

B. Early Vision and Growth: 1901 - 1913

The early years of the Society were years of enthusiasm and energetic growth, of vision and imagination, but also years of struggle
and often of discouragement. Directors of the Society early discovered that in their zeal they had undertaken a much larger responsibility than they had originally anticipated, and it is indeed a credit to those early pioneers that they were able to continue their efforts in spite of the magnitude of the task.

More than to any other one person, credit is due C. J. South, J. P., who served as secretary of the Society from the time of its organization until shortly before his death in 1922. A former board member who knew Mr. South over a period of many years has told of his great warmth and sympathy for children needing affection, and of his devotion to the work of the Society. He worked as a magistrate from ten o'clock to three o'clock each day, at least during many of these years, but he was able to devote the rest of his time to the cause of neglected children. It was he who responded to complaints of neglect and attempted to warn and persuade parents to care for their children more adequately; it was he who brought children to the shelter of the Society's receiving home if removal from their own homes seemed necessary; it was he who carried responsibility for the administrative work of the organization. Others who shared responsibility with Mr. South were the directors of the Society and, after the first few months, the matrons and other staff of

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1The story of the Vancouver GAS was ably prepared by Mrs. Anne Margaret Angus for the fiftieth anniversary celebration which was held in 1951. (Children's Aid Society of Vancouver, B.C., 1901 - 1951). The present study depends much on Mrs. Angus' account of the growth of the agency, but it is focused on the protection aspects of the program, and makes an examination of the relationship of events in the one agency to general trends and developments in the protection of children elsewhere on the continent which was not attempted in Mrs. Angus' account.
the Children's Home, and the physicians who provided medical care for
the children.

It was the volume of work which first amazed members of the
Society, and which intensified other problems with which they had to
deal. The first annual meeting was told:

Your directors, at the time of the incorporation of the
Society expected to be called upon to deal with some two or
three cases during the year, but they regret to say that their
work has by force of the evil conditions existing in the City
been more extensive than could be imagined by any person or
persons — 29 children having been made over by law to their
care, control and protection.¹

The burden did not lessen in succeeding years, as each year
additional children were made wards of the society, adding cumulatively
to the responsibility which had devolved upon the society in years
preceding. In the year 1913, 79 children were committed to the society,
bringing the total number of children who had been committed since
incorporation to 475. While many of those who had been committed
during the earlier years were no longer a responsibility—15 were dead,
a few had run away, some were discharged at 21 years of age, some
were married—there were still 149 children in the Home in addition
to 130 children who had been "adopted into good homes under the
Society's agreement".²

Responsibility without Means

The directors of the Society early discovered that they were
in the dilemma of having authority and responsibility to act in behalf

¹ Children's Aid Society of Vancouver, Annual Report, 1902-03; pp. 9, 10.
² Children's Aid Society of Vancouver, Annual Report, 1913; p. 6.
of neglected children of the province, without being provided with the means to carry out that responsibility. Children from any part of the province could be, and were, committed to the care of the Society, and no one was under any statutory obligation to pay for their maintenance. The state, in accordance with the doctrine of *parens patriae*, authorized that parents should be deprived of guardianship and control of their children when those children were adjudged neglected, but government did not complete the fulfillment of the super-parent responsibility by providing means for the exercise of other guardianship, except in the very limited way of chartering a children's aid society and providing a very nominal financial grant. Directors of the Society, in petitioning and accepting their charter from the provincial government, had agreed to act in behalf of the state by accepting guardianship of neglected children committed to it by the courts, and they had no control over the amount of responsibility thus delegated to them. The courts of the province, functioning for the state in its role as super-parent, placed an unlimited amount of responsibility upon the devoted group of citizens who had voluntarily undertaken the task of operating the Vancouver CAS. However dismayed they may have felt when they discovered the magnitude of the task upon which they were embarked, they were deeply concerned for the children involved, and, as they saw no other way of having the responsibility toward children met, they continued to struggle with the problem.

Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper, president of the Society from 1904 until 1909, was deeply concerned about the dilemma of the Society in allowing itself to be saddled with a greater responsibility for children
than it could actually carry out, and recognized that continuing under those circumstances might actually prove detrimental to the very children whom they sought to help. In his address before the annual meeting of 1904 he stated:

My idea is that the time has come when the matter should be put straight to the Government. If assistance is not granted to the extent of at least $1000, then the Society should give up the work and place the responsibility on the shoulders of the Government, and let it work out the solution. If on the other hand, we go on and take more children, what about the future? What reason have we to believe that we can discharge the responsibility which will devolve year after year? My observations may not be sound, and I would be delighted if someone has a solution to present and relieve me of the fear and apprehension I entertain. In continuing under these circumstances we perpetrate a fraud, and defeat the splendid objects with which we started at the outset.¹

Once again in 1905, President Tupper forcefully stated the dilemma of the Society and the obligation of the state, in a statement which was read in his absence:

I desire now to call attention to the obligation of the State as "Parens Patriae". In England and in the Province under the Chancery Jurisdiction there is and always has been authority in our Courts to interfere in these cases—in the one case the King and in the other the province is the Guardian of destitute children; in practice, however, resort to the Courts became and is useless for want of means at the disposal of the Court.

In British Columbia the duty of the State has been clearly recognized. Our Legislature in 1901 enacted a law whereby Children's Aid Societies under the direction of the Court may become the guardians of the waifs. Nevertheless, while the responsibility and power of the Crown have been recognized, the history of the Children's Aid Society of Vancouver is evidence that while we have still the machinery to perform a noble duty, we are largely left (as the Courts were) without the means to operate it.

What number of children have been taken by this one Society from the haunts of vice and have been given the advantages of clean and Godly homes? No less than 94.

¹Children's Aid Society of Vancouver, Annual Report, 1904; p. 12.
What amount of money has the State contributed for their care and salvation? $750.00.

By constant begging throughout the Province and by aid of Churches struggling with other debts. . . we have received $3981.35 beyond the miserable pittance from the local Legislature. Through the untiring efforts of Mrs. Atkins, $6557.96 have been collected for the building site and the erection of the Home.

What of the future? Can we expect without substantial aid from the State Parent to properly care for the children of the State?

The influx of population will, I think, but add to these burdens on the whole.

If this work is dropped and the children abandoned to their fate, the Province will pay in the end a thousand-fold more to track down and punish the criminals. Many will become criminals and society will suffer and thousands of souls will be ruined.

Annual reports for the early years indicate that there was no lack of conviction on the part of the directors of the Society, nor on the part of the members and friends who participated in the annual meetings, that, if the state removes children from parents, the responsibility of supporting them is the responsibility of all the citizens—of the government. Like Mr. Kelso and his Ontario associates, they often advocated the protection of society which was to be accomplished by preventing the development of criminal characters as a major justification for a children's aid society. Arguments for increased financial assistance often stressed the responsibility of government in dealing with criminal matters and hence in providing financial assistance for the children's aid society program to prevent crime.

In spite of the convictions of members and friends of the

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1Children's Aid Society of Vancouver, Annual Report, 1905; pp. 5-7.
Vancouver CAS in regard to government responsibility for the support of children made wards, government financial participation was only gradually increased, and it was not until after the Child Welfare Survey of 1926-27 that the Society succeeded in having the full maintenance expense of wards provided from government sources. In addition to gradual increases in grants from the City of Vancouver and from the provincial government, one further step was recorded in the 1909 report when "the government willingly assented to our proposals for an amended Act to compel outside districts to at least contribute a reasonable amount towards the maintenance of children received therefrom." ¹ The amendment, passed at the 1910 session of the legislature, made it obligatory that a magistrate committing a child to the care of the Society should award a sum of not less than $1.50 per week for its support; this sum to be paid by the city or municipality concerned, or by the province if the child came from unorganized territory. ²

Care of Children

In spite of the magnitude of the task and the limited financial assistance from government sources, the society did not carry out the suggestion that had been made by Sir Charles in 1904, and it managed, not only to care for the children who were committed to its care, but to acquire property on Wall Street—then outside the city limits of Vancouver—and to erect a large children's home on that property, to which all children were moved in August, 1907, who had

¹Children's Aid Society of Vancouver, Annual Report, 1909; p.7.
not been placed-out in private family homes. The number of children needing care continued to press on the resources available, however, and at the annual meeting for 1907, held about six months after the Wall Street home had been completed, the Building Committee reported:

"At the time of writing this report the Home is overcrowded and if the work is to increase at the rate it has done in the past three years then it is absolutely necessary to build the East wing without delay".¹

It was the intention of the Society from the beginning that foster homes should be found for the children in "well-approved families" and the institution was regarded as a temporary plan of preparing children for such placement, in accordance with the children's aid society tradition of the United States and Canada. Even with continuous efforts in this direction, and numbers of children placed for "adoption" each year, the number of children for whom no home was yet available continued to increase each year. At no time during this period did the number of children placed in private family homes equal the number of children committed to the care and guardianship of the Society. Still the Society managed to meet its mounting expenditures after a fashion. With tag days when children from the Home sang patriotic songs on street corners, contributions from churches and other citizen groups of money and gifts in kind, energetic canvassing and various benefit programs, hours of time contributed by lady members in sewing and mending clothing and furnishings, and with the labour of the children themselves in maintaining the Home and raising its food, the early years of the Society were passed in a creditable fashion. One member of the board of directors

¹Children's Aid Society of Vancouver, Annual Report, 1907; p. 24.
deserves particular mention in this connection: The energy and re­sourcefulness of Mrs. T. E. Atkins, who served on the board for several years and who was chairman of the Ways and Means Committee during part of this time, was responsible for much of the success of the Society in raising funds needed for building as well as funds for current expenses.

Prevention as an Objective

Prevention, as well as rescue, was recognized as one of the objectives of the Society from the beginning, although from the vantage point of 1953, and our present day understanding of the causes of human behavior, we can wonder how far it was possible to implement this. In 1903, Mrs. Atkins wrote in a letter for the press which was published as a part of the Annual Report:

The Children's Aid Society stands first and last for the rights of children. It is authorized to investigate all cases of neglect, destitution and cruelty, to ameliorate and better their home surroundings when practicable, and when hopeless to remove the children from an environment of uncleanness and vice: only when every effort in the home fails is the matter brought to the courts for adjudication. When a child has been awarded to the Society it is sent to the Home at 1058 Pender Street to be cleansed, nurtured and prepared to enter a good foster home whenever one is available.¹

In the same Annual Report we read the words of Rev. R. G. MacBeth, president of the Society:

Where children are cruelly treated in their own homes or exposed there to vicious surroundings, the agents of the Society undertake to admonish those who are responsible for this state of things, and to the great gain of the children, lasting reformation in the character of the home has often

¹ Children's Aid Society of Vancouver, Annual Report, 1903; p. 17.
taken place as a result of these warnings.\(^1\)

And at the annual meeting of 1901, President Sir Charles Tupper cited as an example of the preventive work of the Society:

> In one case where our Secretary was called in \(\ldots\) after two or three visits the choice was given—"give up drink and keep your children, or keep drinking and lose your children". The natural affection prevailed, and for months this once unhappy house has been a clean, tidy and happy home.\(^2\)

Furthermore, not only was warning and concern sufficient in some instances to make the rescue of a child unnecessary, but there were also numerous instances in which children who had been committed to the Society were eventually returned to their parents after it was believed that "reformation of the evil home conditions" had taken place. The annual report for 1909 indicates that 24 children who had been committed to the guardianship of the Society had been "returned to parents on agreement".\(^3\) By the end of 1913 the number returned to parents had been increased to 74.\(^4\)

**Amalgamation with Alexandra Orphanage Rejected**

The possibility of an amalgamation of the Vancouver CAS and Alexandra Orphanage had been suggested in 1904, and was recurrently suggested as long as the Alexandra agency continued to function as a children's institution. The arguments against the amalgamation, as

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recorded in the second and third annual reports of the Society, are
significant in revealing attitudes toward the children being served
by the two agencies. A letter which Mrs. Atkins had written for
the press is published in the annual report of 1903 and reads in part:

From the very nature of the greater number of cases it
is obvious that these particular children cannot be put in
regular orphanages with other children. This is a point which
cannot be too strongly emphasized, and it must be clearly
understood that the Act requires that these children be dealt
with individually, not in numbers as in regular orphanages.
This is not in opposition to or in disparagement of any other
institution or orphanage or the management of the same. They
are doing a noble work in another field and richly deserve
all the practical support and sympathy they receive; but the
poor little unfortunates who are awarded to the Children's
Aid Society by the Courts, are in too many instances removed
from homes of unspeakable wretchedness and vice, with neglected
diseased bodies and perverted minds. The thought and language
must be purified as well as the poor emaciated, bruised and
vermin covered bodies.¹

A year later, the amalgamation of the two child-caring insti-
tutions was again a paramount issue, and at the annual meeting in the
spring of 1905 there was free discussion of the question. The Society's
president, Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper, spoke thus:

The amalgamation of the Children's Aid Society and the
Alexandra Orphanage has been suggested, and leaving out all
other questions, if there is a proper appreciation of the
objects of this society and the other, which is equally good
in its work, it will be seen that a wide gulf exists between
them. I do not think that the different wards of either
organization would benefit by such an amalgamation or that
it would tend to the public welfare so much as if they kept
separate and distinct paths. The Orphanage does not contemplate
dealing with the same class as that dealt with by the C.A.S. and
there would be insuperable difficulties to successful cooperation,
and it would not occur without destroying the objects of each
institution.²

¹Children's Aid Society of Vancouver, Annual Report, 1903; p. 17.
²Children's Aid Society of Vancouver, Annual Report, 1904; p. 9.
Following this a former pastor of a city church is quoted indirectly as having stated that amalgamation with the Alexandra Orphanage was impossible as the children there "should not and cannot be associated with the children of criminals." ¹

Later in the evening a prominent lawyer added his views:

It has been suggested by different parties that the work done by the Society could be accomplished through joining forces with the Alexandra Orphanage. I do not agree with this. The objects of the Orphanage and the C.A.S. to my mind are entirely distinct. The Orphanage should be and I have no doubt is an institution for caring for children of respectable parents who unfortunately are not able to support them, or the home, perhaps through no fault of their own, left their children without proper means of support. The object of the Children's Aid Society is to take children who are neglected and ill treated or who are surrounded by immoral associations, away from such association, and, I consider, that such children in the first instance should not be associated with those who are being taken care of in the Orphanage. ²

Throughout this early period, and until some time in the 1920s, children in the Home always attended the annual meetings, where they listened to the discussion of their "criminal backgrounds" and the dreadful anxiety as to where the next dollars were coming from.

Participants and Contributors

The achievements of the Society during this period are a credit to the deep concern and tireless efforts of board and committee members, the Secretary of the Society, and the matrons and other staff members in the Home. According to Mrs. Angus:

C. J. South, J. P., who more than any one person has the honour of being the founder of the Society, did its administrative and much of its practical work for twenty-one years. For at least three years at the beginning he received no salary, and in 1917 he was receiving $100 per month, $10 of which he paid his stenographer. . . The women of the "Ladies Committee" and later of the "Home Committee" did superhuman things in the matter of

¹Ibid., p. 14. ²Ibid., p. 15.
dressmaking, mending, household inspection and management, fund-raising, and the provision of treats and outings for the children. The matron of the Home who was best-liked in the early days was a Miss Scott, but it was Mrs. Lockhart who was the much respected and loved incumbent for many years.¹

The participation of the children themselves was an important part of the economy of the Society, not only in their public appearances as part of the fund raising efforts, but also as part of the working force of the Home. According to Mrs. Angus:

The children of the institution must have led busy lives. The older boys and girls formed a necessary part of the working force of the Home; paid staff was limited in number, and at least in the outdoor activities of the Home, such as vegetable growing and care of poultry, all the work was done by the older children supervised by the janitor.²

and further:

In one year (1911), we are told, nine infants in the nursery were cared for by the older girls under the direction of the nurse.³

**Limitations**

For all the devotion and zeal with which secretary, board members and staff of the children's Home carried out their duties, the "expertness in guardianship" which later Canadian writers have described as the unique role of Canadian children's aid societies, and the continuity of responsibility which has been described as one of the advantages of the Canadian pattern in child protection⁴, were scarcely achieved during these early years. In the first place, except for complaints arising in or near Vancouver, investigations of neglect

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and committal of children to the guardianship of the Children's Aid Society were carried out with no participation on the part of the Society until after the committal was completed. Furthermore, foster homes in those early days were all free; no board was paid except in the case of the very young infants who were boarded out before the days when the institution was prepared to care for them itself. Many of the homes were at a great distance from Vancouver, and investigation of the applications to "receive" a child must have depended almost entirely on letters of reference. Every child placed in a foster home was considered a candidate for "adoption", and he was considered adopted if the family kept him and did not return him to the institution as unsatisfactory. Annual reports indicate that the adoption committee, consisting of a number of directors together with the secretary, Mr. South, did their utmost, in those early years, to find suitable homes for the children where they might become permanent members of a family, and where they would not be exploited. While numbers were small enough, supervision of a sort was certainly exercised. Local committees were formed in 1905 in Kamloops, Cranbrook, Fernie, Rossland and other centers to "visit wards in foster homes and advise us of their conditions".\(^1\) Mr. South could not travel as much as he would like to have done to visit the children, for money was lacking. In 1907 it was noted: "The Secretary is in almost continual communication with all the children by letter and as often as possible visits them".\(^2\)

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\(^1\) Angus, op. cit., p. 7.

\(^2\) Ibid., p. 10.
C. Dark Days: 1914-1926

Mounting Burden of Child Care

The most difficult and discouraging years in the existence of the Vancouver CAS were those from 1914 to 1926. If those who steered its destiny in the earlier years had at times found the task overwhelming, and even raised questions as to whether they could properly continue to carry the responsibility without more support from the government, how much more discouraging their successors must have found the responsibilities of the war years and the early 1920s. Children were still committed to the guardianship of the Society from all parts of the province, and, although maintenance orders were a mandatory part of every committal after 1909, these were for only a fraction of the actual cost of care even after the 1923 amendments to the Infants Act had increased the weekly maintenance from $1.50 to $3.00 per child.

The Society still faced the dilemma of having mandatory responsibility placed upon it by the courts of the province, while largely dependent on the voluntary contributions of Vancouver citizens. The cumulative effect of the many new committals each year adding to the total burden carried by the Society was accelerated during the war years, as the ranks of children needing help were swelled by the children of men at the front, and, eventually, of men who never came home, or who returned home to find that their wives had deserted. Money was harder than ever to collect during these years, and indigent local agencies found that they had rivals in the strong claims of wartime charities and other patriotic appeals for voluntary giving. Mrs. Angus suggests
that in all probability the directors themselves, since they were prominent citizens, were much in demand to help in forwarding causes more closely linked with the war. Soaring prices for food and clothing added also to the cost of maintaining the institution. Furthermore, in the words of Mrs. Angus:

Mr. South, the indefatiguable Secretary, not young when he founded the agency, was sixty-four in 1911*. It is fair to assume that, from this time till he left his post at seventy-three, he was not able to accomplish as much as he once could, and that his mind was less receptive to changing and developing ideas in child welfare.2

The reports for these years indicate continual concern over the overcrowding of the Home, and continual worry over finances. It is probably a reflection of the struggle that merely providing enough food involved that, for several years, the annual reports included a "Chicken Report", a "Cow Report", and a "Garden Report", and omitted the report of the Adoption Committee.

The records of these years have less to say than those of the preceding period about the grim conditions from which the children were rescued, or about the causes of neglect. Some mention is made of efforts to prevent the breaking up of homes, but the preoccupation of the Society was with the care of the children who continued in the institution, and it is quite understandable if this problem pushed other matters into the background.

In 1917 the Home Committee reported:

As the Committee has not been at all satisfied with the internal management of the institution, it advised a thorough investigation; which investigation was extended by vote of the

1 Ibid., p. 17.
2 Loc. cit.
Directors to all branches of the work. This enquiry is now being conducted by an able committee with Judge McGill as chairman.  

This committee which reported annually for several years on conditions in the Home included, in addition to the juvenile court judge who was its chairman: Drs. E. D. Carder and A. L. Proctor, Miss Helena Gutteridge, and Chief of Police McRae. Judge McGill, writing of the investigations in "Vancouver Social Services, 1884-1912" has stated:

Combined with serious overcrowding, certain persistent complaints and disagreements as to methods, ended in the appointment, by the Board itself, of a Commission to investigate and report to the Board. The most important feature of this report was the recommendation that the Society give its serious attention to the modern method of supervised foster homes rather than institutions.  

New Ideas in Child Welfare

If these were grim and discouraging years for staff and directors, and if the quality of care available to the children was less than the community could wish for, these were also years in which new ideas in regard to child welfare were beginning to take root, the foregoing quotation from Judge McGill providing just one of many examples. Perhaps out of the very magnitude of the problems which the Society was facing came much of the impetus for change.

The ferment of new ideas in regard to community responsibility for the welfare of children is recorded as early as 1912, when Mr. G. J. Denness, recently returned from a visit to Australia and other countries,

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1 Quoted by Angus, op. cit. p. 18.

2 McGill, Helen Gregory, Vancouver Social Services, 1884-1912. Quoted by Angus, op. cit., p. 22.
told the annual meeting that "the idea of the segregation of children in Homes is in many instances being abandoned". Two years later the Reverend Mr. Pidgeon told the Society:

A great eastern churchman told me this: "Suppose there had been an accident and breadwinners in certain districts are all killed. We take the children who are left fatherless and we divide them in two, and put half in our best institutions and the other half in our ordinary homes. We find that the children in the poorest homes have a better chance than the children in the best institution. The reason is that each child needs personal love—the feeling that he is indispensable."

In 1915, another new idea was introduced by the Reverend Ernest Thomas, who described the mothers allowance idea as developed in the city of Denver.

Instead of sending the mother to work, when she has temporary bad luck, and letting the community look after her children, they think it would be better to keep her home together and pay the money there.

Fireproof Building Campaign

Although the ferment of new ideas was at work here and there, for most of the community the problem was one of carrying on in the old ways, albeit more safely, more adequately, and more effectively. In addition to concern over the continual overcrowding, there was recognition of the fire hazard involved in housing so many children in a wooden structure. According to Mrs. Angus:

. . . The campaign for a "fire proof building" became a fetish. The Fireproof Building Committee was constantly mentioned, and was busy over plans for the first unit of a proposed five-dormitory cottage system. The first cottage was built with the bequest of the late George Magee, and as soon as it was opened on May 7, 1923, all the babies and very small children were moved into it.

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1 Angus, op. cit., p. 21.  2 Loc. cit.
3 Loc. cit.  4 Loc. cit.
Looking Ahead

As the ferment of new ideas gained in impetus, as the major investment in fireproof buildings came closer to reality with one unit already constructed, and as certain irregularities in the conduct of the affairs of the Society led to "scandal" that received wide publicity and made it necessary for the president and a delegation from among the directors to appear before the Public Accounts Committee and on the floor of the legislature,—the necessity for a thorough stock-taking and charting of directions became evident. By the time of the legislative investigation into the affairs of the Society, plans had already been formulated for a child welfare survey to be conducted in the province by specialists from the Canadian Council on Child Welfare.

Child Welfare Survey

The British Columbia Child Welfare Survey of 1926-27 marked the end of an era in the history of the Vancouver CAS and the beginning of new developments in the provision of social services for children and families in the province. The survey has been dealt with extensively in other places. For the purposes of this study it is sufficient to note that the dilemma of the Society with its responsibility to more children than it could adequately provide for, and the clash of ideas as to proper objectives and methods to be followed in the future conduct of the agency were factors which made community leaders recognize that a survey was needed which was beyond the scope and competence of the

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laymen of the community. Out of the activities of a special committee of the Rotary Club appointed in 1925 to make recommendations as to suitable projects for financial contributions from the club's fund for community service, the concern of the directors of the Vancouver CAS and of other child-bearing agencies, and, finally, out of consultation with officials of the Canadian Council on Child Welfare came the decision that a comprehensive survey should be made of the whole field of child care and protection in the province of British Columbia. The Council on Child Welfare was asked to take charge of the study, and five service clubs of Vancouver generously agreed to meet the entire cost involved. Representatives of the service clubs also assumed responsibility for creating the local survey committee, while the Canadian Council on Child Welfare accepted responsibility for the creation of a field staff to conduct the survey. The Child Welfare Survey Committee included 16 Victoria members and 26 Vancouver members representing the various service clubs, social service agencies and other interested citizen groups. C. J. McNeely, a member of the special Rotary Club committee of 1925, served as chairman of the survey committee. The general organization of the survey was in charge of the Executive Secretary of the Canadian Council on Child Welfare, Miss Charlotte Whitton of Ottawa; Robert E. Mills, Director of the Children's Aid Society of Toronto was Director of the survey staff; the three other staff members, also from Toronto, included Miss Leila O'Gorman as an adviser on Catholic agencies, Miss Vera Moberley as an adviser on infant care, and Miss Margaret Nairn as Field Secretary. The survey report was released to the chairman on June 1, 1927.  

\[1\] Ibid., pp. 5-10.
A major recommendation of the survey report was the development of resources for general constructive family casework and the institution of social field work as a part of the program of all child caring agencies, and particularly of the children's aid societies. Experiences of agencies in Winnipeg and Toronto were cited as evidence of both the economy and the desirability of providing field service to give careful consideration to all applications for the admission of children to foster care.

In any case, the present almost total lack of field service for the protection and guardianship of neglected children cannot continue to exist without being recognized as a grave public scandal.1

With particular reference to the Vancouver Children's Aid Society, the recommendations were for the appointment of a thoroughly capable administrative officer, the creation of a child protection field service, the organization of social investigation and supervision in connection with free home placements, the establishment of a boarding home system and the development of baby care. The report states further:

A children's aid society has three main functions; child protection, child caring, and guardianship of public wards. The Children's Aid Society of Vancouver has limited its activities very largely to conducting a large shelter institution and has neglected its primary function of protecting children in their own homes. The Society has about 180 children in its building, which is badly overcrowded, and there are many more in free family homes.

The Survey has expressed the opinion that, as constructive field work is developed, the number of children in the shelter will be greatly reduced and instead of erecting a new building at a cost of $200,000.00 as had been proposed, it may be possible to eventually close the main building and manage with the two smaller ones.2

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1Ibid., p. 23. 2Ibid., p. 76
D. Reorganization: 1927-1931

In the years after 1927, recommendations of the Child Welfare Survey were put into effect in the Children's Aid Society of Vancouver and elsewhere in the community. Although the survey report did not create any unanimity of opinion nor complete willingness to follow its recommendations, it was an important instrument of change. It was because there were already questions in the minds of community leaders and a ferment of new ideas at work that the survey had been initially requested, and the initiative that made it possible for the community to organize for a survey, and to take a look at itself, made it possible, also, to implement recommendations of the survey and to move ahead in providing better services for children and families.

Laura Holland as Manager

The first and most crucial step in implementing changes was the appointment of Laura Holland as Manager of the Society. By the time that the survey report was being released to the public in June, 1927, it was possible to include in the report on Children's Aid Society of Vancouver the statement:

While in some respects the work compares favorably with that of other organizations in the province, it has been necessary to make grave criticisms to the Board, all of which pointed to the absence of competent technical leadership and direction. Clearly the outstanding need of this most important piece of work was a thoroughly capable administrative officer. The Board of Management is to be congratulated upon having promptly recognized this need and having appointed an outstanding social worker to lead in the reorganization of the Society's work. [Italics not in the original] 1

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The selection committees which had chosen Mr. South's successors had refused to consider the names of any candidates who were not residents of Vancouver. The scandals which precipitated the Child Welfare Survey and the strictures of the survey report are sufficient comment on the shortsightedness of this policy. The report of the Child Welfare Survey, in outlining the requirements of child placing work and social casework with the child in his own home, concluded with the statement:

Such trained workers are not at present available in British Columbia. Until such time as facilities for training are developed within the province it will be necessary to look elsewhere for workers for at least the key positions in social casework and child placing.¹

This message had impressed itself upon the directors of the Society even before the report was published, and Mr. Glass, chairman, made a trip to Toronto early in 1927. This is the account of Mr. Glass's first interview with Miss Holland as he himself has told it:

Realizing the importance of this appointment I decided to see the persons suggested (by Mr. Mills) personally, and made a trip to Toronto. . . . I had heard from Miss Whitton of Miss Laura Holland and told Mr. Mills I would like to see her. Mr. Mills said I could not get Miss Holland, but he took me to her office and gave me an introduction. After spending an hour telling Miss Holland of our need, she said, "If the President will continue in office for another two years, I'll come." Upon my return to Vancouver the board confirmed the appointment and in August, 1927, Miss Holland arrived with two assistants, Miss Zella Collins and Miss Katherine Whitman.²

The appointment of Miss Holland to the demanding post of Manager of the Children's Aid Society of Vancouver was a most fortunate step for the whole of social work in British Columbia. Her training and

¹Ibid., p. 18. ²Angus, op. cit., p. 30.
experience and her personal qualities made her peculiarly suited to
the pioneering task of leading the Society from old ways to new. The
late Dr. Harry Cassidy who was closely associated with her in his
years as Minister of Health and Welfare for British Columbia has said
of her, "Only a person with remarkable versatility, energy and imagination
could have performed so successfully the undertakings to which she has
put her hand."¹

Miss Holland, born in Montreal, spent part of her youth in Nova
Scotia and received her education at St. Mildred's College in Toronto.
Although destined for a musical career, she decided to give it up and
instead entered Montreal General Hospital. After a year of private duty
nursing, she went overseas in 1915 with the Canadian Army Medical Corps.
Her war experiences took her to England, France, Salonika and Lemnos.
After the conclusion of the war, she enrolled in the social work course
at Simmons College in Boston. Upon completion of her course she was
appointed to the social work staff of Montreal General Hospital. Fol­
lowing this she took a position with the Ontario Red Cross Society to
organize outpost hospitals. As a result of the work done in this field
she was later made a Commander of the British Empire. Two years later
she was appointed as Director of the Division of Social Work of the
Department of Public Health, Toronto. This was an important milestone
in her career, for it was in this post, where she worked in close con­
junction with children's aid societies, that she gained the experience

¹Rabinovitch, Gertrude, Contributions Made by Miss Laura Holland
and insight which prepared her so well for her responsibilities in Vancouver.  

The survey report on Children's Aid Society of Vancouver had stated:

The task of the new superintendent will be one of the most difficult in the whole field of Canadian social service. The work of the Society must be completely re-oriented, involving among other things the creation of a child protection field service; the organization of social investigation and supervision in connection with free home placement; the establishment of a boarding home system; and the development of baby care. In many communities the scope of any one of these functions would be considered sufficient to justify a separate organization. The Society is in a key position to assist in building up of local standards of child care and protection, especially in such matters as that of adoption, and the protection of the child born out of wedlock. Because of the varied types of child problems that will come under its notice, the facts at its disposal can be of great use to the local community or to the Province in forming plans for child care. To render this service requires a clear consciousness on the part of the executive officer of the Society's own field, and its relation to the whole community organization.

Changes Initiated

The most conspicuous of the changes introduced by Miss Holland, and one which many local citizens watched with a skeptical eye, was the change in the method of caring for children,—the transition from institutional care and free homes to a system of foster boarding care. Mrs. Angus has described some of the resistance:

A vocal section of public opinion was antagonistic to professional social work, to "foreigners" from the east coming in to reorganize a local charity, to a foster home scheme as opposed to institutional care. The president of the "Child Welfare Association" for instance was reported in the press on

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1 Ibid., pp. 1, 2.

January 31, 1928: "He defined his attitude toward the findings of the Child Welfare Survey, feeling that better results were obtained when children were not taken from their own districts, but also that an institution was the better place, as he did not believe that any guarantee could be provided that children in foster homes would receive proper care and attention." Even the Local Council of Women, which in 1901 was the organization petitioning the government for a Children's Protection Act, gave only provisional approval for a trial year, to the foster home placement scheme.¹

Equally important to the work of the agency, even more pertinent to the present study, but less conspicuous to the community at large, was the institution of preventive family case work. Miss Zella Collins carried responsibility for this program alone for over two years. The annual report for 1928 indicates that during that calendar year no less than 683 children belonging to 316 families were brought to the notice of the Society as needing protection or help, but it had been necessary to admit only 59 children to care, either as wards or non-wards. Thus for the first time, the Society effectively implemented purposes to which it had given verbal recognition from the beginning of its existence. Mr. Glass stated in his President's Report for the year 1929:

The preventive phase of the work under the Family Work Department is most interesting, as the chief aim of this department is to prevent the separation of a child from its parents. Much has been accomplished but still greater emphasis must be placed on this service if we are to accept the opportunities which come to us for effective child protection. For the funds to carry on this phase of our work, the Society is dependent upon the generosity of the private citizen, as the cost of this Department does not enter into the statutory obligation of a Municipality or of the Provincial Government.²

¹ Angus, op. cit., p. 31.
² Children's Aid Society of Vancouver, Annual Report, 1929; p. 2.
Public financial responsibility for the full cost of the
maintenance of wards had been one of the recommendations of the Child
Welfare Survey, and the responsibility was finally accepted by the
province in 1930 and by the City of Vancouver in 1931.¹

Another significant development of the reorganization years was
the establishment of close cooperation with government on all levels,
and with other private organizations whose work affected the children
of the community. The Children's Aid Society was one of the charter
members of the Council of Social Agencies when it was formed in 1929.
Miss Holland was tireless in her efforts to interpret the work of the
Society to citizen groups; she accepted many invitations to speak, and
she organized agency committees which included non-board-members as
well as board members. As Mrs. Angus has stated it: "In every way
they could, Miss Holland and her staff stood for unity of effort
between all organizations, public and private, which were interested
in health and welfare. Cooperation and mutual help were principles
for which they really worked."²

The survey report had stated: "The administrative officer must
also plan for the installation of a case record system."³ Moreover,
the incompleteness of existing records was one of the major difficulties
with which the staff were forced to deal during these years. Hours,
weeks and months of work were spent in efforts to trace wards of the
Society who had been placed out in free homes without adequate record

¹ Angus, op. cit., p. 32. ² Angus, op. cit., p. 34. ³ British Columbia Child Welfare Survey, op. cit., p. 76.
of their whereabouts. Not only was a case record system installed which provided for a record of the work being carried on with the children from the time of reorganization, but efforts were made, over a period of years, to find all of the children who had been previously placed by the Society.

Thus, during the four years that Miss Holland served as manager of the Society, recommendations of the Survey Report were implemented and carried into practice. To recapitulate: The long over-crowded and dangerously inflammable Children's Home was emptied, and the children in the care of the Society were moved into carefully investigated and supervised boarding homes; protection of children was again accepted as a primary responsibility of the Society, and field services provided by the Family Work Department served many children in their own homes in addition to the few whom it was determined were in need of foster care either as wards or non-wards; services were given to unmarried mothers; infant care was provided; a system of case records was inaugurated; the principle of full public maintenance for all children made wards of the Society was established; a family casework agency (Family Welfare Bureau) was established, together with a social service exchange; cooperation between agencies was improved, and the society became a charter member of the Council of Social Agencies when it was organized in 1929. A fitting climax for the reorganization years,—effectively symbolizing the shedding of old patterns and the acquiring of new ways of functioning in behalf of children,—came with the disposal of the old Wall Street property to the City of Vancouver, and the erection of a new fireproof building to serve as an admission center for the observation of children prior to their placement in foster family homes.
The new building at 1675 West Tenth Avenue, still used by the Society for its offices, was officially opened on September 10, 1930, and the president, Mr. Glass, was able to state: "I am proud to say that today in the opening of this building the last of the recommendations of the Survey Report has been carried into effect."

Recent Years: 1931 - 1953

Miss Holland left her post as Manager of the Society in 1931, to become Deputy Superintendent of Neglected Children for the Province of British Columbia, and Miss Collins, Supervisor of the Family Work Department, became her successor. The twenty-odd years that have since elapsed have seen continual expansion and growth of program and refinements of skills in working with children and families, but there has been no radical change in focus, direction or philosophy. Four different executives have guided the agency during these years: Miss Zella Collins until 1937; Miss Frances Fraser from 1937 to 1940; Miss Winona Armitage from 1940 to 1946; Miss Dorothy Coombe, the present incumbent, since 1946.

These have been years of growth in the City of Vancouver, and years of development in the profession of social work, as well as years of expansion within the agency. The population of Vancouver increased by more than one third in the twenty years from 1931 to 1951, increasing from 246,593 in 1931 to 344,833 in 1951. The number of wards in the care of the Society more than doubled,—increasing from 411 to 934 in the same period of time. The number of social workers employed by the

1 Angus, op. cit., p. 33.
Society has increased from eight to fifty. The preventive and protective activities of the Family Work Department, which Miss Collins carried alone from 1927 until some time in 1930 and which include investigating all complaints of neglect of children which may be reported to the Society, court work in connection with applications for committal, and recommending the admission of children to the care of the Society, has expanded to the point that a staff of twenty social workers make up the Family Work Department.  

Vancouver CAS is but one segment of the services for families and children which the community provides, and the growth of other agencies has significantly affected the tasks which CAS workers have been expected to carry and the kind of service which the Society has been able to provide. Highlights of community change and growth during the years since reorganization might be enumerated: The Welfare Federation, later known as the Community Chest, was organized in 1931, ending the necessity for each agency, individually, to carry responsibility for fund raising. The organization of the Family Welfare Bureau was an outgrowth of one of the major recommendations of the survey report, and the agency has continually grown and expanded its services in an area very closely related to the preventive services offered by the Family Work Department of the CAS. The City Social Service Department was decentralized and opened district offices in different parts of the city in 1940. Prior

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1 Early in 1954, extensive reorganizational changes were undertaken by the Society, breaking down the longstanding departmental structure of Family Work Department and Child Placing Department, and creating five geographical district units. As of December 31, 1953, however, the situation was as described above.
to 1940 the chief function of the City Relief Department was administering direct relief, but, with the employment of professional social workers, the city department has been able to enter into closer relationships with other agencies and to assist in raising the general level of preventive work. The Child Guidance Clinic was opened in 1933, and it has been a resource to the Society in providing psychiatric services and consultation, as well as a community resource for dealing directly with the problems of disturbed children.

A major influence on the segment of responsibilities allotted to the Vancouver Children's Aid Society has been the development of public child welfare services. The Ontario plan (regarded as the Canadian way by many of the Canadian leaders) had seen protection work as a responsibility to be carried by a private children's aid society, although financial responsibility for the care of wards was acknowledged as properly a government responsibility. In British Columbia and six other provinces, children's aid societies have been established only in the larger cities, and in other areas a provincial official once known as the "Superintendent of Neglected Children" and more recently designated as the "Superintendent of Child Welfare," has carried the responsibility for protection work, including preventive work and the investigation of complaints of neglect or abuse, as well as the acceptance of guardianship responsibility.

After 1905 there were two other children's aid societies in the province, with authority to investigate neglect situations and to accept guardianship of children committed to them by the courts, but

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it was the Children's Aid Society of Vancouver that carried major responsibility until recent years. The Children were committed to it by the courts from the entire province, and this was long accepted as a proper responsibility of the Society. The Report of the British Columbia Child Welfare Survey recommended that one of the chief functions of the Provincial Superintendent of Neglected Children should be encouragement and assistance in the establishment of additional children's aid societies in new localities, but it also suggested that the existing children's aid societies "should not at this stage of development limit their field activities to the cities in which nominally they operate. Rather they should each roughly mark out a zone in which, with the assistance of the province, they would endeavor to meet the needs." It may have been Miss Holland who first recognized the advisability of limiting the area from which the Society would accept committals, and

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1The Children's Aid Society of the Catholic Arch-Diocese of Vancouver, commonly known as the Catholic CAS, was incorporated in 1905, and accepted Catholic children from all parts of the province who were committed to it by the courts. The Children's Aid Society of Victoria, incorporated in 1901, had confined itself largely to supplying institutional care for Victoria children, up until the time of the British Columbia Child Welfare Survey. (British Columbia Child Welfare Survey, op. cit., p. 77). The Infants Amendment Act of 1918 had provided that "the Lieutenant Governor in Council may appoint an officer to be called the Superintendent of Neglected Children" and had provided further that such officer "may exercise all of the powers conferred on a Children's Aid Society, and may appoint staff to act for him." (Statutes of British Columbia, 1918, Chap. 36, Sec. 4). Although the "powers conferred on a children's aid society" included the authority to accept guardianship of children made wards, the courts of the province continued to commit children to the Vancouver CAS until recent years when there was a definition of the area in which the Society would accept responsibility. (Cf., pp. 90, 91).

of having the Provincial Superintendent of Neglected Children assume responsibility for the guardianship of children who were committed by the courts of the province beyond the immediate vicinity in which the Society was located. Changes she suggested in 1927 became practices of the Society in 1944. According to Mrs. Angus:

In July, 1927, Miss Holland startled her Board on her first appearance at a Board meeting by a recommendation that the Government be asked gradually to assume the care and supervision of all wards made so by courts outside Greater Vancouver. Some of the Board considered this a very radical idea. In 1944 the Board decided that our aim should be to accept for placement only children from Greater Vancouver unless the request were made for children needing very temporary care, or special treatment and care. This policy involved a long term kind of cooperation with all other child caring agencies. Later in that year the Child Welfare Division asked that the Children's Aid Society turn over to them for supervision the foster home area in the Fraser Valley between Abbotsford and Chilliwack. This was agreed to as a logical development of the new policy. During the . . . years since then, further withdrawal from country areas in favour of the Provincial agency have been arranged by the Children's Aid Society and the Child Welfare Division.¹

Although it had been envisaged by Miss Holland as early as 1927, the actual delimiting of the geographical boundaries for the work of the CAS waited on the development of social welfare field services and foster care services within the public agency. After 1943, legislation called for clarification of the area from which the Society would accept committals. Certain sections of the Protections of Children Act were redrawn to include the following provisions:

The Judge shall not commit a child to a children's aid society unless the child was apprehended within the boundaries of the area in which the society has jurisdiction.²

¹ Angus, op. cit., pp. 41, 42.
² Statutes of British Columbia, 1943, Chap. 5, Sec. 8.
Every children's aid society in existence at the commencement of this act shall submit to the Minister a statement defining the boundaries of the area in which it desires to exercise jurisdiction.\(^1\) 

A 1948 amendment to the act includes provisions in regard to the changing of boundaries:

A society may at any time, subject to the written consent of the Minister, change the boundaries of the area in which it proposes to operate without affecting the articles of incorporation.\(^2\)

As Mrs. Angus has indicated, in 1944 it was the decision of the directors that the Society should aim to accept for placement only children from Greater Vancouver "unless the request were made for children needing very temporary care, or special treatment and care."\(^3\) In the years following this decision, however, with the development of public welfare agencies in Burnaby, North Vancouver and West Vancouver, the area from which the Vancouver CAS would accept committals and other requests for placement has been further limited, and for several years the area has included only the City of Vancouver. Only in the case of adoption homes and boarding homes is surrounding territory still included in the area of operations for the Society.

F. Present Situation: December 1953

At the close of 1953, Vancouver CAS is an agency employing 52

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\(^1\) Ibid., Chap. 5, Sec. 24.

\(^2\) Statutes of British Columbia, 1948, Chap. 48, Sec. 25.

\(^3\) Cf. p. 90.
social workers, with an annual budget of just over $725,000. As of December 31, there were 128 children receiving care in agency foster homes: 105 were wards, 169 were children in non-ward care, and 3 were children before the court on whom committals had not yet been completed. Cases were open in the Family Work Department for preventive casework in behalf of 1289 children who were not receiving foster care, most of whom were with their own families.

The agency is currently (1953) divided into two departments: Child Placing Department and Family Work Department. Twenty workers in the Family Work Department carry responsibility for preventive and protection work for families residing within the City of Vancouver. This includes: the investigation of neglect complaints; work with unmarried mothers; planning with families who are requesting the admission of children to non-ward care or who are wishing to place their children in a private boarding home; conducting investigations requested by the Family Allowance Board, the Department of Immigration, and custody investigations requested by the Supreme Court; services in response to "out-of-town inquiries" from child welfare agencies elsewhere. Family Department workers prepare and present evidence in Family Court when the commitment of children to the agency is being recommended, and they continue to work with the child's own family until the committal is completed. Family Work Department carries the responsibility for family casework when children are in non-ward care, and works with the families of infants under one year of age who are being supervised in their foster home placements by the nursing staff. New cases coming to

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1 Cf. footnote, p.87, for information regarding reorganizational changes put into effect beginning in February, 1954.
the attention of the agency are a responsibility of the Family Work Department, and referral to the Child Placing Department is made only after a district worker has become sufficiently acquainted with the family situation to determine that placement is indicated.

There is no separate protection unit; complaints of neglect are assigned on the same geographical basis as other cases. With the many and varied responsibilities which each of the district workers carry, neglect situations, where people seemingly "do not want help," are easily pushed aside unless the situation seems very acute. Few, if any, of the workers develop the degree of skill in working with neglect situations that Miss Smith has suggested when she tells about the reward of seeing "a neglected child change before ones eyes into a loved child."¹

There is a cooperative relationship with the police department, and, when complaints of neglect are made directly to the police, preliminary investigations are often made by the police women. The Society keeps someone on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week, available to act in emergency neglect situations where it may be necessary to take immediate action. Policewomen investigate the night calls coming to their attention, but if it is not possible to work out some kind of plan that will meet a child's need for care until morning, CAS workers are called on to take over the responsibility. Several supervisors within the agency have been appointed as "officers" of the Society, with authority to apprehend children apparently in need of protection. Whenever it becomes necessary to take children into care without the written request of a parent, it is necessary for one of the "officers" to be present when the child is

¹Smith, Barbara, op. cit., p. 46. Cf. p. 21.
removed from his own home (or such other place as the child may have been left) and taken into the custody of the Society.
CHAPTER IV

VANCOUVER CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY: OTHER RELEVANT SERVICES

No program of services for the protection of children can be effective in isolation from other services for the welfare of children and families. Rescuing children from harmful circumstances and the exercise of substitute guardianship essentially involve providing some kind of foster care for children who are separated from their families by court action. Preventing family break-down by helping families to meet the needs of their children during illness and other crises often involves a need for temporary foster care on a non-ward basis. Children born out of wedlock are particularly apt to become those who are neglected and rejected, and any comprehensive program to prevent the neglect of children needs to seek out the unmarried mother, preferably before her child is born, and to assist her in planning for herself and her child. Children who are separated permanently from their natural parents need to establish new family ties if they are to grow up as normal, happy individuals; hence the facilitating of desirable adoptions as well as the prevention of those that are undesirable is another facet in the broad program of protecting children and promoting their welfare. It has been the characteristic development in Canadian communities that non-ward foster care, services to unmarried mothers and adoption services are provided by the multiple service children's aid societies which have been organized with the protection of children as their primary function, and the Vancouver society is no exception.
Other community agencies, too, provide services which function for the protection of children; financial assistance to families deprived of a breadwinner, the enforcement of laws against the exploitation of children, family casework services outside of the children's agencies, and public health services are a few that might be mentioned. Although they are recognized as a vital part of the web of community services in behalf of children, consideration of these is outside of the scope of this study.

A. Foster Care in Institution and Family Home

It is in contrast with the practices prevalent in many of the "anti-cruelty" societies of the United States, that guardianship and responsibility for the foster care of children has been carried by the Vancouver CAS and other Canadian children's aid societies from the time of their organization, along with the responsibility for the protective services discussed in the preceding chapter. In the over-all history of the Society, the amount of agency time and financial resources devoted to child caring responsibilities have far exceeded the expenditures for all other services combined. The quality of substitute care the agency has been able to provide for children during the years of its existence has affected the validity of decisions that it would be advantageous to the welfare of a child, and necessary for his protection, that he be removed from his own neglectful and inadequate family. Moreover, there have been years in the history of the Society when the pressures of child-caring responsibilities have almost completely obscured and crowded out the responsibility of the Society to seek out those children who might be in need of its protection.
Apprenticeship, placing-out in free homes, boarding-out, congregate institutional care, and care in supervised boarding homes have all been a part of the practice of the Vancouver CAS at one point or another during its history. The more primitive method, providing for the care of children in mixed almshouses, is a phase that was avoided in British Columbia, as the social conscience in Britain and America was already questioning this method of care before citizens of British Columbia communities were obliged to find methods of caring for dependent children.

From the time of its organization until the reorganization following the child welfare survey of 1927, it was the intention that placing-out children in free family homes should be the primary method of child care used, and any institution or "Home" operated by the Society was conceived of as a temporary shelter to provide care during an interim period while foster homes were located, and while the children received the training and "cleansing" influences of the Home as preparation for placement with a family. Intention never fully coincided with practise, however, and, although some children were placed out each year, the number of children in the care of the institution mounted steadily, and the number of children placed in foster homes never equalled the number of children brought into the continuing care of the Society.

The Adoption Committee consisting of the secretary, Mr. South, and a number of other directors, assumed responsibility for "investigating" the homes that applied to take children. Since many of the placements were at a considerable distance from Vancouver and the secretary had limited funds available for travel, investigation was necessarily limited to written references, and perhaps a single contact when applicants called
at the agency to select a child. An adoption agreement, transferring guardianship from the Society to the foster family was drawn up, and any child was considered "adopted" if the foster family did not return him to the agency. Although a need for the supervision of placements was given recognition in the appointment of "visiting committees" in various communities, in repeated requests that the government appoint a Superintendent of Neglected Children who might assist in locating foster homes and in visiting the children who had been placed-out, and in the explanation, that the Secretary was in "almost continual communication with all the children by letter, and as often as possible visits them,"¹--effective follow-up of the placements must have been practically non-existent except in the earliest years when the number of children was still small enough that they could be known individually to the directors.

The proportion of children placed in family homes was probably smaller than in the Province of Ontario, although in both provinces the same principles of caring for neglected children were stated, and Mr. Kelso, Ontario Superintendent of Neglected and Dependent Children, was much quoted at annual meetings and in annual reports of the Vancouver society, as an authority in the field of child protection. It might be suggested that differences in the personalities of the two men who were so largely responsible for the founding of the societies in the two provinces, partially explain differences in the extent to which placing-out was practised. Mr. Kelso became Superintendent of Neglected and Dependent Children for Ontario in 1893 and continued the varied approaches

¹Angus, op. cit., p. 10.
to the needs of children which he had evidenced earlier, encouraging
the formation of new children's aid societies, encouraging the placing-
out in family homes, and experimenting with the removal of children
from correctional institutions to foster homes. Mr. South, considerably
older than the Ontario Superintendent when he started his career in
child care and protection, worked diligently with the Adoption Committee
to locate homes for the wards of the Society, but the annual reports
still leave us with the picture of a "papa South" who loved and was
loved by the children in the Home, and who found satisfactions in
being surrounded by the children whom the Society had rescued. Further­
more, there was only Mr. South to carry the many responsibilities
involved as secretary of the Society, and no Superintendent of Neglected
and Dependent Children was appointed for the Province of British Columbia
until 1920.

There was undoubtedly deterioration in the quality of care
during the difficult years of the first world war and after, when the
number of children in care in the Home had mounted to a total of over
180, and funds to care for them were a constant source of anxiety. As
the problem of "caring for neglected, orphaned or abandoned children"
increased in magnitude, the other purpose of the Society,—the seeking
out of children in need of protection and acting in their behalf--
received less and less attention. The report of the British Columbia
Child Welfare Survey pointed this out.

The Children's Aid Society of Vancouver has limited its
activities very largely to conducting a large shelter institution
and has neglected its primary function of protecting children in
their own homes. The Society has about 180 children in its building,
which is badly overcrowded, and there are many more in free family homes.\footnote{British Columbia Child Welfare Survey, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 76.}

The limitations in the kind of care the agency was offering by 1926, in its placing-out program, are indicated in the following quotations from the Survey Report which applied to other agencies as well:

The children actually received into the custody of child caring or child protection organizations are provided for either in institutional buildings or in family homes acting for the institution. As nearly as we can ascertain the facts there are at present in British Columbia 642 such children in institutional buildings, but it is impossible to do more than guess at the numbers in family homes as the figures actually are not known to the Societies themselves. The tendency among the various organizations is to view these children as no longer in their care. . . .

While this is quite wrong, it accords with existing conditions in that practically all placements of children in family homes in the province are in free or wage homes on the so-called "adoption" or "indenture" plan, and virtually no attempt at control or supervision is made after once the child leaves the institution.

Further:

Child placing in families by child caring organizations has acquired a quite unjustifiable ill-repute in British Columbia, because of two unfortunate facts: (1) It has been practised largely as a means for the cheap disposal of the child and therefore has been confined to adoption or wage placements, many children being so placed who should never have been in free homes; (2) It has been carried out in an unspeakably haphazard manner.\footnote{British Columbia Child Welfare Survey, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 16.}

Although Alexandra Orphanage and other agencies provided non-ward care for children whose parents were requesting this service, and

\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, p. 17.}
care of children committed to it by the courts was the major responsibility of the CAS, there was some provision for the care of non-wards from the earliest years of the existence of the Society. The first annual report told of one mother who had "made over her children to the care of the society" and the second report states "We have also had five children placed in the Home temporarily for protection."  

As far back as 1910 some of the children cared for by the Society in the Home were called "boarders" to distinguish them from wards. Up to the end of 1910 there had been 18 of them. As far as the records show these children were mainly those awaiting decision by the Court, though later it appears that children were accepted as boarders to help parents out of various difficulties. For instance, in 1917, of 24 boarders 16 were children of men at the front, and 8 were children awaiting Court proceedings.  

By the end of 1927, following Miss Holland's assumption of duties as Manager of the Children's Aid Society, steps had already been taken to implement recommendations of the Child Welfare Survey, and children were being moved from institutional care in the overcrowded and unsafe Home on Wall Street into supervised foster-boarding homes. By December 31, 1928, only 33 children remained in the Home, and when these children were transferred to the fire-resistant Magee Cottage, the old Home was demolished. There were 155 wards of the Society in boarding homes, four in other institutions, and six were in the Industrial School. Children who had been placed-out prior to reorganization had also been followed up, and there were 180 children

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1 Children's Aid Society of Vancouver, Annual Report, 1902; p.  
2 Children's Aid Society of Vancouver, Annual Report, 1903; p. 11.  
3 Angus, op. cit., p. 18.
under supervision in free foster homes. ¹

With the development of preventive casework, there came a more definite recognition of the value of temporary foster care in helping families through temporary emergency situations. Since 1928 the number of children admitted to care as non-wards has far exceeded the number admitted as wards or as children awaiting court action, although, because non-ward care is usually for a comparatively brief period, the number of non-wards in care at any one time has always been small.

Since the changes in child-caring practices which were inaugurated as part of the reorganization, there has been steady growth in the volume of the child-placing program, and increasing understanding of children and of the emotional impact which separation from one's own family almost inevitably involves, but there have been no radical changes in the child-caring program itself. Boarding care in foster family homes has continued to be the method of care for most of the children, supplemented by a very limited use of institutions.

The present office building of the Society was built for a receiving home and occupied in 1930. Within three years, as the number of children needing temporary institutional shelter at any one time was diminished, it seemed to the directors that there was no longer any need to maintain a separate institution as a receiving home for the Society. During the years from 1933 until 1938 Alexandra Orphanage was used as a receiving home for the agency.² For a short time the CAS attempted to function without

¹Children's Aid Society of Vancouver, Annual Report, 1928; p. 6.
²In 1928 the Alexandra Orphanage was reorganized as Alexandra Neighborhood House, and so it was no longer a resource for institutional foster care.
any provision for congregate care, but found that this was impracticable. At the present time, the Society is using several subsidized boarding homes for infants, where from two to six infants receive care at one time, and where foster parents receive a small subsidy each month in addition to the regular board payment.\textsuperscript{1} There are also three small institutions that are staffed with personnel employed by the Society. The Fifty-Ninth Avenue Receiving Home, for boys and girls from three to twelve years of age, was opened in 1943 and cares for twelve children. The Alma Road Receiving Home for adolescent girls has been in operation since 1945, and provides care for nine girls. Boys Receiving Home for adolescent boys has been in operation since 1950, and cares for ten older boys. All three are called "receiving homes" in accordance with the original hope that they could provide temporary care during the period of planning needed by children who must be taken into care very suddenly. As the situation has developed in practice, however, there have been many children in both age groups for whom no suitable foster home was available, and other children who needed to remain for a considerable time in the less intensely personal, more controlled situation that an institution provides. Hence, the receiving homes have become semi-treatment institutions, filled to capacity largely with children who have problems in adjusting to foster homes, and most new placements have necessarily been made in available family homes.

In addition to the steady growth in the child-caring program, there was a branching out into a new area of service in 1940 when the

\textsuperscript{1} Baby homes are usually subsidized for four infants, up to the age of three months. Bottlenecks and emergency situations have made it necessary to exceed this number from time to time.
agency assumed responsibility for studying private boarding homes, and for recommending these for the licensing required under city by-law. Previously these home studies had been made by the City of Vancouver Health Department. CAS study of the private boarding homes has had two advantages for the program as a whole. It has made it more possible for workers in the Family Work Department to plan the use of this kind of resource with those parents who were willing and available to carry considerable responsibility for their children, but who were not able to care for their children themselves. Also, it has frequently served to give agency workers a knowledge of neglect situations at an earlier stage than would otherwise be the case.

Although private boarding homes can be a very helpful resource for children needing temporary care away from their own families, they can also be a source of difficulty and neglect for some children. The hazards of private boarding home care are only diminished, not eliminated, by the arrangements for annual licensing and follow-up supervision. Parents who wish to avoid responsibility for their children, without being able to admit their rejecting attitudes, too frequently move children from one private boarding home to another, in an endless series of placements which wreak devastating emotional damage on the children involved even when each of the private boarding homes used may be a good home providing warm and responsible care for the children who come to it.

B. Services to Unmarried Mothers and Their Children

In the years during which Children's Aid Society of Vancouver has
provided protective services and foster care for children, the children of unmarried parents have comprised a percentage of the caseload out of all proportion to the percentage of illegitimate births in the community. In Vancouver, and in communities the world over, the child of the unmarried mother faces certain handicaps, is more subject to neglect, and is more frequently in need of protective services than is the child born in a normal family setting.

The handicaps and special needs of the illegitimate child stem from several sources. The social disapproval and punitive attitudes stem from society's efforts to maintain certain standards of morality and to protect the inheritance of property. There is frequently poverty because of the fact that responsibility for care and support of the child is carried by the mother alone, and that one parent is so often a young and unskilled worker. Emotional deprivation results from the mother's guilt, the fact that the child was unwanted, the emotional immaturity of the mother which is so frequently one of the causes of the illegitimate pregnancy, and from the simple fact that the child lacks the support and protection of two parents. Throughout history, the unwanted child of an unsanctioned sexual union has too often been the victim of gross neglect or of infanticide. Irresponsible adoptive placement, institutional care which hides a child from knowledge of the community, or an endless series of foster placements, fall to the lot of an illegitimate child far more frequently than to the child of legally married parents. Even when an unmarried mother claims and cares for her child, the guilt and emotional conflicts that she feels may result in inadequate or even in abusive treatment.

Illegitimate children are protected to some degree by the general
provisions that a community may make for the protection of all children. The illegitimate child can be rescued from an inadequate home situation after the neglect has become apparent, or, more hopefully, preventive-protective casework service can help the distraught or neglectful unmarried mother to meet the needs of her child more adequately.

However, because of the special hazards to which the illegitimate child is subject, the need for such protective measures can be largely avoided and much of needless tragedy can be averted if special services in behalf of the unmarried mother and her child are made available.

Although the connection between protection of children and assistance to unmarried mothers now seems obvious, services to unmarried mothers were not recognized as a legitimate and desirable part of a program of protection for children during the first two decades of the Society. In the annual report for 1910, a report from the Adoption Committee states:

> Your Committee has dealt with some questions this year of no ordinary importance, one of which is the numerous applications made to receive the offspring of misguided and unfortunate girls. Several girls have come to the City from various parts of Canada and some from the Old Land with a view to hide their shame, and have made application, sometimes even before the child is born, to have the little one committed to the Society immediately after birth. Your committee is of the opinion that the Society was not established for the purpose referred to.¹

And in 1912 Mr. South said:

> Applications are being made to make children over to the Society, and the request, sometimes the demand, is made for most unheard of reasons; but too often the request is made to cover up the crime of bringing a child into the world without a name and permit the mother and alleged father to pass through the world as being without a stain on their character.²

In the annual report for 1913 we read:

Your directors deplore exceedingly that so many young babies have been deserted during the year, which has made it necessary to provide a special ward for them, which of course adds very materially to the cost of maintenance.¹

As Mrs. Angus has pointed out in her history:

There is no evidence in the Annual Reports of the period that any connection was seen between the Society's refusal to accept illegitimate infants as wards, and the tragic plight of a number of deserted babies whom circumstances later forced them to take in.²

The annual report for 1925 is the first to mention any work being done with unmarried mothers, and in that report the number of unmarried mothers "assisted in securing foster homes for their infants" was 28; the number of these infants legally adopted was 15; the number of unmarried mothers placed in employment after homes were secured for the infants was seventeen.³

The Report of the British Columbia Child Welfare Survey stated in regard to unmarried mothers:

After the need of constructive field work, both in general family rehabilitation service and in child protection and child care, the next most urgent need is for organization to care for babies and for casework service for unmarried mothers.

Institutional care is available for the unmarried mother with her baby in the Salvation Army Hospital, Vancouver; the United Church Home for Girls, Burnaby; and the W.C.T.U. Home in Victoria,—but only a small proportion of cases ever accept this type of care excepting for hospitalization.⁴

¹Cited by Angus, loc. cit.  ²Angus, loc. cit.
³Ibid., p. 23.
And further:

There have been two immediate results from the absence of social organization to care for the babies, both of which are very grave from the point of view of the ultimate welfare of the children. Hasty and ill-considered adoptions have been forced upon harassed parents, and the development of private commercialized boarding homes, licensed and unlicensed, has been fostered.¹

It was the recommendation of the Survey Report:

For Vancouver the Children's Aid Society is recommended as the best organization to undertake the care and family placement of babies, provided that the work of that Society is reorganized along case work and child placing lines. Working in the closest cooperation with the Children's Aid Society, the proposed family work agency would probably conduct the casework for unmarried mothers, providing any such service required by the United Church Home, the Salvation Army Hospital, etc.²

Although the survey report had suggested that the proposed family work agency would probably be the agency to provide casework for unmarried mothers, it had stressed, primarily, the necessity that community provisions for such service be made. Once the reorganization of CAS had brought professional social workers to the staff, casework service for unmarried mothers was initiated, and this has continued to be one of the major services offered in the Family Work Department of the Society. The number of unmarried mothers who have received some help from the CAS has been in excess of 5,000 and there were 432 new cases that became known to the Society in 1953.

It is currently the practice for Family Welfare Bureau to provide services for unmarried mothers who are living with their own families, but those who are away from home are referred to the CAS for help with their plans. Problems which the unmarried mothers usually find most

¹Ibid., p. 27. ²Ibid., p. 28.
urgent include arrangements for medical care and hospitalization, finding a place to live during the period of waiting for delivery, deciding on plans for the baby, and planning for the mother's return to normal living. The majority of unmarried mothers request that adoption plans be made for their children and much of the time an adoption placement can be arranged early enough that a child goes directly from the hospital to the home of adopting parents. In situations where an unmarried mother needs a period of time to complete her decision about giving up her baby, temporary non-ward foster care is offered, usually on a time limited basis that is worked out with the mother. Unmarried mothers who plan to keep their babies are assisted with arrangements for private boarding home placement of the child, if such placement seems to be the most suitable place, or assisted in clarifying and carrying out other plans for mother and child.

Although illegitimacy is still frequently one of the factors in neglect situations that come to the attention of the agency at a later stage in a child's life, there can be no doubt that the program of services to unmarried mothers has been effective in serving many children who would otherwise have been seriously neglected or deprived. Furthermore, although services to unmarried mothers who come to the agency voluntarily seeking help do not fall within the definition of preventive-protective services, and are not essentially provided by an agency organized for protection purposes, they are a segment of the child welfare services of the community which are particularly significant

\[1\] Cf., p. 15.
in preventing the need for protective services per se.

C. Adoption Program

Whenever an agency is involved in severing ties between children and their parents, the complementary question of what is being done about reconstructing the old home or finding a new and permanent home comes into focus. A "protection" program which breaks up families, without seeing that something is done about creating new and permanent family ties for the children elsewhere, cannot really protect children from the most devastating of emotional experiences,—the sense of being nobody,—of not really belonging anywhere. An adoption program that effectively serves the children who are in need of new family ties needs to be closely coordinated with other programs serving children, particularly the protection services which separate children from parents who cannot be helped sufficiently that they meet even a minimum standard of child care, the foster care services which are so frequently looking after children at the time that they become legally free for permanent planning, and the services for unmarried mothers who so frequently ask that adoption plans be made for their babies. In British Columbia and all of the Canadian provinces that have followed the Ontario precedents in protection legislation, it has been inevitable that placing children for adoption should become one of the major functions of the children's aid societies that were organized to protect children from neglect and to accept the guardianship of children when their own homes could not be made safe for them.

Prior to enactment of the Adoption Act of British Columbia in 1920, "adoption" practices of the CAS were carried out under authority of the "Apprentices and Minors Act." An agreement of adoption executed
under seal and signed by the parent or parents and by the adopting parents was an instrument for transferring the rights of control and custody of a child. For those children who had been made wards of the Society the agreement was executed between the Society and the adopting parents. The Adoption Act of 1920 made adoption a judicial procedure, and amendments in 1935 created requirements that there should be an investigation of adoptive applicants and a waiting period after the child was resident in the adoption home and after notice of intention to adopt, before proceedings could become final.

Until the reorganization of the Society in 1927, adoption placements were almost entirely confined to the permanent placement of wards of the Society. It was not until the development of the Family Work Department and the initiation of casework services for unmarried mothers that an adoption program was developed for the placement of children who were not already a responsibility of the agency. It was in the placements of infants that the adoption program first underwent expansion, and in many of these adoption placements it has been possible to arrange for the infant to be transferred to the adopting parents directly from maternity home or hospital, without any period of interim foster care in a Children's Aid Society home. The number of annual adoption placements has expanded forty-fold between 1930 when 8 adoptions were completed and 1950 when 342 new adoption placements were made, and a total of 1031 children were on adoption probation in homes under the supervision of the Society at some time during the year. Nineteen percent of the adoption placements in 1950 were private placements referred to the Society for investigation after adopting parents had notified the
Superintendent of Child Welfare of their intention to adopt. The remainder were situations in which the CAS had participated in the planning. In part of this number, the children were placed with adoptive parents on adoption probation without any interim period of foster care; in another group of adoptions children were moved from temporary foster homes to adoption homes; in the third group of adoption "placements", children who had been placed in their foster homes on a boarding care basis were transferred to adoption probation in the same home, either with or without the adoption consent of the natural parent (s).

Two recent changes in the adoption program of the agency have made it more effective in serving the children who are dependent on the agency for protection and guardianship. The agency has become more convinced about the desirability of arranging adoptions for older children who are permanently separated from their own families, and has developed more skill in finding suitable homes and in facilitating such adoptions. A second and equally important development has been a realignment of practices in regard to the placement of so-called "unadoptable" infants. In recognition of the philosophy that an adoption program is properly focused on finding homes for children, rather than on finding children for parents, and recognizing, also, that children with uncertain or pathological heredity or minor physical handicaps and those of mixed racial origin need permanent ties and loving

\[1\text{Step-father adoptions and relative adoptions are included in the 19 percent private placements.}\]
parents fully as much as the easily placeable child, the agency has increased its skill and resourcefulness in making permanent plans for these children. Poor background, low intelligence quotient, mixed racial origin, physical defects,—none of these are now regarded as a bar to adoption, provided that adoptive parents can learn to love and accept the child as their own, and are willing to take whatever risks there may be. Frequently these children are placed in permanent homes, initially on a boarding care basis, with a view to eventual adoption.

A cooperative clearance of suitable adoptive homes, as well as available children, with the Provincial Social Welfare Branch, has provided additional resources together with the greater strength of joint planning.

Prior to 1951, a good many of the permanent placements of those children who had been considered unadoptable began to be thought of as permanent only after the child had been in the home for a considerable period of time. Nurses on the staff of the Child Placing Department were assigned the responsibility for supervising the placements of all children under two years of age. The homes that were referred to them as suitable foster homes had been evaluated in terms of their ability to provide adequate physical care for infants, and not in terms of a permanent adoption home that could later meet the needs of a school age child and an emancipating adolescent as well as those of an infant. The unadoptable infants were made wards of the Society and placed in homes in terms of their immediate needs, rather than with a focus on permanent planning. Many of the children underwent several placements before any permanent plan could be accomplished. In other instances, families who
had accepted a child for temporary foster care became very attached to the child, expressed their interest in adoption, and were evaluated in regard to their acceptability as adopting parents after placement had been in effect for months or perhaps for years. The anomalous situation of having the easy adoption placements of infants with good health and good heredity carried out by social workers, while the very children who were most in need of expert skill in the choice of permanent homes and those who would be most vulnerable to insecurities and lack of permanence in foster homes were planned for more haphazardly, was brought to an end in 1950. A social worker within the Child Placing Department, but separate from the Adoption Department, was assigned to carry responsibility in regard to the permanent placement of infants who for one reason or another could not be placed immediately on adoption probation with one of the families who had come to the agency to request an adoptive child. The change in practice involved a recognition of the responsibility of the agency to provide the necessary skill in this challenging and difficult area of child placing, a redefinition of the concept of adoptability, an increased confidence in the capacity of families to accept risks, and a willingness to let them do so.

At a meeting of the Child Placing Committee in June, 1950, there was discussion around the discharge of a ward who had recently become twenty-one years of age. The boy had been in the same foster home all of his life, but adoption by his foster parents had been discouraged many years earlier because he required treatment for a congenital infection. This case served to highlight the changing philosophy in regard to the advantages of adoption for children who need new family ties, and the
capacity of adopting parents to accept risks or to work out difficulties. It was of particular significance to the committee at that time because they were reviewing two recent cases in which a contrasting policy had been followed. The agency had successfully placed two children in foster homes with a view to adoption who were presenting a variety of behavior problems and who were already four years old and seven years old at the time they were placed in the adoption homes.

**Parental Rights and Permanent Planning**

Intimately involved in both the adoption program and the protection program of the agency is the question of parental rights, and the determination as to when the agency has the necessary authority to proceed with a permanent placement that will ultimately result in adoption. Unfortunate incidents highlighting this problem occurred in the early days of the Society, and in recent years, too. Children placed in permanent homes with a view to eventual adoption have been removed to return to natural parents after both the child and the foster family have invested much in becoming one family and have been looking forward eagerly to the completion of a legal adoption. Neglectful parents, long missing or otherwise believed to be permanently disinterested or incapable, have returned to assert their parental rights and to demand from the court that their children be returned to them.

One such case caused much concern to the Society in 1911. M____, born in 1901, was made a ward of the Society in April, 1908. Some time after she had been placed in an "adoption home", with every expectation on the part of the child and her foster parents that she would be with them permanently, her natural mother asked that she be returned and transferred to the Catholic Children's Aid Society. The court upheld the
mother's petition, and directors of the Society reluctantly decided against an appeal to a higher court. In recommending against an appeal, a special committee which had been appointed to study the case reported:

The reason that the Society cannot succeed in these matters, and cannot properly protect its wards is the defective character of the legislation under which it is obliged to operate. The act does not give to foster parents any protection nor does it place any limit to the time within which applications for the transference of children can be made, and your Committee recommends that an application be made to the legislature for such amendments as will afford due protection to the Society and to foster parents of children adopted out.

The British Columbia Adoption Act of 1920 improved this situation considerably. Whereas previously there was no provision, whatsoever, for the permanent severing of ties between children and their natural parents that was not subject to judicial review and a possible reversal of the decision at some later date, as in the case of M____, the adoption act provided that, after an adoption is completed, the natural parents no longer retain any residual rights and cannot later make application to have a child returned to them. Although the adoption act does require the consent of legal parent(s) for the completion of an adoption, there is a supplementary provision that parental consent may be waived by the court, for proper cause. Hence, adoptions can be, and frequently are, completed without any parental consent.

Permanent planning for children is still complicated, however, because the British Columbia Protection of Children Act does not make any provision for a permanent deprivation of parental rights. A committal order gives an agency control, custody and responsibility in planning for a child who is made its ward, but does not end the necessity for seeking parental consent before an adoption can be completed, or, alternatively, for seeking court approval for the waiver of such consent.
Neglectful or deserting parents who have been deprived of the custody of their children are frequently unavailable, "whereabouts unknown", or they are unwilling to facilitate an adoption by giving their written consent when a child is ready to be placed in a permanent home and a family is ready to receive him. Unless parental consent is available, there is always a possibility that legal parents may petition for and be granted the return of their children some time during the year of residence in the adoption home that is required before an adoption petition can be heard.

In spite of the complication, permanent plans are made for many of the wards for whom no parental consent to adoption can be obtained. Such children are placed in their permanent homes with a warning to the hopeful adopting family concerning the hazards that are involved. Usually, such placements work out well. There is ordinarily no difficulty about having parental consents waived if the agency has made a reasonable effort to locate a missing parent, or if other good and sufficient reasons are shown; adoptions are usually completed happily after a year or more of residence in the adopting home. Enough exceptions arise, however, in which children must be removed from permanent foster homes and returned to legal parents who have reappeared after long absence, that it adds considerably to the anxiety that workers feel in making such placements, it appreciably limits the number of permanent homes available for these children, and it adds to the number of children who remain in suspension without being planned for on a permanent basis.

In many states and provinces this problem is made much easier by a legal recognition of two degrees of parental deprivation. Children may be made wards of a court or agency on a basis that recognizes the immediate
need for protection from the state as super-parent, but that recognizes
also the possibility of eventual rehabilitation of such parents. Such
temporary deprivation reserves to a parent the right to later apply to
the court for the return of his child,—presumably after there has been
an improvement in the situation which originally necessitated the
separation. Often the temporary aspect of this type of deprivation is
further recognized by a time limit in the committal order, which makes
it necessary to review the case judicially and to renew the court order
if the child is not being returned to his natural parents. Time limited
or not, such a deprivation is temporary because there is always a possi­
bility that parents will apply to the court and be awarded the return of
their children.

A more complete parental deprivation removes the necessity for a
parental consent to adoption and deprives the parent of all of his
rights, including the right to apply for return of his child at some
future date when circumstances may have changed. Such permanent
depreivation is justified only when efforts to help a family resume
responsibility have been carried on over a reasonable period of time,
when the original mistreatment or current diagnosis of the parents
condition makes it evident that any future return would be extremely
hazardous to the child, or when parents are voluntarily relinquishing
their rights and asking for permanent deprivation and adoption planning.

Because British Columbia law makes no provision for such a
permanent deprivation of parental rights except with the completion of
an adoption, problems of arranging permanent placements are increased.
Until adoption planning can be facilitated for these children who will
not be returning to their families but for whom parental consent to
adoption is not available, the protective services of the agency will continue to serve some children less effectively than the community should require. Children can be rescued from situations that are harmful to them, but unless they can be rescued to a substitute family where they can form permanent ties, or returned to a strengthened and rehabilitated own family, the job of protection is less than half done.
CHAPTER V

RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT

The Vancouver CAS story is a story of the creation of patterns for the protection of children in a fastgrowing agency in a fastgrowing community in one particular country of the western world. If, in some areas, the Society has not been in the forefront in finding effective ways to help children who are not adequately protected by their own parents, neither has it been among the most laggard. If examples might sometimes be cited of better ways that have been thought out in other places and certain "next steps" seem to be indicated, many aspects of the promotion of healthier families and communities for children await the creative genius of the citizens of the future. Dilemmas in the state's exercise of its role as super-parent are a challenge to the best thinking of judges and lawmakers, social workers and law enforcement officers, educators and community organizers,—to all who care about the welfare of children and families.

The Past

The Children's Aid Society of Vancouver, B.C., was organized in 1901 to meet the needs of British Columbia children who were neglected or abused by their parents, and who were therefore in need of protection from some outside source. In accordance with the knowledge and precedents of that day, a private agency was incorporated to act for the community in protecting such children, under the authority implied by the doctrine of parens patriae. Legal authority for the powers and responsibilities of the Society were defined under the newly enacted Protection of Children
Act. Drunkenness was considered to be one of the major causes of child neglect, and was mentioned as a factor in nearly all of the cases coming to the attention of the Society during the first years. The children of neglectful parents were regarded as somehow different from those whose parents voluntarily placed them in one or another of the child caring institutions of the province, and the suggestion that the CAS and the Alexandra Orphanage might well combine their functions was several times vigorously rejected.

From the beginning of its existence the Society functioned in several ways to protect children. These included the investigation of complaints of neglect, bringing cases of apparent neglect to the attention of a court for decision, the exercise of guardianship and the provision of foster care for children committed to it by the courts. Strengthening of the child's own family and persuading neglectful parents to look after their children more adequately was given verbal recognition from the earliest years, and admonitions of the secretary must sometimes have been effective. Still, question can be raised as to how much was actually accomplished in this direction in the years prior to the reorganization of 1927. In actual practice, it was rescue rather than prevention that prevailed as the protection program of the agency in the earlier years.

Although placement in free family homes was the intended method of caring for children who were made wards of the society, a receiving home was established during the second year to provide care for children until a foster home placement could be arranged. Since family homes were not made available as fast as new children came into the care of the Society, the number of children in the Society's receiving home
mounted steadily, and the increasing burden of child care became a major concern of the directors. Complaints of overcrowding in the Home were a chronic feature of annual meetings and committee reports. The dilemma of "responsibility without means", created as courts from the entire province committed more and more children to the care and custody of the Society without any corresponding provision for financial support, led one of the early presidents to suggest that, if substantial government assistance was not forthcoming, the Society should withdraw from further effort to carry the burden and place the responsibility squarely on the shoulders of the government. This suggestion was never seriously considered, but, as the war years and the 1920's rolled by, child caring responsibilities must have pretty completely absorbed the attention of the secretary, directors and friends of the Society. Little attention was given to the protective function during these years.

The population of the Home on Wall Street reached a high point of nearly 200 children, and, concerned as the directors were about the overcrowded conditions, they continued to have a faith in the educational value of residence in the Home as a training and cleansing process in preparation for placement in decent family homes.

During the war years and the early 1920's, when protection had been all but forgotten and the quality of care in the overcrowded and hazardous frame building must have reached its lowest point, there was a ferment of new ideas in child welfare at work. Still, the major effort of the Society's directors was toward improving the quality of care along the old lines. They campaigned for a fire-proof building, and the erection of Magee Cottage as the first unit was an achievement in this direction.
Mr. South, the faithful secretary who had been so active in organizing the Society in 1901 and had served as its administrative officer for twenty years, died in 1922. In the years immediately following, a climate for change developed. The short and rather hectic tenure of the two men who succeeded Mr. South, the ferment of new ideas, and the efforts of a Rotary Club committee to determine which community service projects should receive its financial support, were some of the circumstances which raised questions and culminated in a decision that the community should take a look at itself and its child caring practices. The British Columbia Child Welfare Survey of 1926-27 was organized, carried out, and most of its recommendations were implemented.

The British Columbia Child Welfare Survey marks a significant step in the life of the community, and a turning point for the CAS. Out of it grew the first employment of professional social workers in the agency and the community, the initiation of effective efforts to prevent family breakdown, and the beginning of a more responsible guardianship and more adequate kind of care for the children who were wards of the Society.

There has been a very large increase in the volume of work carried on by the Society, a refinement of practice, and an increasing understanding of the emotional implications of belonging to a family, of separation from family, and of taking on new family ties. Still, there has been no radical change in philosophy or direction since Miss Holland, the first professional social worker to serve as the executive of the Society, left her post to become the Deputy Superintendent of Neglected Children for the Province of British Columbia.

Other services which are not a part of the protection function per se, but which are closely associated with it, had their beginnings in the
reorganization years, and these services, too, have been continuously expanded. Foster care for non-wards as well as wards, services to unmarried mothers and their children, and an expanded adoption program for infants and others not already a responsibility of the Society, are the major additions to the functions of Children's Aid Society of Vancouver which have rounded out the practice of the past twenty-five years.

The Future

What of the days ahead? How can the growing community of Vancouver best serve the children who are in need of protection? How can the Children's Aid Society of Vancouver, B.C., born at the turn of the century, best serve children and families in the years to come? In what ways do experiences of the past set directions for the practices of the future? Without attempting to provide answers, a few questions can be suggested that are already being talked about by directors and staff members, community organizers and government officials.

The most basic question to be considered is the division of responsibility between public welfare agencies, the two children's aid societies (Vancouver CAS and Catholic CAS), and the Family Welfare Bureau. Is the protective function—derived from the authority of the state as a super-parent—best continued as a private agency responsibility? Are there advantages in transferring this function to a municipal or provincial public welfare agency? Fund-raising difficulties in Vancouver Community Chest have twice made it necessary for the Society to seek special grants from the city and the province, in 1948 and 1953. Is the authoritative work of child protection, with its inevitable tendency to create enemies as well as friends, a function that should depend on
voluntary giving? Or should child protection, like such other authoritarian responsibilities of the community as police and court, be publicly financed and publicly administered as it is in other areas of the province? Would this change free private funds for intensive help to disturbed families and children?

The principle of public financial support for the maintenance of wards is already well established. What advantages are there in having publicly-financed care provided by a private agency? Does this arrangement, creating a diffusion of responsibility, help or hamper efforts to improve the level of practice and to secure more adequate financial support? Can the watchfulness and concern of private citizens be as effectively maintained if protective functions are transferred to a government agency?

In a large agency, how can the multiple functions be organized to avoid its becoming unwieldy and inefficient? Whether they are provided by one agency or by more than one agency, how can coordination be accomplished among the following services: protection services, child-caring services, homemaker services, treatment services for emotionally disturbed children, family counselling, unmarried mother services, and adoption services? How can the functions of the family court and of policewomen and juvenile enforcement officers be coordinated with the services of the social agencies?

If protection services and foster care for wards should be transferred to a public agency, would this mean that non-ward children who later became wards would then be transferred from one agency to another?

If the extensive responsibility of foster care for wards continues
to be carried by the Vancouver CAS and the Catholic CAS, can these agencies gear themselves, also, for the intensive job of specialized foster care for disturbed and difficult children which is urgently needed in the community?

Whether the protection of children in the City of Vancouver becomes a responsibility of a public agency or remains with the two children's aid societies, what can be done to increase the skill of workers who would serve those who seemingly "do not want help?"

Should the Family Welfare Bureau and the CAS be amalgamated, or should they continue to function as separate agencies? (An answer to this question might be considerably influenced by a decision in regard to public or private agency responsibility for providing protection services and foster care for children who are made wards). In any case, so long as there are two separate agencies, what is the most effective division of functions between them? Mrs. Angus has suggested that the present division of responsibility in regard to work with unmarried mothers is confusing to everyone, and has no particular advantages to recommend it. Should one agency or the other carry responsibility for the entire unmarried mother program, or are there advantages in having both agencies functioning in this area?

Is a supervised homemaker program in behalf of children best carried out by an agency providing foster care? Can better planning be accomplished when the alternative kinds of care are budgeted and planned for by one agency? Or are there definite advantages in having supervised

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1 Angus, op. cit., pp. 140, 141.
homemaker services provided by an agency that specializes in family counselling?

The lack of legal provision for a permanent deprivation of parental rights, except with the completion of an adoption, handicaps permanent planning for children. What modifications in legislation would be desirable, and what are the steps that might be taken to accomplish this?

Obviously more research is needed, and there is plenty of room for further study in directions which have not been followed by this thesis. The particular answers with which the community meets these and other questions of child protection and agency function are not nearly as significant as the courage and spirit in which these questions are faced, and the eternal vigilance of those who recognize the responsibility of society for the welfare of children. Even with the most obvious of "next steps," all needed changes are a challenge to staff and board members, to public officials and to community planning committees, if new ways are not to create unforeseen problems which are just as serious as the problems that have been resolved.

It is to be hoped that the concern and imagination shown by those pioneers who "did something" about child protection in 1901 will continue to activate Vancouver citizens, and that it will be harnessed to increasing knowledge and accumulated experience, providing more and more effectively for the protection of children and the promotion of their growth and well-being.
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