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**“The Be-All and End-All of Teaching”¹:
Nova Scotia’s Provincial Examinations in History, 1893-1972**

Bruce Hubert Fisher

April 2000

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the
Faculty of Education for acceptance, a thesis entitled
**"The Be-All and End-All of Teaching":
Nova Scotia's Provincial Examinations in History, 1893-1972**
submitted by Bruce Hubert Fisher to fulfill partial requirement of the
Degree of Master of Arts (Education) from Saint Mary's University.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. D. Perry", written over a horizontal line.

Dr. George Perry, Thesis Supervisor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. J. Larsen", written over a horizontal line.

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Abstract

Provincial examinations were administered to secondary history students in Nova Scotia from 1893 until 1972. This study investigates the history examination system and demonstrates how it circumscribed history education. Documents from the provincial examination era reveal an examination system that imposed a straitjacket on the learning and teaching of history. Provincial history examinations demanded little more than the memorization, and recall, of textbook content. In addition to providing content, textbooks also shaped and organized history courses. The comments of examiners, and the observations of educational officials, make it clear that history courses conformed to the textbook content and organization demanded by history examinations. The provincial examination system handcuffed secondary history teachers and students, limiting their function and defining a history education that made memorization and recall paramount. The implications of such an examination system are important to seriously consider before a return to another era of external assessment for secondary history students in Nova Scotia.

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Table of Contents

Abstract	i
Acknowledgements	ii
Table of Contents	iii - iv
Chapter 1: Introduction	1 - 15
Research Purpose	1 - 2
Organization of Thesis	2 - 4
Overview	4 - 6
Literature Review	6 - 14
Definitions	14 - 15
Chapter 2: Methodology	16 - 22
Sources	16 - 19
Procedure	19 - 21
Limitations	21 - 22
Chapter 3: Secondary-School History Education: Organization and Content	23 - 55
Introduction	23
Organization	23 - 46
Content	46 - 55
Conclusion	55

Chapter 4:	Secondary-School History Education: The Examination System	56 - 90
	Introduction	56
	The Provincial History Examinations	56 - 74
	The Provincial Examiners' Comments	74 - 90
	Conclusion	90
Chapter 5:	Discussion	91 - 106
Chapter 6:	Summary and Conclusion	107 - 110
Endnotes		111 - 126
Bibliography		127 - 130
Appendices		131 - 142
	Appendix A (Textbooks)	131
	Appendix B (Overview, By School Year)	132 - 142

Chapter 1: Introduction

Research Purpose

In 1999, the Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation released *Foundation for the Atlantic Canada Social Studies Curriculum*. This document stated, “As part of the regional agenda, development of external assessments in the core curriculum areas is being undertaken.”¹ It also asserted that external assessment “...can be used for all of the same purposes as classroom-based assessment, but it can also serve additional administrative and accountability purposes such as for admissions, placement, student certification, educational diagnosis and program evaluation.”² While the document did make the point that each provincial department of education would decide whether or not it would administer external assessment, the intention to shift towards external assessment appeared clear.

Nova Scotia’s students do not currently write any external assessment in social studies. The use of external assessment, however, has a long history in Nova Scotia. From 1893 to 1972, secondary-school students in Nova Scotia wrote provincial examinations at as many as four different grade levels. Provincial examinations were set in social studies subjects, always including history, throughout this era of provincial examinations. This study examines secondary-school history education during the era that provincial history examinations were written.

This study of Nova Scotia’s secondary-school history education is based upon an examination of five main sources of information connected to the provincial examination

era: the documents which organized the history courses, primarily the courses of study; the prescribed textbooks; the provincial examinations; the comments of the examiners; and the observations of many educational officials as well as *Journal of Education* comments. Aside from the textbooks, these sources can be found in the various series, volumes and numbers of the *Journal of Education* (and related publications and bulletins) published by the province of Nova Scotia throughout the provincial examination era.

A study of secondary-school history education during the provincial examination era is instructive at a time in which the province of Nova Scotia is considering the introduction of external assessment. This study gives insight into how provincial examinations affected secondary-school history education in Nova Scotia during the provincial examination era. It reveals the implications of external assessment based upon the record of the past. The past shows that provincial examinations severely constricted secondary history education in Nova Scotia by forcing teachers and students to focus upon the memorization of textbook information which students would be expected to recall on the provincial history examinations.

Organization of Thesis

The key components of this thesis are presented in the numbered chapters. Chapter 1 is entitled "Introduction." It states the purpose of the research being undertaken in this thesis. It explains the organization of the thesis and provides an overview of the era of provincial examinations. Chapter 1 also surveys the literature that is relevant to this thesis and defines some key terms. Chapter 2 is entitled "Methodology." It explains the principal sources that were consulted, and describes the procedure that was

used in the preparation of this thesis. Chapter 2 also describes the limitations encountered in the methodology used.

Chapter 3, “Secondary-School History Education: Organization and Content,” and Chapter 4, “Secondary-School History Education: The Examination System,” are companion chapters and they constitute the bulk of this thesis. These chapters detail secondary history education in Nova Scotia during the provincial examination era. Chapter 3 examines the documents that provided for the organization, and the textbooks that held the content, prescribed for history courses. Chapter 4 studies the provincial history examinations as well as the examiners’ comments. Together, these two chapters provide a close look at secondary-school history education during the provincial examination era in Nova Scotia.

Chapter 5 is entitled “Discussion” and comments on the findings disclosed by the evidence, revealed in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4, about the provincial examination era. It will also bridge these two chapters by underlining the strong union between those documents that organized, and provided content for, history courses, and the provincial history examinations which tested students in history courses. Chapter 5 also weaves in some of the observations made by educational officials throughout the provincial examination era and various comments published in the *Journal of Education*. Chapter 6 provides a summary of the findings of the thesis and explains some conclusions that the evidence suggests.

Following the Endnotes and Bibliography, the thesis concludes with two appendices. Appendix ‘A’ is a table showing all the textbooks prescribed for use during

the provincial examination era in secondary history courses with provincial examinations. The textbooks are organized according to grade and level. The range of years that the textbook was prescribed is noted as is the name of the textbook's author. Appendix 'B' is also a table which provides a survey of secondary history education in Nova Scotia during the provincial examination era. By school year, this table notes which secondary history courses had a provincial examination; whether or not those secondary history courses were compulsory; the prescribed textbooks for secondary history courses with a provincial examination; and the duration of each secondary history provincial examination.

Overview

What this thesis defines as the provincial examination era in Nova Scotia began with the provincial examinations of 1893 (following the 1892-1893 school year) and ended with the provincial examinations of 1972 (at the end of the 1971-1972 school year). Similar province-wide examinations were held prior to those administered in 1893, but were held exclusively for the purposes of licensing teachers. For example, the licensing examinations of 1892, after the 1891-1892 school year, the last examinations before the provincial examination era, were held for four different classes of teachers' licenses: an "Academic License (Grade A.)"; a "First Class License (Grade B.)"; a "Second Class License (Grade C.)"; and a "Third Class License (Grade D.)."³ Examination subjects for each class of license, in 1892, included various academic subjects unique to that class of license as well as two examinations directly related to the field of education: "School System And School Management" and "Teaching."⁴ While the titles for these two examinations were the same, the actual examinations were different for each distinct class

of license.

The 1892-1893 school year ushered in the provincial examination era. Province-wide examinations were again held but without the examinations in “School System And School Management” and “Teaching.” These new provincial examinations, in 1893, were based entirely upon the academic subjects prescribed for each of four secondary-school grade levels: “Grade A. (XII.)”; “Grade B. (XI.)”; “Grade C. (X.)”; and “Grade D. (IX.).”⁵ The job of the public school system in preparing future teachers for this same system remained important as a Minimum Professional Qualifications (M.P.Q.) Examination was simultaneously instituted with the new academic provincial examinations. A student, therefore, could write both and qualify as a teacher. While the provincial examinations and the M.P.Q. Examinations were clearly linked at this point, a distinct change had occurred beginning what this thesis refers to as the provincial examinations era, an era of examinations based upon the academic subjects prescribed for each grade level examined.

The provincial examination era lasted from 1893 to 1972. Initially, provincial examinations were held at all four secondary-school grade levels: grade A (or 12); grade B (or 11); grade C (or 10); and grade D (or 9).⁶ In 1908, grade 9 provincial examinations were not held. Provincial examinations continued for grades 10, 11, and 12 until 1932, when grade 10 provincial examinations were not administered. Grades 11 and 12 provincial examinations continued and were expanded when “General” level provincial examinations were added at each of these grade levels: grade 11 “General” provincial examinations were held for the first time in 1963 while grade 12 “General” provincial

examinations began in 1964. In 1969, the grade 11 “General” provincial examinations were not held. The following year, 1970, the grade 11 provincial examinations were also not administered. In 1971, the grade 12 “General” provincial examinations were not held. The last provincial examinations administered were at the grade 12 level in 1972. It should also be noted that during some years of the provincial examination era, some typically larger schools were accredited by the Department of Education. This meant that their students did not have to write the provincial examinations. As well, in the last few years of provincial examinations, some examinations were made optional for students.

History was a subject in the teacher licensing examinations held prior to 1893. It continued as an examination subject when the provincial examination era began, although history was not always a provincial examination subject at every grade level examined. History remained an examination subject in the final year of the provincial examination era. Appendix ‘B’ is a detailed table that identifies which secondary history courses had provincial examinations; which had compulsory examinations; the titles and authors of prescribed textbooks for history courses; and the duration of each course’s provincial history examination.

Literature Review

In Nova Scotia, the literature that addresses provincial examinations or secondary history education during the provincial examination era is not very recent. All the relevant literature was written during the provincial examination era. In 1938, C.E. Howard wrote *The High School Leaving Examinations* as an M.A. (Ed.) thesis at Acadia University. Howard complained about the effect of external school leaving examinations, lamenting

that they were largely tests of memory⁷ and that they tended to dictate the school program.⁸ Howard maintained that the examinations were the sole gauge of success in teaching⁹ and further noted that external examinations functioned “...as a clamp for the teacher’s imagination.”¹⁰ Howard also observed that provincial examinations dictated what went on in courses. Howard wrote, “The student is bound to the textbook because it is needed for the examination, and the curriculum is made to suit the examination, instead of vice-versa? Thus the passing of examinations has become the be-all and the end-all of teaching....”¹¹

In *The Teaching of History in Nova Scotian Schools*, a 1943 M.A. thesis at Acadia University, John Stewart Erskine made a number of observations about secondary history education in Nova Scotia, particularly about provincial history examinations and prescribed history textbooks. Erskine lamented the presence and effect of fact-oriented provincial history examinations. He wrote, “...I shall be glad to see the threat of the factual examination lifted from the subject. If the history has been experienced, it will be built into the mind; if not, it will be forgotten anyway.”¹² Erskine bemoaned the role of the textbook in history education in Nova Scotia. He noted, “A review of the textbooks at present in use can illustrate the curriculum better than any other method, for in general practice, well supported by the matriculation examinations, the textbook is the curriculum, a body of material submitted to the child for memorization and partial digestion.”¹³ Erskine later added, “...but it is the exceptional teacher still who uses any material beyond the prescribed textbook.”¹⁴

In 1969, Donald Murray Albert Trider wrote *Departmental Examinations: The*

Opinions of Selected School Personnel in Nova Scotia and Trends in Provincial Participation Across Canada as a M.A. thesis at Dalhousie University. To gauge opinion about provincial examinations in Nova Scotia, Trider interviewed supervisors, principals, and teachers. Trider tentatively recommended abolishing grade 11 provincial examinations while maintaining grade 12 provincial examinations.¹⁵ He noted that supervisors and principals did not favour grade 11 or 12 provincial examinations as they felt the examinations had an adverse effect on the approach teachers took toward their subject matter; in fact, they felt that the removal of provincial examinations could improve teaching. Trider wrote, "It was suggested that teachers should be carefully prepared for the time when these examinations will be removed as principals and supervisors believe that more effective teaching techniques could then be adopted."¹⁶

In his thesis, Trider also noted that a large majority of the teachers he interviewed felt that their approach to teaching was negatively affected by provincial examinations, as they felt rushed and emphasized topics that they felt would end up on the examination.¹⁷ Teachers felt that they would probably make changes, if the examinations were abolished, by studying certain topics in more depth, going on field trips, and emphasizing more research work.¹⁸ Trider also noted that a large percentage of teachers interviewed indicated that they would alter their selection of content, if there were no examinations, by reducing its scope, and adjusting it to the needs and interests of their students.¹⁹ Interestingly, however, Trider revealed that over half of the teachers interviewed were in favour of keeping the grade 12 provincial examinations.²⁰

John King Lorimer's 1970 M.A. (In Educ.) thesis at Dalhousie University, entitled

A Study of Nova Scotia's Provincial Examinations in English Since 1930, and a Comparison with Corresponding Examinations in Other English-Speaking Countries, examined Nova Scotia's provincial English examinations. Lorimer concluded that the English examinations should be kept but that they should be improved.²¹ Lorimer noted that grade 11 and 12 English courses were not good preparation for university and lamented that the examinations did not select the "good university material."²² Lorimer observed that the provincial English examinations in the 1940's and 1950's demanded cramming. He wrote that the examinations "...were selection of crammers, not of thinkers. Assiduous study is a virtue, but a 'university preparatory' course should also encourage independent thinking."²³ In the 1960's, Lorimer asserted that attempts to accommodate and promote pupils of low ability caused standards to be lowered. He argued that while the provincial English examinations of the 1960's encouraged independent thinking, they no longer selected students.²⁴

Glenda Jean Redden wrote *Fifty Years of Social Studies in the High Schools of Nova Scotia: An Examination of Certain Aspects of Education Affecting Social Studies as Taught in the High Schools of Nova Scotia from 1918-1968* as an M.A. (In Educ.) thesis at Dalhousie University in 1970. It is an extremely thorough observation of all secondary social studies courses, including history, in Nova Scotia during this time period. Redden looked at courses of study, teaching methods, textbooks, provincial examinations and the comments of the examiners, as well as curriculum revisions, international education philosophy, and Canadian educational philosophy. She also surveyed Nova Scotian social studies teachers regarding their feelings about the state of social studies

education.

Redden thoroughly described all but one of the social studies textbooks used in Nova Scotia between 1918-1968. She detailed most of the courses of study in social studies courses. Redden's thesis included many of the provincial examinations as well as the comments of the examiners. She also included a variety of published comments by officials involved in the Nova Scotian education system. Redden did not, however, offer any broad conclusions about the social studies education system that she so comprehensively covered. She did make occasional specific comments. In the section on the period 1918-1931, she wrote, "Criticism has been made regarding the effect of these examinations on teaching and learning."²⁵ In the section on 1945-1961, Redden observed that "...the questions asked changed from factual-memorization answers to an answer requiring interpretation and application."²⁶ In her survey of teachers, Redden found that a vast majority felt that provincial examinations influenced their teaching. The teachers indicated that the provincial examinations in social studies courses made them cover all topics equally, study answers to provincial examinations, feel pressure to complete the course, have no time for topics of interest, and stress facts instead of understanding.²⁷

A few other theses in Nova Scotia also touched on the affect of examinations. In a 1960 M.A. thesis at Saint Mary's University, entitled *Educational Development in Nova Scotia Under Henry Fraser Munro*, Arthur Thomas Conrad noted, "Examinations are everywhere, they play a leading part in education...."²⁸ Similarly, in *Some Historical Aspects of Testing and Their Impact on Education*, a 1965 M.A. thesis at Saint Mary's University, Herbert C. Fillmore stated, "Finally, with apologies to the curriculum

developers who too long have held the notion that curricula modify education, I submit that the testing movement is the prime innovator of education.”²⁹ Sister Genevieve Petitpas, in *A Classification of the New Brunswick Provincial Examinations in Grade XII History According to B.S. Bloom, Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Handbook I: Cognitive Domain*, a M.Ed. thesis at Saint Francis Xavier University, examined grade 12 provincial history examinations in New Brunswick. Petitpas noted that the questions focused on the recall of textbook information, and that there were no comprehension and application questions and only one analysis question on grade 12 New Brunswick grade 12 provincial examinations between 1960 and 1970.³⁰

A number of the theses that addressed the provincial examination system in Nova Scotia arrived at conclusions, or made comments or observations, about the effect of the examination system. Whether examining the provincial examinations in general, or in a specific subject areas, these theses noted that the provincial examinations affected education by causing it to stress memorization and the recall of factual information; limit the type of instruction; and make textbooks the focus of courses. While some of the theses examined history, or social studies, education in Nova Scotia, none of them undertook a comprehensive study of the provincial history examination era with the purpose of determining if, and how, the provincial history examinations affected secondary history education. This study fills a gap in the existing literature in Nova Scotia. It augments those theses which have surveyed secondary history education during periods of the provincial examination era. It also contributes new findings, in the field of history, that corroborate some similar conclusions, and observations, reached about Nova Scotia’s

provincial examinations in general, or in another discipline.

Outside of Nova Scotia, and much more recently, more has been written on the topic of provincial examinations. John O. Anderson, and others, wrote *The Impact of Provincial Examinations on Education in British Columbia: General Report* in 1990. They surveyed grade 12 students, parents of grade 12 students, teachers of grade 12 students, school counselors, high school principals, and thirty-five district superintendents. This wide ranging report made a number of observations and recommendations. They recommended that the examination program be maintained in British Columbia. They suggested, however, that the British Columbia Ministry of Education should increase the presence of higher order cognitive skills on the examinations.³¹ The report noted that provincial examinations had an effect on teaching practice as the examinations had become central to instruction and content.³² They noted that copies of old examinations were used in classes.³³ They also noted that while the examinations caused teachers to stick more closely to the curriculum, which they considered a positive thing, the examinations also had the negative effect of narrowing the curriculum.³⁴

Also in 1990, David J. Bateson, one of co-authors of the preceding report, wrote *What Are Some of the Effects of Province-Wide Examinations: The Findings*. Bateson noted that the provincial examinations in British Columbia were seen as beneficial to the educational system.³⁵ Bateson noted, however, that, according to school officials, the provincial examinations affected teaching practices.³⁶ The provincial examinations become the focus of content and instruction which resulted in “teaching to the test.”³⁷ As well, the examinations caused a preoccupation with the memorization of knowledge as opposed to

critical thinking and problem solving.³⁸

External Examinations and the Curriculum: Do They Monitor or Control was published in 1992 by Marvin F. Wideen, Thomas O'Shea, and George Ivany. They studied the grade 12 final examinations in secondary science in British Columbia as well as that province's grade 10 science assessments. Using interviews of students, teachers, principals, as well as district and provincial administrators, they found that the grade 12 secondary science examinations had a big effect on teaching in grade 12, and concluded that the examinations were more than just performance indicators.³⁹ They argued that the examinations seemed to be "driving or justifying a type of instruction."⁴⁰ Wideen, O'Shea, and Ivany also noted that success on provincial secondary science examinations depended mostly on the memorization of curriculum content.⁴¹

The Program Evaluation and Methodology Division of the United States General Accounting Office, in 1993, published *Educational Testing: The Canadian Experience with Standards, Examinations, and Assessments. Report to Congressional Requesters*. This report broadly reviewed assessment in Canadian education to provide assistance for the United States as it considered national testing. It stated that most Canadian educators, and the public, support testing programs. It noted, however, that there was a "consensus of opinion among the individuals we interviewed regarding the potent influence of testing on both what is taught and how it is taught."⁴²

The recent studies, largely of the provincial examination system in British Columbia in general, as well as in science, provided findings remarkably similar to some of those reached by many of the theses surveyed in Nova Scotia; particularly, the emphasis

that the provincial examinations placed on recall and on textbooks, and the effect that the examination had on teaching and instruction. As British Columbia has already returned to provincial examinations, the fact that these recent conclusions and observations are similar to those reached during the provincial examination era in Nova Scotia is instructive at a time when Nova Scotia is also considering a return to external assessments in secondary history. The recent studies in British Columbia underscore the importance of this study at this time in Nova Scotia.

Definitions

There are no new or technical definitions introduced or used in this thesis. During the provincial examination era, however, a number of different terms were used to describe the documents employed to organize secondary courses. For the 1891-1892 school year, the year prior to the beginning of the provincial examination era, the *Journal of Education* called its descriptions of all secondary-school courses the “Syllabus of Examination, agreeably to which the Examinations of 1892 are to be conducted.”⁴³ For the 1892-1893 school year, the first of the provincial examination era, the organization of all secondary courses was entitled “High School Curriculum.”⁴⁴ Terms such as “Special Directions for High Schools”⁴⁵ and, later, “Special Prescriptions for High Schools”⁴⁶ were also used. The “Special Directions” and “Special Prescriptions” identified the organization in each of the specific secondary-school courses while the “General Directions”⁴⁷ and, later, “General Prescriptions”⁴⁸ described broader goals of education, by subject area, at all grade levels. “Courses of Study for the Public Schools of Nova Scotia,”⁴⁹ “Course of Study,”⁵⁰ and “Program of Studies”⁵¹ were other terms that were

used to describe the organization of secondary courses in Nova Scotia during the provincial examination era.

As so many terms were used, it can be confusing. This study, in the interests of clarity and consistency, wishes to define one term to be used throughout. The term **course of study** will be used to define the official document which prescribed the organization in a specific secondary history course. This use of the term seems consistent with a definition given in the *Journal of Education* in April 1921. It wrote, “*Course of study*, which means the quantity, quality and method of the work in *any given subject* of instruction.”⁵² The term **courses of study** will be used as the plural.

Chapter 2: Methodology

Sources

To examine the provincial examination era — from the 1892-1893 school year until the 1971-1972 school year — sources were sought which would provide primary evidence. The *Journal of Education* (and related publications and bulletins), teaching guides, and the numerous textbooks prescribed for various secondary-school history courses were the main sources that were examined.

The *Journal of Education* provides a record of the provincial examinations written in history from the first of the provincial examination era in 1893 up to, and including, the provincial examinations of 1950. Prior to 1947, the examinations were published in the *Journal of Education* itself. The provincial examinations from 1947 to 1950 were published as appendices to the *Journal of Education*, entitled *Provincial Examinations 19__*. From the provincial examinations of 1951 until 1970, the provincial examinations were published annually as an Education Office Bulletin, again entitled *Provincial Examinations 19__*. Although documents note that provincial history examinations were written in 1971 and 1972, they were not found.

Like the provincial examinations, the comments of those who evaluated the provincial examinations were also published in the *Journal of Education*. Until the provincial examinations of 1932, however, the comments of those who had evaluated the provincial examinations were only sporadically published in the *Journal of Education*. Starting in 1932, the comments were regularly published in the *Journal of Education* up to, and including, the comments regarding the provincial examinations of 1950. From

1947 to 1950, the examiners' comments were published with the corresponding provincial examinations as appendices to the *Journal of Education*, entitled *Provincial Examinations 19__*. Similarly, from 1951 to 1970, the comments of the examiners were published annually with the provincial examinations as part of an Education Office Bulletin called *Provincial Examinations 19__*. As a result, the examiners' comments were also not found for either 1971 or 1972.

The *Journal of Education* provides a chronicle of those documents which organized secondary history courses. It published the courses of study for history courses from the beginning of the provincial examination era in 1892-1893 up to, and including, the 1951-1952 school year. For the 1952-1953 school year, through to the school last year of the provincial examination era in 1971-1972, the courses of study were published annually as an Education Office Bulletin, always entitled *Program of Studies in the School of Nova Scotia 19__ - __*. The *Journal of Education* also published the "General Directions," later "General Prescriptions," for all public school "Geography and History" instruction, including secondary-school history courses. They were broad statements that applied to all grades with history and geography classes or courses. The "Geography and History" part of the "General Directions" were officially applicable to all secondary history courses beginning in 1894-1895 and lasting until at least 1921.

As an official publication for Nova Scotia's public schools throughout the provincial examination era, the *Journal of Education* contains a vast amount of other information about education in the province of Nova Scotia. It published articles that directly, and indirectly, related to secondary history education in Nova Scotia. It

sometimes issued short commentaries on various aspects of history education. Reports from the Chief Inspector of Schools, reports on educational reform and speeches and comments from educational officials in Nova Scotia can be found in the *Journal of Education*.

Like the courses of study, various published teaching guides also provide evidence about the organization of secondary history education in Nova Scotia during the provincial examination era. The first teaching guide for secondary-school history was published for the 1958-1959 school year. The course of study for that same year refers teachers to the guide *Social Sciences (Grades 10-12): A Teaching Guide*. This teaching guide remained in circulation through the end of the provincial examination era. The general history courses also had teaching guides: separately at first and then as *General History: Grades 10-12*. Such general teaching guides were first noted in the course of study in 1964-1965 and remained through the end of the general provincial history examinations in 1970.

The prescribed textbooks in secondary-school history during the provincial examination era clearly indicate what it was that students had to learn. Eight textbooks (plus one at the grade 13, or grade 12 final, level for the one year it existed) were used at the grade 12 level during the full eighty years of the provincial examination era that it had a provincial examination. In addition, one textbook was used in grade 12 general during the seven years that it had a provincial examination. Six textbooks, and one booklet, were prescribed for grade 11 history during the sixty-two years that it had a provincial examination. In addition, one textbook was used in grade 11 general history during the six years that it had a provincial examination. Essentially three textbooks, and one

booklet, were used during the twenty-four years that a provincial examination was given in grade 10 history. One other was briefly offered as an alternative to one of the three. As well, still one other was basically the same as its predecessor and, although its name changed with the omission of the word *Ontario*, the author was the same. Appendix 'A' provides a full account of the various prescribed textbooks used in secondary-school history during the provincial examination era.

Procedure

In the preceding account of the resources consulted, five types of primary evidence were discussed: the courses of study (as well as the early "General Directions" and later teaching guides); the textbooks; the provincial examinations; the comments of those who evaluated the provincial examinations; and various observations of educational officials and other comments published in the *Journal of Education*. The courses of study (and the "General Directions" and teaching guides) were the documents prescribing the organization of each history course. It would seem logical, therefore, that they should be studied first. This study examined them first as they described how secondary history courses should be arranged.

The prescribed textbooks were examined next by this study. As textbooks contained the content of the courses, their study would appear to logically follow an examination of the organization of these courses. This decision was affirmed by the inordinate importance given prescribed textbooks by history courses of study in Nova Scotia during the provincial examination era. All but one of the prescribed textbooks used in secondary history courses during the provincial examination era were examined. The

exception was Myers' *Ancient History* (prescribed for grade 12 history from 1907-1908 until 1913-1914). Special attention was given to studying of the organization of each textbook and to determining the content of each textbook.

Following the courses of study and the prescribed textbooks, the provincial examinations were examined. Provincial history examinations were the culmination of any course that had them. They examined students after they had completed their history course. As a result, it seems logical to study the provincial examinations following the examination of courses of study and textbooks as the examinations were administered after the conclusion of courses and tested what students learned from courses described by the courses of study and provided content by the prescribed textbooks.

The comments of those who evaluated the provincial examinations in secondary history were studied following the examinations themselves. These comments provide valuable insight into how well the examiners felt that students did on the provincial history examinations. More specifically, the examiners' comments identified areas in which students were either strong or weak in a particular year. They also often provided hints or suggestions, for teachers in particular, as to what the history examiners were looking for in student answers.

Various comments by educational officials and inspectors, and various notes, comments, articles, and reports published in the *Journal of Education* were examined last. These sources of information provide some insight into the expectations of, and problems with, education in general, and specifically secondary history education, during the provincial examination era as seen by those in positions of authority in the public

education system in Nova Scotia.

Limitations

The scope of this study is limited to what the study refers to as the provincial examination era (1892-1893 to 1971-1972). This time period was chosen as it represents the only era in Nova Scotia's history in which external assessment, in the form of provincial examinations, was administered solely on the basis of "scholarship" in the courses offered for provincial examination, including secondary history courses. Prior to the 1892-1893 school year, culminating in the provincial examinations of 1893, there had been licensing examinations held for those wishing to become teachers. While these licensing examinations functioned as a *de facto* provincial examination, they did contain parts that examined students about teaching and the school system. These licensing examinations were not purely, therefore, an examination of "scholarship" in particular subject areas and, therefore, were not considered in this study.

In the late 1960's, provincial examinations began to slowly be phased out: the grade 11 general provincial examination in history was last written in 1968; grade 11 history provincial examinations were eliminated after 1969; and grade 12 general history provincial examinations were not written after 1970. While the Department of Education's annual reports (for the years ending July 31st, 1971 and July 31st 1972) stated that grade 12 provincial examinations were written in both 1971 and 1972, no copies of these provincial examinations could be located. It also seems that these last provincial examinations were not written by as many students as before as some examinations became optional in their final few years. Despite dwindling interest and a reduced

numbers of students, provincial history examinations did continue until 1972, the last year of what this study refers to as the provincial examination era in Nova Scotia. As a result, this study does not examine secondary history education after 1972.

Chapter 3: Secondary-School History Education: Organization and Content

Introduction

During the provincial examination era in Nova Scotia, examinations were written in various secondary history courses. The documents that organized these courses, and the textbooks that supplied their content, provide abundant information about secondary history education in Nova Scotia from 1892 until 1972. The organization of each history course was primarily described by its course of study. The course of study often directly conveyed information about the provincial examination in that course. Courses of study in secondary history usually involved little more than a recitation of the author's name and the name of the prescribed textbook. History textbooks, as a result, essentially organized history courses. They also provided the required course content. These textbooks were secondary sources which contained, and tightly arranged, a mass of detailed historical information. History textbooks, thus, both organized and provided the content for history courses. In doing so, they worked in unison with the provincial history examinations. The examinations, which asked recall type questions, required history courses that focused on the memorization of textbook information. The courses of study and textbooks both affirm that the provincial examinations got what they were demanding.

Organization

Throughout the provincial examination era in Nova Scotia, the organization of each secondary history course was primarily described in its course of study. Almost without exception, the course of study deferred to the prescribed textbook. In many cases, the course of study simply named the textbook and its author. Where greater detail

was provided, it usually only specified those parts of the textbook that were to be studied. Similarly, in other cases, the course of study simply noted what was to be studied and then differentiated between the material that would, or would not, be tested on the provincial history examination. With or without additional details, the course of study merely described the textbook information which the provincial examination would cover. Many courses of study further revealed the importance of the provincial examinations by describing the format of the examination, giving its point value, indicating its duration, or specifying the number, or type, of questions that the examination would ask.

In addition to the course of study, the “General Directions,” later “General Prescriptions,” from the *Journal of Education*, the *Handbook to the Course of Study*, and teaching guides were other documents which, at various times in the provincial examination era, addressed the organization of secondary history courses. While providing more detail than the courses of study, these documents rarely provided more real help than what the course of study, and its prescribed textbook, supplied. The exceptions, like the grade 11 teaching guide, were notable and truly stood out. The provincial history examinations, nonetheless, carried on asking questions that simply demanded the recall of information from the textbook.

Throughout the provincial examination era in Nova Scotia, the course of study provided descriptions of secondary history courses which primarily consisted of naming the prescribed textbooks. As grade 12 was the only grade level to have had a provincial examination every year of the provincial examination era, it is a fitting departure point for demonstrating the pervasiveness of textbooks as the courses of study in history. The very

first course of study for history in grade 12, or grade 'A' as it was then called, was published in the *Journal of Education* for the 1892-1893 school year. It read, "BRITISH HISTORY — 100: As in *Green's Short History of the English People*, with the Canadian Constitution."¹ This short entry was the entire course of study for grade 12 history in Nova Scotia in 1892-1893. The primary textbook, by Green, essentially provided both the organization and the content for grade 12 history. The "Canadian Constitution" was not a textbook; it was a supplemental part of the course of study. On the provincial examinations while this course of study description was in force (1892-1893 to 1897-1898), only one question per year was asked on the Canadian Constitution (out of six or seven in total). As only five questions had to be answered, the Canadian Constitution questions could be avoided. Green's prescribed textbook was the primary instrument which provided the organization and content of grade 12 history at that time. The use of the phrase "as in," in the course of study description, suggested that the British History to be studied in grade 12 was exclusively the British History which was contained in Green's textbook.

Nothing significant was added to the course of study for grade 12 history until the 1898-1899 school year, when "...and *Clement's History of Canada*"² was added and the "...with the Canadian Constitution"³ phrase was dropped. The *Journal of Education*, in 1898-1899, altered its grade 12 history course of study, as follows, to accommodate this change. It read, "HISTORY. — 100: As in *Green's Short History of the English People* [sic], and *Clement's History of Canada*."⁴ While this particular course of study for grade 12 history changed, the character of the course of study stayed the same. Like the

Canadian Constitution, only one of the six or seven examination questions was asked on Clement's textbook and that question could still be avoided (except on the 1904 grade 12 provincial history examination when it was made compulsory). The course of study, therefore, remained an exercise in naming the textbook: in this case, Green's *Short History of the English People*. To further illustrate this point at the grade 12 level, *Ancient Times*, by Breasted, was the textbook for grade 12 history from 1928-1929 to 1957-1958. The course of study remained "...Breasted's *Ancient Times*"⁵ for each of those twenty-eight years.

Like those at the grade 12 level, grade 11 and grade 10 courses of study in history predominantly just listed the prescribed textbook. The first grade 11 course of study for a course solely in history appeared in the *Journal of Education* for the 1907-1908 school year. That course of study description remained unchanged through to, and including, the 1913-1914 school year. It indicated, "HISTORY: — General History as in *Swinton*."⁶ This was the entire course of study for grade 11 history; grade 11 history was Swinton's textbook. In the 1913-1914 course of study, the final year of Swinton's textbook, the following note was added in brackets: "For 1914-1915, Myer's [sic] *A Short History of Ancient Times* (Ginn, Boston), \$1.10."⁷ The *Journal of Education*, thus, gave advance notice of a change in the course of study which was, in essence, a textbook change. As with many textbook changes in the provincial examination era, this change occurred as the time or setting of the history at a particular grade level was altered making necessary a new textbook and, therefore, a similarly new course of study.

Myers' *A Short History of Ancient Times* was the grade 11 history textbook from

1914-1915 through the end of the 1926-1927 school year. While the textbook changed, the nature of the course of study did not: it remained an exercise in naming the prescribed textbook. The 1914-1915 course of study for grade 11 history read, "HISTORY: — Myers' *A Short History of Ancient Times* (Ginn, Boston, \$1.10)."⁸ For the next twelve years, the only thing that ever changed in the grade 11 course of study was whether or not the publisher, city, and price of the textbook was included. What stayed the same was that Myers' textbook provided the content and the organization for grade 11 history; according to the course of study, it was, for all intents and purposes, grade 11 history. Also for that same 1914-1915 school year, the grade 10 history course of study contributes similar evidence. It described grade 10 history as, "HISTORY: — Review of British History as in '*Outlines of British History*,' and oral lessons by teachers based on '*Canadian Civics*.'"⁹ The course of study in this excerpt merely named the prescribed textbooks for grade 10 history. Throughout the provincial examination era in Nova Scotia, courses of study for all levels of secondary history often just listed the prescribed textbook.

When history courses of study appeared to go beyond simply naming the textbook, they often did so only to specify which parts of the textbook were to be covered. By indicating the parts to be done, or to be omitted, such courses of study, while containing more information, provided no more direction for history course organization than those which merely named the textbook. At the grade 12 level, for the school year 1911-1912, the course of study simply prescribed Myers' *Ancient History* (revised edition) as the textbook.¹⁰ For the preceding three, and following two, school years, however, the course

of study was slightly different. It read, "HISTORY: — Myers' *Ancient History* (revised edition), Parts I, II and III."¹¹ While this second course of study description for grade 12 history was more detailed than those just listing textbooks, it did not provide any more direction as to the organization of the course. It only specified the parts of the named textbook which would be studied and, by inference, which parts would not be studied.

The specification of the parts of the prescribed textbook to be omitted can also be found in grade 11 history. From 1928-1929 through 1933-1934, the course of study description for grade 11 history was as follows:

History: — (a) West's *Modern Progress* (Allyn & Bacon) omitting Chapters II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, XXVIII, XXIX, XXX, XXXI, XXXII, XXXIII, XXXIX, and XL. (b) References by the teacher to the chapters in the Grade X History text dealing with Canada from 1914 to the present. (c) A booklet published by the League of Nations Society in Canada entitled *A New World or The League of Nations*. This booklet may be obtained from the booksellers in the same way as other text books.¹²

This course of study description was quite detailed compared to the previous examples: in the "(a)" part, it listed the chapters from the primary textbook that could be omitted, and, thus by inference, pointed out which parts of the textbook had to be covered; in the "(b)" part, it pointed out the chapters that needed to be referred to in a supplemental textbook (grade 10 history); and in the "(c)" part, it identified a supplemental booklet. While this course of study description was longer, it was not fundamentally different from the previous examples which simply named the textbook.

Grade 11 history courses of study sometimes clearly stipulated the specific pages to be studied. With the prescribed textbook *The Record of Mankind*, for the 1958-1959 school year, the course of study noted, “*The Record of Mankind* — from page 198 to the end of the book....”¹³ For 1960-1961, the course of study was changed, and noted, “*The Record of Mankind* — from page 268 to the end of the book....”¹⁴ The next year, 1961-1962, the course of study further clarified the precise pages that grade 11 history would cover. It specified, “The material to be used in this course is pages 268 to 713.”¹⁵ Pages 268-713, of *The Record of Mankind*, remained a course of study directive through the remaining years that grade 11 history had a provincial examination. As with the grade 12 example, these excerpts from grade 11 courses of study description provide no more instruction than those which merely named the prescribed textbooks.

Like grade 11 and grade 12, grade 10 history courses of study specified the parts of the textbook that were to be covered or omitted. The courses of study from 1928-1929 to the last year that grade 10 had a provincial examination administered, 1930-1931, were very particular about what material was to be covered. The 1928-1929 course of study for grade 10 history read as follows:

(a) CANADIAN HISTORY: — MacArthur’s [sic] *History of Canada for High Schools*, Chap. XII to end of book. (b) CIVICS: — Bourinot’s *How Canada is Governed* (Copp, Clark) in the hands of the teachers for oral lessons. (Omit the fine print on pages 43 to 46; also pages 241 to 291 excepting the part dealing with Education in Nova Scotia; omit also pages 311-351). (c) A booklet published by the League of Nations Society in Canada entitled *A New World or The League of Nations*. This booklet may be obtained from the booksellers in the same way that all other text books are obtained.¹⁶

This course of study description was more detailed than most in the provincial examination era. It was, however, really no different than those which just named the textbook. It specified the parts of the primary textbook that were to be studied by the students and, thus by inference, those parts that were not to be studied. It also pointed out the pages, and sometimes even the type of print, that grade 10 history teachers were supposed to omit when giving oral lessons from the supplemental textbook. While it did contain more information, this course of study, like the examples from the grade 11 and grade 12 levels, provided no more guidance for the organization of the grade 10 history course than those which merely cited the prescribed textbook.

While some history courses of study simply specified which parts of the textbook were to be done, some even went a step further. Courses of study in secondary history sometimes not only indicated which parts of a textbook were to be covered, but noted which of those parts covered would be required for the provincial history examination. The course of study for grade 12 history in 1961-1962 provides a good example. That year, the following description, regarding one of the prescribed textbooks, *North America and the Modern World*, was added to the description of grade 12 history, "Book Four, 'Problems of the Twentieth Century' (pages 313-410 inclusive) should be read by all pupils, but it is not required for examination purposes."¹⁷ While this addition to the course of study description for grade 12 history made it more detailed than the original, the course of study did no more than name the textbook: it simply differentiated between those parts that the students needed to study and know, and those parts the students were supposed to study but were not required to know, for the grade 12 provincial history

examination.

Grade 11 history also provides good examples of courses of study that specified which parts, of those to be covered, needed to be known for the provincial examination.

The course of study for 1935-1936 described grade 11 history as follows:

History (one two-hour paper) : — *The Story of Civilization*, by Seary and Patterson [sic]. Close study of parts seven and eight, pages 527 to 763 [sic — should be 673] inclusive, is not required, and no examination questions will be drawn from these sections. However, these sections should be assigned for supplementary reading and there should be some discussion of them in class.¹⁸

While more detailed, this course of study was again not really different in nature from those which simply named the textbook: it differentiated the parts of the textbook that the students needed to both study and know for the provincial examination, and those parts of the textbook that the students were supposed to study but were not required to know on the provincial examination.

Similarly, the course of study description for grade 11 history in 1952-1953 suggested that the latter part of the prescribed textbook, while it was to be completed, was not so important as the part that preceded it. This description read as follows:

History

The Record of Mankind, the complete text; however, chapter 19 to the end of the book shall be studied more particularly for the purpose of providing background material for an understanding of current affairs.

See note re provincial examination on page 36 of this *Bulletin*.¹⁹

Chapter 19 of *The Record of Mankind* was on World War I and the subsequent chapters (20 - 23) dealt with ensuing topics. The grade 11 provincial history examination at the end of that school year, 1953, contained no questions, aside from a prescribed current affairs questions (explained in the note referred to in the preceding extract), on World War I or subsequent topics. The course of study, thus, articulated the parts of the textbook that needed to be covered for the provincial examination.

While grade 10 history had a provincial examination for far fewer years than either the grade 11 or grade 12 courses, there were examples of its courses of study identifying the parts of prescribed textbook which needed to be known for the provincial examination. For the school year 1916-1917, the course of study described grade 10 history as follows:

History: — *Ontario High School History of England* by Wrong (Macmillan), from Chapter IX to the end of the book. (The provincial examination questions shall be confined to this part of the History only altho [sic] the whole book is to be read by the pupils in class.) Oral lessons by teachers based on *Canadian Civics, N. S. Edition* (Copp, Clark).²⁰

The above excerpt from the course of study indicates that even though the description was more detailed, it had not gone beyond naming textbooks: it simply specified which parts of the primary textbook had to be studied and known for the provincial examination, and which parts were to be studied but did not have to be known for the provincial examination. Again, while containing additional information, these courses of study offered no more instruction as to history course organization than those courses of study which merely stipulated the prescribed textbook.

An small error in the grade 10 history course of study printed in the April 1928 *Journal of Education* triggered an example of the differentiation between what was supposed to be covered and what was required to be known for a provincial history examination. The error led to a correction. A note, entitled “Canadian History Prescription Grade X,” in the October 1928 *Journal of Education*, explained that the course of study, in reference to McArthur’s *History of Canada for High Schools*, should have stipulated “Chap. XII to end of book” instead of “Chap. XIII to end of book.”²¹ More importantly, however, this note went on to add, “No imperative examination question will be taken from the first eleven chapters, but these chapters should be read by the students although not taken up in class.”²² Neither was this note specifying, as some courses of study did, that only certain parts of the textbook were to be studied and examined, nor was it differentiating, as some other courses of study did, that certain parts were to be studied and examined while other were to be studied but would not be examined. The note was explaining that students were required to read the first eleven chapters of McArthur’s *History of Canada for High Schools* although they would neither discuss those chapters in their grade 10 history classes, nor be responsible for those chapters on the grade 10 provincial history examination.

Throughout the provincial examination era in Nova Scotia, most secondary history course of study descriptions consisted of naming the prescribed textbooks, specifying which parts of the textbooks were to be covered, or noting which textbook parts to be studied would be tested on the provincial history examination. These three traits, however, were based on a common premise: the textbook was the course of study. The

textbook not only provided the content for secondary history courses, but it also organized those courses. A simple phrase repeated on five consecutive grade 12 history courses of study would seem to reinforce this conclusion. From 1914-1915 to 1926-1928, Myers' *A Short History of Medieval and Modern Times* was the grade 12 history textbook. The course of study description of this course simply named the textbook except for the period 1922-1923 to 1926-1927, when the phrase "...brought up to date by the teacher"²³ was placed immediately after the title of the textbook. This phrase concisely articulated a view of the textbook as that which defined not only the content of history courses, but its whole organization as well. It was the textbook, and not the course of study or medieval and modern history in this case, that the teachers were being requested to bring up to date.

While history courses of study indicated that they handed the textbooks the task of organizing secondary history courses in Nova Scotia during the provincial examination era, the courses of study also reflected the importance of provincial examinations. Provincial history examinations were so significant in secondary history courses that they often warranted mention in courses of study. The format, point value, or the duration of the provincial examination, or even the number or type of questions on it, were sometimes included in courses of study; thus, demonstrating the importance of the provincial history examination on documents which defined the organization of history courses.

The provincial history examination format was occasionally included in the course of study. At the grade 12 level, in 1966-1967, *The North American Nations* replaced *North America in the Modern World* as a prescribed textbook. The change of textbook

was the primary change to the course of study for grade 12 history that year; it did, however, also contain a significant addition. The following note appeared with the grade 12 history course of study from 1966-1967 to 1970-1971:

(NOTE: The structure of the provincial examinations in history in Grade 12 will be as follows: A. Colonial and American history: six questions, of which three will be required; B. Canadian history: five questions, of which two will be required; C. Government: three questions, of which two will be required; one additional question from A, B, or C will be required, so that eight questions in all will constitute a complete paper.)²⁴

This excerpt illustrates the close relationship between the course of study and the provincial examination. This note, last found during the second to last school year of the provincial examination era, brought the provincial examination directly into the course of study. The format of the provincial examination was of such importance that it had to be included in the course of study, a document which guided the organization of each secondary history course.

The format of the grade 11 provincial history examination was also referred to in courses of study. From 1953-1954 to the final grade 11 provincial examinations, the examination format was published. Although it was not originally published as part of the course of study description for grade 11 history, it did appear either in the same publication in a section on provincial examinations or, later, in an Education Office Gazette. For 1966-1967, however, the format of the grade 11 provincial history examination was directly published as part of the grade 11 course of study description.

This reference to the exam structure remained in the course of study through to the last provincial examination at that grade level in 1969. The part of the 1966-1967 course of study description, regarding the provincial examination format, read as follows:

(NOTE: The Grade 11 history examination will consist of two parts:

- A: on pages 268-518 of the prescribed textbook; eight questions, of which five will be required:
- B: on page 518 to the end of the prescribed textbook; five questions, of which three will be required (which may include a current events question of wide significance.) Eight questions will constitute a complete paper.)²⁵

Again, as this example attests, the provincial examination was so important that its format was directly noted on the course of study. The provincial examination was divided into two parts. The prescribed grade 11 textbook at that time, *The Record of Mankind*, was not obviously divided into such parts. In fact, a quick look at the divisions imposed by the provincial examinations bears this out. The examination's section 'A' began with page 268 in *The Record of Mankind*, which began Chapter 13, "The Age of Autocracy," the fourth and last chapter in Part V, "The Dawn of Modern Times."²⁶ Section 'A' ended with the end of Chapter 18, "A New Race for Colonies," the first chapter of Part VIII, "Rivalry Among the Great Powers."²⁷ The examination's section 'B' started on page 518 of the textbook, which started Chapter 19, "World War I," the second of three chapters in Part VIII, "Rivalry Among the Great Powers."²⁸ Section 'B' ended with the closing chapters of *The Record of Mankind*.²⁹ Since the grade 11 provincial history examination

was divided into two parts, the course of study, its prescribed textbook, and, thus, the organization of the grade 11 history course would have followed suit. The inclusion of the examination format with the course of study not only underlined its importance, but would have been a cue calculated to help teachers organize their courses in a manner that would improve student readiness for, and performance on, the provincial history examinations.

Like the examination format, the point value and duration of provincial history examinations were occasionally included in courses of study. The first grade 12 history course of study from 1892-1893, cited earlier in this chapter, provides an example of the inclusion of the examination's value. It began, "British History — 100...."³⁰ The number "100" represented the number of points out of which the provincial examination would be marked. It remained a part of the course of study description every year until 1902-1903. The 1935-1936 grade 11 history course of study, also cited earlier in this chapter, provided an obvious example of the incorporation of the examination's duration. It began, "History (one two-hour paper)...."³¹ The course of study, thus, identified that the grade 11 history examination would consist of one examination paper with a duration of two hours. Including the 1937-1938 course of study, which revealed that the grade 11 provincial history examination would be "...one two-and-one-half hour paper....,"³² the duration of the examination was included in the course of study up to, and including, the 1951-1952 school year. Similarly in grade 12, the course of study from 1938-1939 to 1951-1952 noted that the provincial examination would consist of "...one two-and-one-half hour paper...."³³ Including the point value or duration of the examination in the

course of study again emphasized the importance of the provincial history examination; it was so significant that its value, or length, was communicated in a document that defined the organization of secondary history courses.

Along with the format, the value, or the length of provincial examinations, the number or type of examination questions were sometimes noted in courses of study. In 1907-1908, the first year of a grade 10 provincial examination exclusively in history, the course of study made reference to a question on the provincial examination. The second part of the description read, "...and oral lessons by teacher based on Bourinot's 'How Canada is Governed' (one question)."³⁴ The course of study was declaring that there would be one question on the part of the course taught orally by the teacher. The following year, it was increased to two questions, then, the next year, to three questions, which remained until the 1914-1915 school year. In this example, the provincial examination was so important that it was noted in the course of study. Indeed, indicating whether one, two, or three question were to be asked on Bourinot's book, or the subsequently prescribed Jenkins' *Canadian Civics*, would have provided a clear a directive which would have affected the manner in which this grade 10 history course was organized.

Another example of including information about provincial history examination questions in courses of study occurred in grade 11 history in 1939-1940. For 1939-1940, the course of study description was essentially the same as that of 1935-1936, cited previously in this chapter. There is one addition, however, that first appeared for 1939-1940 school year. Aside from the annual date change, it remained in the course of study

through 1951-1952. In 1939-1940, this addition read, “Note: — The examination in History in 1940 will include one compulsory question on important world events during the year.”³⁵ Though it might be considered laudable at any time, let alone in 1939, to encourage the teaching of current events in a history course, the course of study was not literally asking teachers to teach world events. It stated that the provincial examination would have a compulsory question on world events. Of course, the implication was that teachers would prepare their students for this provincial examination and, thus, this question. The way the note was phrased with its powerful implication for teachers, and the fact that it appeared in the course of study, however, suggested that provincial history examinations strongly influenced the organization of secondary history in Nova Scotia during the provincial examination era.

While the course of study was the primary document that described the organization each history course, other documents were published which addressed the organization of, and instruction in, secondary history courses: the “General Directions,” later “General Prescriptions,” published for the first time in April 1893 *Journal of Education*; the *Handbook to the Course of Study*, published in 1935; and *Social Sciences (Grades 10-12): A Teaching Guide* introduced in 1958. These documents, while frequently describing a history much differently than the various courses of study, were rarely, if ever, reflected in the questions asked on the provincial examinations in secondary history.

In the early part of the provincial examination era, the “General Directions” or “General Prescriptions” were regularly published in the *Journal of Education*, as well as

on the back of school registers. In April 1893, for “Geography and History,” the *Journal of Education* wrote in its “General Directions”:

The verbal memorizing of these lessons at home by he [sic] pupil is for the most part injurious to the character of the memory and useless as practical knowledge. For in spite of all cautions and instructions to the contrary, most pupils when left to themselves mentally associate the facts memorized with the review and perfecting of the lessons by the pupils in the proper manner by reference to the several items in the text. Local or current events, historical, conomic [sic] or scientific, should be skilfully used to interpret the remote in time and place.³⁶

The “General Prescription” for “Geography and History” published in the April 1921 *Journal of Education* was more lengthy. It began:

The facts of geography and history even of school geography and history — are too numerous and extensive to be memorized verbally. Both these studies should begin with the direct observation and consideration of the home-district. Comprehending the larger and more obvious features of his geographica and civic environment, the child will then be in a position to look wider afield. Beginning at home, geography and history may with profit continue to be a study of contrasts and comparisons of distant lands and of events remote in time with those of our own neighbourhood nation, and era.³⁷

After providing some specific advice for geography, this “General Prescription” continued with some advice for history:

In the history of the highest grades, a few great events and dates in each succeeding epoch should be seized upon as waymarks of politica [sic]

and social progress, and as reminders of chronological order and lapse of time. Around these, should circle the facts of dynasty, accession war, treaty, discovery, invention, exploration, literary activity, etc. Endeavor to make the facts of history in each epoch reveal to the utmost the contrast with our own time in point of individual liberty, religious tolerance, democratic power and privilege, industry and commerce, means of communication, material comfort, and education - current events, or occurrences of social economic, or scientific import should be given the same serious attention as is given to the past.³⁸

The “General Directions” clearly provided more directions to history teachers than the listing of the textbook so prevalent on the courses of study. From the 1894-1895 school year, until 1906-1907, the *Journal of Education* noted that one provincial history examination question could be taken from the “General Directions” or, later, the “General Prescriptions.” The provincial history examinations from this period, and, indeed, from the entire provincial examination era, however, indicate that the questions asked almost exclusively demanded the recall of factual information from the prescribed textbook cited in the course of study. The “General Directions” or “General Prescriptions” were not reflected in provincial history examination questions.

The *Handbook to the Course of Study* was published in 1935 although a number of drafts or parts had appeared in the *Journal of Education* in the few years leading up to its publication. It addressed history education generally with an “Introductory Statement”³⁹ and “General Suggestions on Methods of Teaching History”⁴⁰ but focused on the history taught in elementary and junior high school grades. In fact, the *Handbook to the Course of Study* detailed history education from grades 3 - 9, but provided no information about secondary history courses. Regarding all secondary courses, it wrote, “For the full Senior

High program teachers are referred to the announcements appearing in the *Journal of Education* from time to time.”⁴¹ An examination of the *Journal of Education* suggests that the *Handbook to the Course of Study*, with this statement, was simply referring teachers to the courses of study. Like the “General Directions” and “General Prescriptions,” the general history instructions of the *Handbook to the Course of Study* did not find representation on provincial history examinations which continued to require the recall of textbook content.

Teaching guides for history were probably the most detailed documents used during the provincial examination era for organizing, and suggesting methods of instruction in, secondary history courses. The first teaching guides for history appeared in *Social Sciences (Grades 10-12): A Teaching Guide* for the 1958-1959 school year. Despite the added detail, the grade 12 teaching guide offered little more than what was contained in the course of study for organizing the grade 12 history course. While the order of the teaching guide’s course outline did not perfectly follow the textbooks, *America and the Modern World* and *Democratic Government in Canada*, and while the hierarchical structure used in the outline was not always perfectly consistent with that of the textbooks’ table of contents, and while there were a few things in the outline that cannot be explicitly found in either textbook, the teaching guide’s course outline closely mirrored the organization of the prescribed textbooks. In fact, there were many examples of the exact phrasing of the textbook being used in the teaching guide.

The grade 12 history course outline in the teaching guide identified five topics, each with numerous sub-topics, to be studied. The teaching guide’s “Topic 2: The

Growth of the United States” contained nine sub-topics.⁴² “Book Two: The United States of America” in *North America and the Modern World* consisted of nine chapters.⁴³ In order, the nine sub-topics in the outline corresponded to the nine chapters in the textbook. The titles were not exactly the same, although common phrasing like “Isolation to Ascendancy”⁴⁴ would seem more than coincidental. The outline’s “Topic 3: Canada a North American Nation”⁴⁵ corresponded with the part of *North America in the Modern World* called “Book Three: The Canadian Nation.”⁴⁶ The outline had eight sub-topics while the textbook contained nine related chapters. The sub-topics and chapters again corresponded closely if the two textbook chapters on Confederation, “The Prelude to Confederation” and “The Coming of Confederation”⁴⁷ were considered one, which matches, in order as well as theme, the teaching guide’s sub-topic “Confederation.”⁴⁸ Common phrasing again appeared with “Growth of Autonomy.”⁴⁹ “Topic 1: Colonial Background”⁵⁰ of the outline and “Book 1: The Nations Emerge”⁵¹ of the textbook were quite similar but not so obviously as the two previous examples. The first chapter of “Book 1: The Nations Emerge” of *North America in the Modern World* was entitled “The Colonial Background,”⁵² the same title as “Topic 1” in the teaching guide. In addition, “Topic 5: The Twentieth Century”⁵³ in the teaching guide was quite similar to the textbook’s “Book Four: Problems of the Twentieth Century.”⁵⁴ Again, common phrasing examples like “The World in Transition” and “Democracies and Dictatorships”⁵⁵ illustrated the parallel between the teaching guide’s course outline and *North America in the Modern World*. The other prescribed textbook for the grade 12 history course, *Democratic Government in Canada*, had its organization mirrored by the teaching guide’s course

outline in “Topic 4: Democracy and Government.”⁵⁶ While titles were not always the same, and while the hierarchical structure is not perfectly parallel, the teaching guide’s outline was a virtual duplication of the topics, and their order, as found in the textbook.

While *Social Sciences (Grades 10-12): A Teaching Guide* provided more information than just naming the prescribed textbooks for grade 12 history, the added information really offered no more direction in organizing the course. Most of the additional details could have been easily found by simply turning to the table of contents in the two textbooks. Interestingly, *North America and the Modern World* was first printed in 1945 while *Democratic Government in Canada* was first printed in 1949. Those who produced the grade 12 history component of the teaching guide, for 1958-1959, therefore, would have had these textbooks available to them. It would seem to be quite apparent that these two textbooks were consulted extensively in generating the grade 12 history teaching guide.

In addition to the grade 12 teaching guide, *Social Sciences (Grades 10-12): A Teaching Guide* provided a teaching guide for grade 10 and grade 11 history. It combined the grade 10 and grade 11 history courses into what it called “World History.” The two grades used the same textbook, *The Record of Mankind*. Courses of study, however, noted the point in the textbook at which grade 10 was to end and grade 11 begin. Parts of the teaching guide applied to both grades, while others dealt specifically with one grade or the other. As grade 10 history had no provincial examination at the time this first teaching guide went into circulation, only the general and specific aspects of the guide that relate to grade 11 history will be examined.

Unlike any other document produced for the organization of secondary history during the provincial examination era, *Social Sciences (Grades 10-12): A Teaching Guide*, in its section on grade 11 history, provided a lot of detail and offered many suggestions. It sketched a course that was neither just a listing of the prescribed textbook nor a mere reiteration of its table of contents. It began with an overall purpose, a discussion of teaching techniques and aids, and a list of films, filmstrips, and filmstrips that could be used by teachers. The detailed description of what was to be taught also went beyond the *The Record of Mankind*. The teaching guide divided the course up into four parts with a total of thirteen topics. The teaching guide organized grade 11 history differently than did the textbook. It included topics not found in the textbook. Everything that was in the sections of the textbook enumerated by the course of study was not necessarily found in the teaching guide. While much of what the guide describes can be found in the textbook, the differences, especially the overall organization, was suggestive of a different perspective on the same history. It described a course with possibilities beyond just reading *The Record of Mankind*.

The grade 11 teaching guide truly stood out when compared to other documents which defined the organization of secondary history education in Nova Scotia. *Social Sciences (Grades 10-12): A Teaching Guide* described a grade 11 history course that was more than just the prescribed textbook. Despite this, from 1958-1959 to the end of the provincial examination era for grade 11 history, provincial examinations continued to ask questions requiring the recall of information from the textbook. The grade 11 history course described in the teaching guide found no representation on the grade 11 provincial

history examination.

During the provincial examination era in Nova Scotia, the documents that organized secondary history courses, primarily the courses of study as well as the later teaching guides, did little more than name the prescribed textbook and its author. When the course of study did provide more information, it usually only specified which parts had to be studied or which parts would be tested on the provincial examination. The courses of study also reveal the importance of the provincial examination by often noting information about the upcoming examination's format, point value, duration, or questions. The teaching guides essentially provided an outline that organized the course little differently than the textbook. They typically paralleled the table of contents found in the textbook. The exception, the grade 11 history teaching guide, truly stands out because it sketched a course different than that of the textbook. The provincial examinations, however, bear witness that it was the history found in the prescribed textbook that was examined and not that of the history of the teaching guide, the *Handbook to the Course of Study*, or the "General Directions."

Content

The prescribed history textbooks used during the provincial examination era in Nova Scotia contained the required content for their courses. As the documents that organized the courses essentially just named the textbooks and their authors, the textbooks also provided much of the organization for secondary history courses. Whether the whole textbook, or just certain parts of it, were described in a course of study, the prescribed information, as arranged in the textbook, was needed to be known for history

courses and, ultimately, for provincial history examinations. The textbooks gave a broad survey of the “histories” they covered. They were secondary sources of information that provided a lot of historical information. The prescribed textbooks were lengthy. The historical content was usually arranged chronologically and was tightly organized with numerous divisions and subdivisions. Textbooks were divided into sections such as volumes, parts, divisions, sub-chapters, margin headings, and numbered headings. They often provided a particular view of the history that they covered; a view that had to be known for the provincial examinations. The textbooks were a perfect fit for provincial history examinations that demanded the recall of the historical details and information they contained. The prescribed history textbooks provided, and organized, the abundant historical information that would be tested on the provincial examinations.

While the provincial examination era in Nova Scotia lasted eighty years, there were surprisingly few textbooks used in secondary-school history courses. Although a few textbooks had a short life span, most that were used had a long life. There were only six primary textbooks used at the grade 12 level, five in grade 11, and three in grade 10. Due to the long life of some secondary-school history textbooks, there are a few textbooks, from all three grade levels, that provide a representative sample of the history textbooks used during the provincial examination era. Although for different grade levels, and used at different times during the provincial examination era, these textbooks possessed many common characteristics.⁵⁷

Duncan McArthur of Queen’s University wrote *History of Canada for High Schools*. It was the last textbook used during the period that grade 10 history had a

provincial examination. *History of Canada for High Schools* was a textbook that ran over 500 pages in length. It detailed Canadian history in a largely chronological manner and was highly organized. The textbook was divided into twenty-eight chapters. In addition, there were a few sub-chapters and numerous margin headings throughout the textbook that further categorized the abundant information contained within each of the twenty-eight chapters. *History of Canada for High Schools* contained quite frequent black and white visual aids in the form of maps, sketches, and reproductions of paintings.

While McArthur's textbook was not purely chronological, it deviated from the chronological format only to divide up the information into more manageable categories. Instead of treating post-Confederation Canadian history as a whole and moving through it chronologically, McArthur divided it into three chapters determined by region: "The Central Provinces, 1867-1896"; "The Maritime Provinces Since Confederation"; and "The Western Provinces Since Confederation."⁵⁸ McArthur further divided these chapters in sub-chapters according to province (with the exception on Saskatchewan and Alberta, which were dealt with together). McArthur's *History of Canada for High Schools*, therefore, continued to be highly organized even when it is not following a strictly chronological pattern. Indeed, it appears that a strict chronology was forsaken in the interests of organization.

Although his textbook contained a lot of historical detail, and organized it strictly, McArthur noted the tendency of history textbooks to emphasize political history and suggested that his textbook tried to include more social history. In the preface to *History of Canada for High Schools*, McArthur wrote:

School texts of Canadian history have reflected the general tendency, which has prevailed for many years in the writing of the history of Canada, to emphasize unduly constitutional development. In this text, the author has endeavoured to stress the progress of settlement and the economic and social problems which have arisen from the efforts of the people who came to this country to discover and utilize its great natural resources.⁵⁹

As much as McArthur suggested that his textbook would be different, it was still a very traditional Canadian history textbook. There were chapters like “The Life of the People”, “Settlement and Pioneer Problems”, and “General Progress, 1840-1867” which dealt, in varying degrees, with the lives of average people.⁶⁰ McArthur’s last chapter, “Canadian Literature and Art”, gave some samples, albeit brief, of the poetry of Charles G.D. Roberts, Bliss Carman, Archibald Lampman, and others.⁶¹ These instances, however, were far outnumbered by the chapters recounting a traditional view of political-military history.

Prescribed history textbooks at the grade 11 level illustrated many of the same characteristics as McArthur’s *History of Canada for High Schools*. *A Short History of Ancient Times*, by Philip Van Ness Myers, served as the prescribed grade 11 textbook for the provincial examination years of 1915 until 1927. It contained over 370 pages of detailed information on the ancient world. It was another very organized history textbook. It consisted of four divisions, forty-one chapters (some still further divided), and 528 numbered headings or subdivisions. The textbook contained a photo and some sketches and maps (including some coloured maps). Although it does not ask any questions, *A Short History of Ancient Times* did suggest “Topics for Class Reports” at the

end of each of the four major divisions.

Myers' textbook provided a broad survey of ancient history. It was strictly chronological with a liberal dose of dates throughout its table of contents. *A Short History of Ancient Times* provided the reader with a secondary source that articulated a clear view of what constituted history. In the following example, Myers' textbook illustrates how that particular view could be wrong.

The Black Race. — ...but we find them on all the other continents and many islands of the seas, whither they have migrated or been carried as slaves by the stronger races; for since time immemorial they have been 'hewers of wood and drawers of water' for their more favored brethren.⁶²

The Yellow or Mongolian Race. — ...Their leading part in history has been to harass peoples of more settled habits.⁶³

The White Race and its Three Groups. — ...After what we might call the Semitic age it is the Aryan-speaking peoples that have borne the leading parts in the great drama of history.⁶⁴

This view of history would have been studied, and probably accepted, by teachers and students, who with provincial examinations and a prescribed textbook, became passive recipients of a history that the teachers were required to teach and the students needed to study, memorize, and then recall on their provincial history examination.

Like the textbooks of McArthur and Myers, *The Story of Civilization*, by V.P. Seary and Gilbert Paterson, was another lengthy and organized history textbook. It was the grade 11 textbook for the provincial examinations written from 1935 until 1952. *The Story of Civilization* consisted of nine parts with 147 sub-parts. The textbook was over

700 pages long, although, for most of its use in grade 11 in Nova Scotia, students were not responsible on the provincial examination for approximately 150 pages of it. *The Story of Civilization* was a detailed historical textbook.

The Story of Civilization was organized in a different manner; the basic organizational structure was not chronological. It was organized on the concept of eight "Quests," each of which made up one of the first eight parts of the textbook: "The Quest For Comfort"; "The Quest For Knowledge"; "The Quest For Security"; "The Quest For Power"; "The Quest For Harmony"; "The Quest For The Common Good"; "The Quest For Utterance"; and "The Quest For Beauty." The ninth part of the textbook was called "Toward New Horizons."⁶⁵ *The Story of Civilization* was, thus, organized according to themes. For instance, Greece, and all its aspects, was not dealt with all at once in the textbook. Greece was examined eight different times: once in each of the quests. Each of the "Quests" was, however, organized in a chronological manner.

The Record of Mankind, by A. Wesley Roehm, Morris R. Buske, Hutton Webster, and Edgar B. Wesley, was the grade 11 textbook for the provincial examination of 1953 until the last provincial examination at the grade 11 level in 1969. It was a textbook of more than 700 pages. It comprehensively surveyed its subject. *The Record of Mankind* was tightly organized with nine parts, twenty-three chapters, over 150 subdivisions, and innumerable margin headings. *The Record of Mankind* replaced Seary and Paterson's *The Story of Civilization* and it also replaced their "Quests" with a more traditional chronological survey. It contained many charts, maps, sketches, photos, caricatures and political cartoons. At the end of each chapter, there was a section called "Aids For Better

Understanding.” In this section, students were asked to identify or define terms and/or people and/or places as well as answer questions. In addition, at the end of each of the nine parts, there was an additional part to the section called “Things To Do.” The vast majority of the questions were, however, review questions that only required recall answers.

McArthur’s grade 10 textbook, and the three grade 11 textbooks examined, exhibited many traits common to secondary history textbooks during the provincial examination era in Nova Scotia. They were generally lengthy books which contained a lot of historical detail. As the amount of historical information they contained was large, these history textbooks were tightly organized with many levels of headings with which to divide the information. *The Story of Civilization*, with its “Quests,” did differ with a thematic approach that set it apart. Myers’ *A Short History of Ancient Times*, with its descriptions of the “Races,” revealed that prescribed history textbooks could provide a single view of history. These textbooks all provided the historical information that was required by provincial examinations that demanded the recall of textbook information.

The history textbooks at the grade 12 level, provide similar evidence as those at the grade 10 and 11 levels. *Short History of the English People*, by John Richard Green of Oxford University, served as the primary grade 12 textbook from the inception of the provincial examination era in 1893 until the provincial examination of 1907. It was an almost 1000 page textbook that was full of information about British history. This textbook was organized into two volumes. There were a total of ten chapters with each possessing between four and ten sections. *Short History of the English People* was

entirely chronologically organized. Each of the sections noted in the table of contents had two date-markers ascribed to it: beginning with “449-577” and ending with “1815-1873.”⁶⁶ At the front of Green’s textbook, there was an extensive time line of British History called the “Chronological Annals.”⁶⁷ There were also numerous genealogical tables at the front of the textbook.

Short History of the English People was a dense textbook. It thoroughly described British history. The textbook chronicled the lives of kings, queens and politicians, described British relations with other nations and various important wars, and discussed some religious issues. There was a section on “The Elizabethan Poets” but this section, while naming various literary works, did not provide any examples of poetry.⁶⁸ The textbook provided readers with its particular view of British history.

Another grade 12 history textbook, *Ancient Times*, by James Henry Breasted of The University of Chicago, served as the grade 12 textbook for the provincial examinations in history from 1928 until 1958 (thirty-one years). *Ancient Times* was used for more years than any other history textbook in the provincial examination era. At over 800 pages, it, like Green’s textbook, was lengthy. Breasted’s chronological textbook contained some colour, maps, drawings, and photos. *Ancient Times* contained a detailed table of contents that organized the textbook into parts, chapters, and sections. To read through Breasted’s table of contents alone was to survey ancient history from “How Mankind Began as Food-Gatherers” to “The Triumph of the Barbarians and the End of the Ancient World.”⁶⁹

The North American Nations, by Edgar McInnis of York University, was the

primary grade 12 textbook for the provincial examination of 1965 until the last provincial examination in grade 12. It was about 400 pages long and surveyed North American history. McInnis' textbook was very organized with a table of contents showing three books, thirty-one chapters, and numerous sections. The book was chronological as well. There was, however, one exception. After explaining "The Colonial Background" in Book One, McInnis dealt with the now separate United States and Canada in two entirely separate parts — Book Two and Book Three. Book Two, on the United States, began with the "Declaration of Independence" and chronologically followed American history up to Kennedy's election as President. Then, Book Three, on Canada, began with a look at the state of the British Empire in North America with the United States now independent. It then went on to chronologically follow Canadian history up until the time of the textbook's publication.⁷⁰ Like Seary and Paterson's *The Story of Civilization*, while it was not strictly chronological in a broad sense, the chronology was still intact within both Book Two and Book Three.

The North American Nations contained a political cartoon. It did not ask students to interpret the political cartoon. Instead, it told them the gist of what it meant before it even provided the caption. McInnis' textbook also asked questions. At the end of each chapter, there were "Questions for Research, Study, and Discussion." While most questions required students to recall information, and would appear to have been designed to focus students on reviewing the key information in that chapter, some questions did ask for more than strictly recall answers.

The grade 12 history textbooks provide similar evidence to McArthur's *History of*

Canada for High Schools and the three grade 11 textbooks examined previously. They all display characteristics common to all secondary history textbooks during the provincial examination era. As the providers and organizers of content for history courses, the textbooks essentially became the history courses. They were broad and lengthy surveys which provided a single view of history and supplied an extensive amount of historical detail. The history textbooks were highly organized with many levels of headings with which to divide the considerable information they contained. The textbooks produced secondary history courses that provided precisely what the provincial history examinations desired: they contained, and organized, the historical information that had to be memorized for recall on the provincial examinations.

Conclusion

The documents which organized secondary history courses in Nova Scotia during the provincial examination era, primarily the courses of study as well as the later teaching guides, essentially named the prescribed textbook. The textbooks, therefore, assumed the role of organizing the courses in addition to their more obvious role of providing the course content. With abundant historical information as their content, and meticulous structures to organize that content, the prescribed history textbooks worked in lock step with the provincial history examinations. The examinations demanded the recall of historical information and the textbooks obliged by provided the information, and the historical perspectives, to be recalled. The courses of study, as well as the teaching guides, and the prescribed textbooks provided the provincial examinations with exactly the type of history that they were testing.

Chapter 4: Secondary-School History Education: The Examination System

Introduction

From 1892 until 1972, provincial history examinations were written in Nova Scotia. The examinations, and the comments of the examiners who marked them, provide substantial information about secondary history education during the provincial examination era. The history examinations demanded the recall of information from the prescribed textbooks. Secondary history courses worked in lock step by employing textbooks to arrange and provide content, and stressing the memorization, and recall, of textbook information. The examiners' comments affirm that the provincial history examinations required the recall of textbook information. The examiners' comments also reveal that secondary history courses were influenced by provincial examinations. The examinations and the examiners' comments, thus, both demonstrate that the provincial examinations dictated the organization, content, and instruction of secondary history courses in Nova Scotia during the provincial examination era. By asking recall-type questions, the provincial examinations handcuffed and defined the nature of history education.

The Provincial History Examinations

Throughout the provincial examination era in Nova Scotia, examination questions in secondary history asked students to recall factual information. The facts expected in student answers were contained in the prescribed history textbook. It is rare to find questions that genuinely asked history students to think, to demonstrate judgement or analysis, to apply knowledge, to be creative, or to form opinions. A far larger number of

history examination questions would appear, in isolation, to have demanded more than just factual recall; however, these questions had already been clearly posed and answered for students in their textbooks. Directly or indirectly, thus, provincial history examinations tested student knowledge of the information in their textbook. In a related manner, the examinations also tested student knowledge of the views and the structure of their textbook. Numerous examination questions in history made direct reference to the textbook or its author. History students, therefore, not only had to recall factual information, they were expected to recollect it as it had been advanced in their textbook. In addition, some provincial history examinations were even structured in a way that mirrored the table of contents in the prescribed textbook. Due to the provincial examinations, history teachers and students undertook a narrow study that emphasized students learning the information in, as well as the views and structure of, the prescribed textbook. The examination regulated the organization, the content, and the instruction of secondary history education in Nova Scotia during the provincial examination era.

Provincial examination questions that demanded the recall of textbook information proliferated at all secondary history grade levels. Grade 12, however, was the only grade level which had a provincial history examination administered every year from 1893 to 1972. The grade 12 British History examination of 1893, the first of the provincial examination era, provides an appropriate departure point for an investigation into examination questions demanding textbook recall. The 1893 grade 12 British History examination paper read as follows:

BRITISH HISTORY,

[Any *five* questions make a full paper.]

1. Give a short account of the reign of King Cnut.
2. On what did Edward III found his claim to the throne of France? Illustrate by a genealogical table.
3. State what you know as to the condition of the Poor in the Tudor period. What was the date and what were the leading provisions of the Poor Act passed during that period?
4. What were the chief features in the settlement of the Constitution by the Revolution of 1688-9.[sic]
5. Describe the character and career of any one of the following: John Wesley; Francis Bacon; Edmund Burke; Wm. Pitt; Thos. Beket [sic]; Duke of Marlborough.
6. Narrate what is called the "Conquest of Ireland."
7. Define the jurisdiction of the Dominion and local Parliaments respectively.¹

The seven questions on this first provincial history examination exclusively demanded that grade 12 students recall information. Except for the final question, the information required to answer the questions came from Green's *Short History of the English People*, the prescribed textbook from 1893 until 1907. Question No. 7 required a knowledge of the Canadian Constitution not found in Green's textbook; however, the course of study for 1892-93 did indicate that the Canadian Constitution was to be taught along with Green's textbook.² As only five of the seven questions had to be answered, the one question not from the textbook could have been avoided.

The 1930 grade 12 history examination provides further evidence that provincial history examination questions insisted upon the recall of textbook information. The first five questions on that Ancient History examination were as follows:

1. Give a brief account of the invention of our calendar by the early Egyptians.
2. Describe the house and garden of a nobleman in the Pyramid age.
3. Write a note on the position of woman [sic] in the reign of Hammurapi.
4. What dangers within and without caused the fall of Assyria?
5. Write a brief description of the following battles, and show their importance: Marathon, Salamis, Plataea. What was the date of the Battle of Marathon?³

These representative questions again required grade 12 history students to recall information. Breasted's *Ancient Times*, the prescribed textbook for grade 12 history in 1930, provided the needed information. All eleven questions on the Ancient History examination (including the six not cited above) could have been answered directly from Breasted's textbook.

The grade 12 provincial history examination in 1970 furnishes evidence in support of that shown by the examinations of 1893 and 1930. The examination, divided into three distinct sections, Colonial and American History, Canadian History, and Government, asked questions which once again called for recall answers. The following four questions, representing all three parts of the examination, characterize the type of questions it asked:

6. Discuss the conflict of American and Japanese interests that culminated in the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour.
8. Outline the causes of the unrest in the Canadas that led to the

rebellions of 1837.

11. Discuss the following:
 - (a) The activities of the Canada Council.
 - (b) American influence on Canadian culture.
12. Discuss “The Rule of Law” as a feature of the government of Canada.⁴

These four questions served only to test the ability of students to recall information. The answers to question Nos. 6, 8, and 11 could easily be found in McInnis’ *The North American Nations*, one of two textbooks prescribed for use in grade 12 history in 1970. The answer to the last question, No. 12, another strictly recall question, could be found in *Democratic Government in Canada*, by Robert MacGregor Dawson, the other assigned textbook. From this 1970 history examination, back to the first examination in 1893, grade 12 provincial examinations in history resolutely asked questions requiring textbook recall.

The grade 11 provincial history examinations provide much the same evidence as the examinations at the grade 12 level. The questions also expected recall and expected it to come from the prescribed textbook. Three grade 11 history provincial examinations, 1920, 1940, and 1960, provide a representative look at the qualities of the grade 11 provincial examination questions. The 1920 grade 11 provincial examination in Ancient History read as follows:

ANCIENT HISTORY. — XI

3 to 5 p. m., Tuesday, 22 June, 1920.

1. Write a note on Phoenician commerce and its influence on civilization
2. What was the relation of a Greek colony to its Mother City?
3. Relate the Greek Legends of Heracles, Theseus and Minos.
4. Give the causes and results of the Peloponnesian War.
5. Outline briefly the rise and fall of the Assyrian Empire. *Or*, tell what you know of the Royal Library at Ninevah.
6. Sketch briefly the career of Sulla.
7. Tell what you know of the "Laws of the Twelve Tables," and the "Magna Carta of Rome."
8. Compare the relative strength of Rome and Carthage at the beginning of the First Punic War.
9. Write a note on the Greek Drama.
10. Who were the following? Hammurabi, Psammetichus, Confucius, Lycurgus, Solon.⁵

These examination questions were solely interested in testing recall. In grade 11 history in 1920, the information required to answer these questions came entirely from Myers' *A Short History of Ancient Times*, the prescribed textbook.

The same type of questions from the 1920 grade 11 provincial history examination were also in evidence on the 1940 examination. It consisted of a compulsory current events question and two questions in each of six sections. Students had to do one question in each of the sections and any other one, as well as the compulsory question.

Three representative questions from the 1940 grade 11 examination were as follows:

2. Egypt developed one of the earliest civilizations. Describe this civilization briefly under the headings of (a) buildings and building materials; (b) farming and farm products and (c) arts and crafts.
8. Describe the Athenian Empire, telling (a) its origin; (b) its history (very briefly) and (c) the reasons for its collapse.
- OR: Explain fully the investiture dispute during the Middle Ages between the Popes and Emperors; (a) what questions were involved; (b) naming one outstanding leader on each side, and (c) telling how it was settled.
12. Sketch the progress of the Co-operative movement in Great Britain since the middle of the 19th Century.⁶

As with the 1920 examination, this examination required recall. In 1940, the information to be recalled came directly from the assigned parts of the prescribed textbook at that time, Seary and Paterson's *The Story of Civilization*. The 1960 grade 11 provincial history examination was similar. Two representative questions were as follows.

1. "By the end of the Middle Ages a growing *secularism*, or concern with the affairs of this world, began to displace the otherworldliness of medieval thought."
 (a) State the *two* reasons for the growth of secularism.
 (b) Describe the new literature and the new science which developed in this period.
12. The year 1907 found the chief European powers lined up in two diplomatic camps — the Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente. Give the names of the countries comprising each alliance and trace the steps by which each of these alliances came to be formed.⁷

These two questions solely examined the ability to recall factual information from the textbook. In 1960, the prescribed grade 11 history textbook was *The Record of Mankind* and the answers to the two recall questions above, and all the others asked on the 1960 examination, could be easily and quickly found in the textbook. Throughout the provincial examination era, grade 11 provincial history examination questions fit a similar mold; a mold evidently shared by the examination questions at the grade 12 level. They doggedly demanded answers straight from the pages of the prescribed textbook.

The questions on the Grade 10 provincial history examinations were cast from the same mold as those at the grade 11 and 12 levels. The examinations written in grade 10 consistently provide evidence of questions which only tested the ability of students to recall information from their textbook. In 1908, the first grade 10 examination solely on history was written. Its eight questions are highly representative of the questions asked on grade 10 history examinations throughout the provincial examination era in Nova Scotia. This first grade 10 provincial examination read as follows:

ENGLISH HISTORY. — X.

1. Mention the chief events during the reign of the Danish Kings.
2. Explain the terms: "Feudal System," "Homage," "Franklin," "Villein," "Chivalry."
3. Summarize the events in the reign of Henry VII., and state his claims to the English throne.
4. Sketch briefly the character of each of the Stuart Sovereigns.

5. Name the most important Acts passed in the reign of William III, and describe his foreign policy.
6. Write notes on "Porteous Riot," "Seven Years' War," "John Wilkes," "Stamp Act," "Warren Hastings."
7. Give a brief account of the different wars during the reign of Queen Victoria.
8. Name the different sources from which the Province of Nova Scotia obtains its revenues.⁸

These eight questions yet again demanded recall. A quick review of the last grade 10 provincial history examination reveals questions very similar in character to those asked in 1908. The questions represented the traits of the vast majority of questions asked during the twenty-four years of history provincial examinations at the grade 10 level. Three questions from this last grade 10 provincial history examination in 1931 were as follows:

7. What were some of the main causes of Confederation?
9. Apart from the great contribution Canada made in fighting men, in what other ways did she assist in the Great War (1914-1918)?
12. "Nova Scotia was the cradle of English letters in what is now Canada." Show how this statement is true.⁹

As with the first grade 10 provincial examination in history, these questions from the final grade 10 provincial examination expected the recall of information that could easily be found in a textbook prescribed for the course. In the case of the three excerpted questions above, the answers could be located in McArthur's *History of Canada for High Schools*,

one of the assigned textbooks in grade 10 history.

Beginning with the first provincial examination in secondary history in 1893, the provincial examination era in Nova Scotia provides continual examples of questions requiring the recall of textbook information. At all three grade levels, the same type of questions occurred over and over again on provincial history examinations. Particularly common questions began with: "Write a full note..."; "Sketch..."; "Write notes..."; "State..."; "Mention..."; "Give a brief account..."; "Explain briefly..."; "Outline..."; "Give a brief..."; "Discuss..."; "Explain..."; "Tell what you know..."; and "Describe...." The expected answers to such recall questions were almost exclusively contained in the prescribed textbooks.

Questions that asked for more than the recall of textbook information were rare on provincial history examinations in Nova Scotia. It is wholly unusual to find questions which truly required students to think, analyze, judge, be creative, or form opinions. Significantly more questions gave the superficial, and false, impression that they were asking for more than recall. In isolation on examinations, such questions might have looked like they were demanding more sophisticated thinking; upon examining the corresponding textbooks, however, it can be seen that such questions had been asked and answered for students in the textbook. As a result, such examination questions simply became still other recall questions.

An obvious example of a question that deceptively appeared to ask for more than just recall can be seen on the grade 12 provincial history examination in 1931. Question No. 9 read, "Breasted calls the Emperor Justinian 'the Hammurapi of the Roman Empire.'

Discuss what Justinian did to deserve the title.”¹⁰ If students had studied Emperor Justinian and Hammurapi independently and then, on this examination question, had to substantiate or refute Breasted’s claim, a thoughtful and complex question would have been asked. Breasted, however, not only made this statement, but his textbook, *Ancient Times*, clearly explained the parallel he saw between Justinian and Hammurapi. In addition, the question is posed in such a way that the answer must agree with Breasted’s contention. As a provincial examination question, thus, it was no different than any other type of recall question. The students were not being asked to reconcile two seemingly disparate pieces of history, but were being asked to recall a comparison made and explained by their textbook.

Another excellent example of a question that seemingly required more than simple recall was question No. 8 from the previously cited 1920 grade 11 history exam. This question asked students, “Compare the relative strength of Rome and Carthage at the beginning of the First Punic War.”¹¹ Like the previous example, if students had studied Rome and Carthage separately and then, on this provincial examination, had been asked to compare the two, a question requiring more advanced thinking would have been asked. In reality, however, the prescribed grade 11 textbook, Myers’ *A Short History of Ancient Times*, contained a section with a numbered heading which read, “326. Rome and Carthage compared.”¹² The textbook, thus, contained and explained a titled comparison. On the 1920 provincial history examination, this question was really no different from any other type of recall question. The students were not being asked to genuinely compare but to recollect a comparison noted and articulated by their textbook.

The 1930 grade 10 provincial examination in history contained a question similar to those grade 11 and 12 examples cited. Question No. 4 seemed to be quite thoughtful. It read, "Discuss the following statement: 'On the principles first introduced by Lord Durham, the modern British Empire is founded.'"¹³ The quotation is meaningful and, to handle it well, students would appear to need to marshal and reconcile some varied information. Outwardly, it would appear to have been a fairly sophisticated type of question. One of the prescribed textbooks for this grade 10 history course, McArthur's *History of Canada for High Schools*, however, contained this quotation midway down page 262 (missing the comma, which followed Durham's name in the examination question). The quotation was explained in the part of the textbook that immediately preceded it. A potentially thoughtful question, thus, was really just another question that demanded recall information from the textbook. The students were not being asked to use their knowledge to elucidate a previously unseen quotation, but were being asked to summon up the explanation of a quotation given in their textbook.

The grade 10 level provides still more examples of questions that only appeared to require more than remembering textbook information. On each provincial history examination from 1912 until 1919, there was a question which began, "Tell what you know of...." While these might appear to be open-ended, opinion-type questions, what students were expected to "know of" a subject was actually that of which the textbook wrote. Question No. 10 on the 1925 grade 10 examination is another good example. It followed a pattern similar to the previous example, although it goes a little bit further. Question No. 10 asked, "What, in your opinion, are the chief duties of a good citizen?"¹⁴

It begs wonder whether students were sincerely being asked to consider and explain those duties of citizenship which they personally regarded as important, or if they were really being asked to recall those characteristics of a good citizen as described in the textbook. Provincial examination questions which truly required students to think, analyze, judge, be creative, or form opinions were unusual. Closer inspection of many questions that appear to require advanced thinking revealed that they too, like the vast majority of history questions asked during the provincial examination era, merely invited the recall of textbook information.

The importance that provincial history examination questions placed upon the information contained in the prescribed textbooks was further revealed by questions which referred to the prescribed textbook or its author. By citing textbooks or authors directly, these questions illustrated not only that the history examinations promoted recall of textbook information, but also the recall of information, and, in some cases, opinions, as advanced by the author in the textbook. The previously cited question No. 9 from the 1931 grade 12 provincial history examination is a good example. It read, "Breasted calls the Emperor Justinian 'the Hammurapi of the Roman Empire.' Discuss what Justinian did to deserve the title."¹⁵ This question sought neither to test knowledge of Justinian nor the ability to relate him to Hammurapi. As was previously discussed, it tested the ability to recall the information, and the opinions, as specifically articulated by Breasted in *Ancient Times*. Another question No. 9, on the grade 12 history examination in 1959, provides an additional example. It asked, "Your text gives six important characteristics of Canadian government. (a) What are these characteristics? (b) Discuss *three* of them briefly."¹⁶ This

example shows the close relationship between a grade 12 history textbook, McInnis' *North American and the Modern World*, and the grade 12 examination. In addition to being asked to recall information from their textbook, students were being requested to recall that information as it had been presented in their textbook. This examination questions was not asking for characteristics of Canadian government, it was asking for McInnis' six characteristics.

Grade 11 provincial history examinations also provide examples of questions which made direct mention of the textbook or its author. On the 1947 provincial examination for grade 11 history, question No. 3 requested, "Your book in discussing the Middle Ages says: 'The conditions of the villeins were uniformly wretched.' (a) In a few sentences state what you understand by the word 'Villein.' (b) Describe the conditions under which they lived."¹⁷ In 1953, the grade 11 examination asked two questions that referred directly to the textbook. Question No. 5 read, "In your text a short section on the Roman Empire is headed 'Effects of Foreign Conquests'. Write of the effects of these conquests on the Romans."¹⁸ Question No. 14 requested, "Your text speaks of 'The Japanese Revolution' which took place in the 19th century. Describe this Japanese Revolution."¹⁹ The expected answers to questions that cited the textbook or its author could easily be found in the prescribed textbook. In the last example, the information needed to answer the question could be found in the prescribed textbook for grade 11 history in 1953, *The Record of Mankind*. On page 507 of this textbook, there is a right margin heading, titled "The Japanese Revolution," with a corresponding paragraph. Students were not only being asked to recall information, they were being asked to recall

it directly from their textbook, and they were being asked to recall it from a particular paragraph on a particular page. Question No. 12 on the 1935 grade 11 history examination went a step further. It asked, "One of the last sections of your book is entitled "Social Welfare". What does this mean? Along what lines do the authors of the book suggest that improvement is being made, or will be made?"²⁰ This question solely tested the ability to remember the information and the sentiments as specifically articulated by Seary and Paterson in *The Story of Civilization*.

Even in the last decade of the provincial examination era, there were many grade 11 examination questions that mentioned the textbook. Question No. 9 on the 1966 provincial examination asked, "Your textbook gives as basic causes of World War I: nationalism, economic imperialism, secret diplomacy and alliances, and militarism. Show how any *three* of these were causes of the war."²¹ Students were once again being asked to recall information as presented in their textbooks. The second part of the question also introduced another, though related, examination predisposition coupled to the reliance on textbooks. It asked for three causes. There are many examples on grade 11 history examinations of questions asking for a certain number: of causes, of effects, of reasons, of countries, of people, of steps, of purposes. While it is also true of grade 12 and grade 10 history examinations, grade 11 examinations seemed to have had a far greater proportion. The 1960 grade 11 provincial history examination provides a particularly good example. Among its many questions, this single history examination asked for "the two reasons"; "three of the following scientists"; "three reasons"; "three countries"; "four causes"; "the four main steps"; and "three purposes."²² Such questions not only tended to expect the

recall of information; the specific number asked in the questions usually represented part of a list featured in the textbook. Students were again expected to recall specific knowledge that they had gathered directly from their prescribed textbook.

The importance of textbook information to provincial history examinations was demonstrated by questions which directly cited the prescribed textbook or its author. By referring to textbooks or the authors, these questions indicated not only that examination questions advocated textbook recall, but specifically the recall of the information and the viewpoints expressed by the author in the textbook. Similarly, the effect of prescribed textbooks on history examinations is further revealed by the fact that the structure of provincial examinations sometimes mirrored the table of contents of the textbook for that course. Examinations questions were grouped under headings which paralleled the headings in the textbook. By clearly identifying the area of a textbook the answer would have to come from, such organization of examination questions not only made answering easier but demonstrated how the provincial history examinations made textbooks essential for success on the examinations.

For twenty-one consecutive years, from 1938 until 1958, the grade 12 provincial history examination provided remarkably consistent and good examples of examinations constructed to parallel the prescribed textbook. The examination questions were put into three sections: "Early Man And The Orient"; "The Greeks"; and "The Hellenistic Age And Rome."²³ The textbook for the course during that time, and the nine years previous, was Breasted's *Ancient Times*. It consisted of five parts according its table of contents. The five parts of the textbook matched up with the three sections of questions asked on

the provincial history examination. “Part I. Man Before Civilization” and “Part II. The Origins and Early History of Civilization in The Ancient Near East” from *Ancient Times*²⁴ covered the material tested in the first group of examination questions, “Early Man and the Orient.” Breasted’s “Part III. The Greeks”²⁵ had exactly the same title as the second group of examination questions. “Part IV. The Mediterranean World and the Roman Conquest of Italy” and “Part V. The Roman Empire” from Breasted’s *Ancient Times*²⁶ covered the same material that was being examined in the section of questions titled “The Hellenistic Age and Rome.” If the link between the examination structure and the textbook was not obvious in 1938, surely by 1939 or 1940, through to 1958, all grade 12 history teachers and students knew of the three sections to be found on the examination and in what part of the prescribed textbook the answers could be found.

Grade 11 history examinations also provided examples of how the organization of provincial examinations sometimes mirrored the table of contents of the prescribed textbook. The second last textbook used in grade 11 history during the provincial examination era best illustrates this point. Seary and Paterson’s *The Story of Civilization* was organized around the concept of eight “Quests” as described in the preceding chapter. In 1935, the grade 11 provincial examination was written with *The Story of Civilization* as the prescribed textbook for the first time. This provincial examination consisted of eight sections: “Section A, The Quest For Comfort”; “Section B, The Quest For Knowledge”; “Section C, The Quest For Security”; “Section D, The Quest For Power”; “Section E, The Quest For The Common Good”; “Section F, The Quest For Harmony, And Towards New Horizons”; “Section G, The Quest For Utterance”; and “Section H, The Quest For

Beauty.”²⁷ Although not in exactly the same sequence, and with two of the parts combined, the provincial examination structure clearly paralleled the table of contents from Seary and Paterson’s textbook. Indeed, the concept of “Quests” used in the textbook was duplicated on the provincial examination.

Since the Course of Study for grade 11 history in the 1935-1936 school year (and up until the book’s last year in 1951-1952) noted that “Part Seven: The Quest For Utterance”; and “Part Eight: The Quest For Beauty” from Seary and Paterson’s *The Story of Civilization* were not required for the grade 11 course, the grade 11 history provincial examination in 1936 (and up to and including 1952) contained all the “Quests” except for those two. The provincial examinations from 1936 until 1952 stayed much the same (“Towards New Horizons” was dropped and a compulsory current events question was added in 1940), organized according to the six “Quests,” until the textbook was replaced for the 1952-1953 school year and the subsequent 1953 provincial examination in grade 11 history. That the structure of provincial examinations sometimes mirrored the table of contents of the prescribed textbook, as demonstrated by the preceding examples, further illustrates the effect that textbooks had on history examinations. For those who knew their textbook, answering recall questions was made even less exacting by clearly identifying from which area of the textbook the answers to various sections of questions could be found.

The study of secondary history provincial examinations during the provincial examination era in Nova Scotia reveals a number of common characteristics. In any history course, there was a close relationship between the examinations and textbook. In

fact, the examinations were sometimes structured parallel to the table of contents in the textbook. As well, provincial examination questions frequently referred directly to the textbook or its author. Examination questions that required thinking, analysis, judgement, application of knowledge, creativity, or opinion were very rare. The questions that were asked, even most of those that seemingly appeared to be more than recall questions, were questions that tested students' ability to recollect the factual information contained in their prescribed textbook. They created history courses that stressed the history contained in the prescribed textbooks.

The Provincial Examiners' Comments

The Provincial Examiners' Comments were a commentary on the performance of students by those responsible for marking their provincial examinations. The comments were sometimes an overall critique of the all the examinations marked in a particular year but, more frequently, they commented on those examinations marked in a specific subject and at a particular grade level. The comments of the examiners, generally and specifically in history, reveal that the provincial examinations demanded the memorization and the recall of textbook information. Throughout the provincial examination era, whether the examiners observed, encouraged, or lamented it, their comments clearly acknowledged the importance of textbook recall and the memorization induced by provincial examinations.

The Provincial Examiners' Comments sometimes also offered a broader analysis of education, and, specifically, secondary history education. It was their judgment of how well the provincial examination system was working. The examiners' comments reveal that the examinations strongly affected instruction and content in courses, including

history. The examiners used the provincial examinations as a vehicle for giving advice on how to improve history instruction, and for providing direction as to the content that should be covered. While a few examiners lamented the influence provincial examinations had on history instruction and content, an even greater number of examiners at least recognized that the examinations affected what, and how, history was taught. By using the provincial examinations as the rationale to direct instruction and content in secondary history, and by acknowledging that the provincial examinations demanded memorization and recall, the examiners reinforce the present argument that the provincial examinations were a straitjacket on history education: a straitjacket that caused history courses to focus on memorizing information from the textbook for recall on the provincial examination.

Throughout the provincial examination era, examiners observed, encouraged, or lamented examination questions which demanded the recall of information from the prescribed textbook. The examiners who simply observed textbook recall questions were numerous and cover the entire provincial examination era. The 1932 grade 12 history examiners' comments noted, "No.'s 1, 4, and 10, were mere text knowledge questions...."²⁸ Three years later, the 1935 grade 11 history examiner stated, of question No. 15, "The first part was generally well done — it being a straight text question."²⁹ In 1948, regarding question No. 2 on the grade 12 history examination, the examiner commented, "This topic is treated very specifically in the text and is divided quite definitely into the three parts as indicated in the question."³⁰ In a similar manner, the grade 12 history examiner in 1962 said, of question No. 2, "This was a comprehensive question on Jackson's administration and is well treated in the textbook."³¹ While such

examples demonstrated that the examiners were aware that particular examination questions simply required the recall of textbook information, other examiners' comments reveal how entire history examinations sometimes only required the information in the textbook. In 1941, the grade 11 history examiner remarked, "All questions were specifically based on material contained in the text, and generally covered important phases of history with which any Grade XI student should be familiar. No attempt was made to give 'catch' questions or to require information beyond the scope of the text."³² Two years later, in 1943, the grade 11 history examiner observed, "The paper this year followed the usual pattern, and covered well the material of the text."³³ In 1946, the examiner of grade 11 history even noted how the structure of the provincial examination was modeled on that of the textbook. The examiner wrote, "As has been the practice in previous years, the question paper is divided into quests. Thus the setter of the paper undertakes both to follow the organization of the text and at the same time emphasize the quest approach to history."³⁴ These examples indicated that examiners were cognizant that provincial examinations demanded the recall of textbook information.

The examiners' comments sometimes went even further than merely observing examination questions which required textbook recall. Many examiners approved of such questions and they frequently criticized student answers which did not display knowledge from the prescribed textbook. In 1941, the grade 11 history examiners' comments were extremely blunt in appraising the reasons for problems with question No. 11. The examiner noted, "Any errors here were due entirely to lack of familiarity with the text."³⁵ The grade 11 history examiner in 1945 was a bit sharp towards students who did not

sufficiently heed their textbook when answering question No. 5: "The text deals with education in Athens during two periods. Only occasionally was this fact noted in the answers."³⁶ In 1953, at the grade 12 level, the history examiner made two comments which suggested students needed to better know their textbook. The examiner wrote, regarding question No. 12 (b), "The chief weakness in answers...in the (b) part [was] to give Shakespeare's version of the assassination rather than that of Breasted [the author of the prescribed textbook]."³⁷ Of question No. 14, that examiner added, "Generally speaking, candidates showed but a very vague knowledge of this part of the text."³⁸ Regarding question No. 14 on the 1955 grade 12 history provincial examination, the examiner commented, "The students had very little knowledge of the textbook with the result that they had to imagine what the traffic was like."³⁹ In 1966, the examiners' comments on the grade 12 history examination included, in reference to the (a) part of the first question: "A more careful study of the facts in the textbook would have eliminated many careless statements in the answers. The text gives four reasons why a new Imperial policy was needed."⁴⁰ A comment from the examiner of the grade 11 general history examination in 1967 was perhaps the most direct in criticizing students who did not produce the expected information from their textbooks. Regarding question No. 1, the examiner noted, "Students were weak on the material on pages 206 and 207 of their textbook."⁴¹ The criticism of student answers for not adhering enough to the textbook in these excerpts indicates that many examiners expected and encouraged the recall questions so prevalent on provincial history examinations.

Some examiners were not so straightforward in noting their approval of recall

questions. Three particular examiners offered similar opinions as to why they did not receive an adequate answer to a specific question. They felt that since the topic of the question was located near the end of the textbook, it never got done in the course of the year's study. In 1945, the grade 12 examiner commented, of question No. 14, "Apparently this topic — placed so near the end of the text — escaped notice of the pupils."⁴² Of question No. 13, in 1951, the grade 12 examiner noted, "The answers to questions 13 and 14 would seem to indicate that the last few chapters in the text do not get much consideration from either teachers or students."⁴³ In 1958, the grade 12 examiner, when commenting on question No. 14, suggested, "Perhaps many students did not finish the text...."⁴⁴ The fact that these three provincial examiners blamed not being able to answer a question on not having finished the textbook highlights the importance of being able to recall the textbook in answering history examination questions. The clear implication was that if any part of the textbook was not covered, the ability to answer the examination questions was jeopardized; that is, students needed to know the entire history textbook in order to answer all the questions on the history examination.

In a manner also entirely consistent with those examiners who chided answers not displaying sufficient knowledge of the textbook, some examiners seemed willing to excuse insufficient or confused answers if they felt the textbook was at fault. In 1935, the grade 11 history examiner criticized the textbook for the answers received for question No. 7: "It would appear that the text is to blame for such a scattered answer to this question."⁴⁵ Six years later, in 1941, the answers to question No. 2 on the grade 12 examinations prompted the examiner to write, "That many confused the Feudal Age with the Empire is

excusable, as the text does not make a sharp division between them.”⁴⁶ In 1968, the general grade 11 history examiner noted, of question No. 5, “Only about one-half of the students attempted to relate the views of Hobbes and Locke regarding primitive man to the type of government which each was advocating. Without this additional information, the text provided little on this topic. Hence, the answers, for the most part, were confined to only a few sentences.”⁴⁷ The fact that provincial examiners excused poor answers because of faulty textbooks again underscores the significance of textbook recall on history examinations. The suggestion was that if the textbook was deficient or confused on any topic, the inability to properly answer examination questions on such a topic was excusable: that is, one cannot really be expected to answer examination questions about topics in which the history textbook was lacking.

Whether by blaming weak answers on inadequate textbooks, or by suggesting that certain examination questions were not properly answered because the textbook had not been covered, these examiners also encouraged and approved of recall questions. There were, however, some examiners who lamented how much student examination answers relied upon recall of the prescribed textbook. While fewer in number and with a different appraisal of recall examination questions, these examiners, like those who either observed or championed it, contribute to the evidence which shows that provincial history examination questions demanded the recall of information from the prescribed textbook.

The first examiners’ comments to criticize how much student examination answers relied upon recall were also the very first published examiners’ comments. They were made by the “Provincial Examiner” in 1894, a Professor MacGregor. MacGregor’s main

criticism of all provincial examinations, including history, was that students had prepared by memorizing the textbook. While he noted physics and chemistry in particular, MacGregor wrote that in all grades and in all subjects, students had "...evidently prepared themselves largely by committing portions of the text-book to memory."⁴⁸ He added, "The fact that a correct answer is given in the words of the text-book does not, of course, show that the subject matter has not been understood, though it leaves a doubt in the mind of the examiner and does show that the candidate has been trusting too much to his book."⁴⁹ MacGregor's criticism of textbook memorization went even further in the following suggestions he made to the Department of Education:

I would suggest that notice should be sent to teachers, and through them given to candidates, to the effect that henceforth answers which are quotations from the text book, and which, though partially, even largely accurate, show internal evidence of having been written down from memory, will be regarded as of no value; and that answers which are quotations from text books, and which though entirely accurate leave the examiner in doubt as to whether or not the candidate really understood what he has written, will be regarded as of little value.⁵⁰

MacGregor was so concerned with textbook memorization that he actually suggested that largely, or wholly, correct answers should receive no, or little, value if the examiner was not sure the answer was understood by the candidate who wrote it. As early as the 1894 provincial examinations, thus, an examiner had strongly articulated a concern that too much emphasis was being placed on textbook memory. In the following decades of the provincial examination era, MacGregor's lament would be echoed by others.

In April 1896, in a section titled “Provincial High School Examinations,” the *Journal of Education* complained of this same problem. While it is not clear if this section contained the thoughts of official examiners or *Journal of Education* staff, it was an official commentary on the examinations. It remarked, “In many cases there are pupils and even teachers who think that the best way to prepare for examination is to memorize all the minutiae in the texts prescribed, and they attempt to do so although feeling that it is profitable for nothing except ‘passing’ the examination.”⁵¹ It went on to discuss history. “In some papers, such as history, memory is all important. But even in history, there is a world of difference between the memory which reproduces a paragraph and that which collects and sums up all the relevant points of a question in the compass of the average answer.”⁵² The 1934 grade 11 history examiner made two comments which betrayed a similar concern about students memorizing their prescribed textbook. About question No. 3, the examiner wrote, “One thing that seemed particularly noticeable was the frequency of which the expressions of the text appeared in the answers which would suggest that the students are limited to the text as a source of knowledge in this subject.”⁵³ The examiner added, regarding question No. 14, “There was, however, a tendency to resort to knowledge gained from the texts....”⁵⁴ Also in 1934, the grade 12 history examiner echoed MacGregor’s chief concern when he noted of question No. 14, “...it was difficult to tell whether the answer was due to mere memory work or intelligent understanding.”⁵⁵ In the 1930’s, forty years or so after MacGregor’s warnings, examiners were troubled by the very same things. Provincial history examinations, despite concerns, continued to demand the memorization and recall of textbook information and, the examiner noted,

secondary history students obliged.

Worry about textbook memorization was still evident in the last full decade of the provincial examination era. In 1962, the provincial examiner for grade 11 history noted the following of question No. 5:

It would appear that students had been well drilled in this section of history. They wanted to reproduce what they had memorized without any regard to being selective and discerning enough to realize that...

It is evident that pupils are being encouraged to memorize entire sections of their history without any attempt being made to fit the passages into a topic, or a movement of history. A broader interpretation should be aimed at. Pupils should attempt to understand what they read and endeavor to answer the question as it is asked.⁵⁶

Like other examiners before, including MacGregor in 1894, the 1962 grade 11 history examiner clearly saw the problem that memorization posed when trying to evaluate student understanding. Two years later, in 1964, the grade 11 history examiner noted, of question No. 11, "The answers were most frequently word for word memorization of the textbook."⁵⁷ Also in the 1960's, the examiner for grade 11 general history in 1967 noted, regarding question No. 5, "Many students had memorized information without an understanding of the terms involved."⁵⁸ From Professor MacGregor in 1894 through to the late 1960's, examiners complained about the textbook memorization induced by the provincial history examinations. Unfortunately, the fact that the complaint was continually repeated would suggest that nothing was ever done and, therefore, throughout the provincial examination era, provincial history examinations were tests of textbook

memorization and recall.

While some examiners lamented how much student answers sometimes relied upon the textbook, a few examiners went even further. Instead of bemoaning textbook memorization and recall, these examiners actually commended those student answers which did not rely on the textbook. The grade 11 history examiner in 1935 wrote of question No. 1, "The answers were in many cases the results of quite original thinking on the part of the students."⁵⁹ The next year, the examiner at the same grade level, noted of question No. 8, "It was gratifying to observe that the fourth part of the question which required two present day instances of imperialism was answered very creditably by nearly every student."⁶⁰ The 1939 grade 11 examiners' comments provide a further example. The examiner wrote, "The readers feel that the students should be congratulated on their knowledge of current events. Question 12 showed wide reading and a reasonable understanding of world events of the lost [sic] few years. Prejudices there were; but these had to be expected."⁶¹ Such comments are noteworthy because they were so infrequent. They are also significant in that by being so rare, they help to accentuate the vast majority of comments which observed, encouraged, or lamented examination questions and/or answers which focused on the recall of factual textbook information.

While many examiners comments stuck strictly to the specific provincial examination questions and answers which they were charged with marking, others used their examiner's position to issue more wide-ranging comments. Such comments typically used the provincial examination as a place to begin to advise teachers in areas of instruction and content. The suggestions were with the intent to improve student

performance on future provincial history examinations; these examiners, therefore, saw the provincial examinations as the engine which drove secondary-school history education in Nova Scotia during the provincial examination era.

Some examiners used their provincial examination comments to direct teachers as to the type of instruction they should employ. In 1925, the grade 10 provincial examiner issued the following remark:

It seems to me that the use by the pupils of specific questions on the assignment would be a much more effective method of studying the history lesson than the expenditure of the same amount of time in undirected reading. This might be supplemented by the writing of outlines and summaries which cultivate precision.

In making the assignment in history many good teachers dictate a brief summary indicating clearly and distinctly the high points of the topic, which the students enter verbatim in their note books. This practise eliminates vagueness and induces efficient methods of study.⁶²

This examiner was clearly advising grade 10 history teachers on how to instruct their students so as to help the students do better on provincial history examinations. The examinations were the impetus for changing instruction as they were, albeit more blatantly, for the grade 12 examiner in 1948. That examiner wrote, "The paper this year serves to emphasize the fact that the teacher of Grade XII History must try to do two things: He must insist on the student learning certain facts in detail and at the same time must encourage the student to obtain a general view or perspective on ancient history."⁶³ Similarly, in 1963, the grade 11 examiner wrote, in regards to question No. 3, "Causes and results should be stressed much more and attempts should be made by teachers to show

that history is not a bundle of isolated events but is a bundle of events tied together by causes and results.”⁶⁴ Whether in the 1960's, the 1940's, or the 1920's, there were examiners who used the provincial examinations to counsel teachers in matters of instruction.

In a section titled “Provincial High School Examination, 1895,” the *Journal of Education* advised teachers in an instructional matter; it advocated that teachers tested in a manner more consistent with the provincial examinations. The April 1896 *Journal of Education* wrote:

Inexperienced teachers who are preparing candidates, have to be reminded of the fact that in testing their own candidates as to their fitness for the Provincial Examinations, they should remember that they are not likely to put questions on points which escaped their own attention when teaching. Furthermore, that they will be prone to put questions to their own candidates on points on which while teaching they laid special stress. Candidates are therefore likely to have their records at the school examinations under perhaps the great majority of teachers, all of whom are capable and honest, reduced at the Provincial Examinations from 10 to 40 per cent., according to the care of the teachers in guarding against the tendency referred to. As soon as this principle is more fully apprehended by teachers as a whole, the results of the Provincial Examinations will not so often be disappointing to them.⁶⁵

Like the previous excerpt from 1895, entitled “Provincial High School Examination,” it is not clear if this section contained the thoughts of official examiners or *Journal of Education* staff. It was, however, an official commentary on the examinations of that year. It clearly indicated that provincial examinations were what motivated the desire for change in instruction: in this case, the way that teachers tested students in their own

classrooms. Almost fifty years later, in 1944, a grade 11 history examiner made the same point, albeit more succinctly, by suggesting, “Generally teachers would do well to pattern their own questions after the style of those contained in these papers.”⁶⁶ These examples indicate that the provincial history examinations were used to direct teachers in areas of instruction, including evaluation. Whether the instructional advice given by the examiners might be seen as good or bad, it still reinforces the argument that the provincial history examinations dictated the nature of secondary history education: in this case by exhorting teachers to alter their methods of instruction and evaluation.

Examiners sometimes used the provincial examinations not only to direct teachers in matters of instruction but in content as well. The grade 11 history examiner in 1944 hinted that teachers were paying too much attention to strictly following the structure of the prescribed textbook, Seary and Paterson’s *The Story of Civilization*. The text and corresponding examination were organized upon a number of individual “quests” and the examiner, advocating that the “quests” were interdependent and not wholly distinct, suggested to teachers, “It will be found advisable very often, in the teaching of this text, to go from one ‘quest’ to another on certain occasions. Students should not be encouraged to consider history as a number of separate ‘quests’, but should be advised to relate them whenever possible.”⁶⁷ Sometimes the examiners’ comments were solely related to content. The grade 12 examiner in 1943 told teachers exactly what information in the textbook should be covered. That examiner wrote, of question No. 6, “Summaries such as that of the ‘Age of Tyrants’ Breasted, Pages 379-80, should be brought to the attention of the students and their importance noted.”⁶⁸

In 1947, grade 11 history teachers were told which content they needed to teach. The examiner gently admonished them for being careless by not preparing their students for an obvious examination question. Of question No. 7, the examiner remarked, "While a question on great scientists appears annually [sic] on the Grade XI History paper, this one was treated very casually by the students. Teaching such a topic is a dreary process, requiring drill, drill, drill! But it is a question on which students ought to make good marks, and therefore it should be given careful attention during the year."⁶⁹ Sometimes, teachers were instructed of the need to prepare students for examination questions by going beyond the scope of the textbook. The 1941 grade 12 examiner wrote of question No. 4c, "While the text does not cover 'education' in its discussion of Persia, teachers should link up the student's knowledge of Grade XI history."⁷⁰ Similarly, of question No. 10 on the 1966 general grade 12 examination, the examiner commented, "Most answers were verbatim, since the book covers this part quite sketchily. Others, where teachers had filled in the context, showed greater understanding of the topic."⁷¹ These excerpts demonstrate that the provincial examinations were used to advise history teachers as to the content they needed to cover. Whether or not these recommendations were good or not, the very existence of such advice buttresses the evidence showing that provincial examinations directed history education: in this case by pointing out to teachers the content they needed to complete.

One examiner used the examiners' comments to dispense more than just a content directive. The grade 11 examiner in 1932 issued a stern judgment criticizing the entire textbook. The comments identified the textbook as one of three reasons why the answers

to the history examination “were so very poor”⁷² and argued that the textbook should be replaced. That examiner wrote the following criticism:

The book prescribed is too heavy for Grade XI. It is only from cultured homes where there is free access to books that pupils enter this grade with any knowledge of modern history, outside that of England. The majority of them have not that advantage. There is no association of ideas. They have nothing to build upon. The result is a jumble of facts: the main lines of movement are lost in a multiplicity of details. A slimmer book, stressing the main movements and ignoring details, would be more suitable.⁷³

These comments, aside from obviously being a damning indictment of the prescribed grade 11 textbook, also underlined the effect provincial examinations had on secondary history education. The provincial history examination was the principle reason why this examiner was seeking a textbook change. Like the examiners who used the provincial examinations to direct teachers as to the content they should cover in their courses, this examiner demonstrated that provincial examinations exerted a powerful influence over the content of secondary history courses.

One particular examiner provided further testimony that provincial examination questions and answers directed history instruction and content. The Reverend James Boyle, D.D., the examiner of the grade 10 and 12 provincial history examinations in 1930, used his comments not only to critique the provincial examinations and the students, but to lament their effect on instruction and content. Boyle was damning of the written examinations and observed that they affected teachers. He argued that the examinations had limitations “...as guides to teachers in the task of vitalizing the processes of history.”⁷⁴

He added, "...high examination scores are untrustworthy indexes of the efficiency of instruction."⁷⁵ He also criticized the authors of textbooks, along with students and teachers, for seeing "...little else in history than a 'chronicle of the doings of warriors, statesmen, politicians and kings.'"⁷⁶ Boyle continued, "War and politics do produce outstanding characters; but in this democratic age, history should give our young people an entree also to the movements beneficial to the common man who is little concerned with the intrigues of 'courts and cabinets.'"⁷⁷ Boyle saw that the provincial examinations did not reliably gauge the quality of instruction and were deficient in helping history teachers to better teach history. While he clearly did not see it as a positive thing, by making such comments, Boyle must have felt that the provincial history examinations were generally viewed as measures of, and aids to, history instruction. He also saw that history textbooks limited the history to which students were exposed, and because of their importance on history examinations, played too large a role in defining the content of history courses. History examinations, for Boyle, did not just affect history content and instruction during the provincial examination era in Nova Scotia, as countless other examiners demonstrated; Boyle saw that the examinations profoundly, and negatively, affected history instruction and content.

The examiners used the provincial examinations as the motive to direct instruction and content in secondary history. They gave advice on how to improve history instruction and provided direction as to the content that should be covered. More explicitly, the examiners disclosed that the provincial examinations demanded memorization and recall from prescribed textbooks. Throughout the provincial examination era, whether they

merely observed it, actively encouraged it, or openly deplored it, the examiners' comments recognized the importance of textbook recall and memorization inspired by provincial examinations. The examiners' comments, thus, underscore the evidence that the provincial examinations were a restraint that caused history courses to focus on memorizing information from the textbook to be recalled on the provincial history examinations.

Conclusion

The provincial examinations and the examiners' comments contribute abundant evidence to the study of secondary history education during the provincial examination era in Nova Scotia. The examinations and comments illustrate and affirm that the provincial examinations governed the organization, content, and instruction of secondary history courses. The examiners' comments attest that the provincial history examinations required the recall of textbook information and influenced the nature of history courses. The history examinations show that they demanded the recall of information from the prescribed textbooks. The history courses worked in harmony by employing textbooks to arrange and provide content, and stressing the memorization, and recall, of textbook information. The provincial history examinations both fettered and defined secondary history education in Nova Scotia during the provincial examination era.

Chapter 5: Discussion

In chapters 3 and 4, the courses of study and other documents which organized history courses, the prescribed textbooks which provided their content, and the provincial examinations were studied. While each was studied separately, their intricate relationship was clear. While the courses of study, textbooks, and examinations were ultimately part of the same process, it was the provincial examinations that dominated and largely defined the history education system. The examiners' comments reinforced the connection between the provincial examinations, textbooks, and courses of study. By noting that the examinations demanded textbook recall, and by using the examinations as an opportunity to counsel students and teachers, the examiners underlined that the provincial history examinations handcuffed history education in Nova Scotia during the provincial examination era. The provincial examinations made history courses into the study of a large volume of historical detail as contained, and organized, in the prescribed textbook.

In Nova Scotia, provincial examinations were administered after the close of the school year. The examinations, however, effectively launched the school year; their influence was so great that they played the major role in determining what was taught and how it was taught. The provincial examination in history determined what went on in the Nova Scotia's secondary history classrooms. The provincial examinations in secondary-school history exerted such a strong influence because of their importance to all aspects of secondary-school history education. Obviously, the provincial examinations were extremely important to the students of secondary-school history. While perhaps less obvious, the provincial examinations also served to indirectly assess teachers and schools.

With so many people and things affected by the provincial examinations, it is not surprising that they exerted such a command over the secondary-school history in Nova Scotia during the provincial examination era. In secondary history courses where provincial examinations were administered, the entire system was set up to examine, and everything was deployed so as to maximize student success on the examinations.

That provincial examinations commanded such influence in history education is significant, but it is also important to examine exactly what that influence was. The provincial examinations in history, at all grade levels throughout the entire provincial examination era, almost exclusively examined students on their ability to recall information contained in their prescribed textbooks. It is rare to find an examination question that required students to be creative, to apply knowledge, or to make judgements or inferences. The influence of examinations on secondary history education during the provincial examination era was to generate history courses that stressed the importance of students acquiring the factual information contained in their prescribed textbooks; the provincial examinations did little, if anything, to encourage independent or creative thinking about history. The comments of many examiners affirm that textbook recall was paramount on provincial history examinations. Despite perceptive and regular admonishments from some examiners that teaching should involve more than merely covering the textbook, provincial history examination questions continued to ask students to recall factual information from their textbooks. Due to the importance of the provincial examinations, memorizing the textbook remained a cornerstone of secondary history education in Nova Scotia during the provincial examination era. Indeed, the fact that the

admonishments were repeated would suggest that they had little effect.

Like some of the examiners' comments, the observations of various provincial education officials, and the views set forth in Nova Scotia's official *Journal of Education*, leveled criticism at the effect that the whole provincial examination system had on secondary-school education in Nova Scotia. The criticism was sometimes directed at the effects of the provincial examinations in general (including, obviously, history); while at other times, the criticism was directed at their effects on secondary history education in particular. It is also important to note that these critical observations and views were articulated throughout the provincial examination era in Nova Scotia. These perspectives are representative of the entire era, and not just of a particular phase during the time of provincial examinations in Nova Scotia.

The criticisms made by the education officials and the *Journal of Education* mirrored many of the observations made by various examiners and reinforce the basic arguments made by this study. The broad criticism was made that the provincial examination system played too important a role in determining what went on in the secondary-school history classrooms of Nova Scotia. More specific criticisms were also made about the effect of the provincial examination system on various aspects of secondary history education: it encouraged students to memorize information from their textbook; it created classes where the textbook defined what was learned and how it was learned; and, the provincial examination system caused the textbook to be the *de facto* history for secondary history courses. Interestingly, some well-positioned educational figures, ones whom might actually have had a chance of making positive changes, appear

to have done nothing to really change the nature of the very history provincial examinations they criticized. The fact that the criticism from such sources continued throughout the entire provincial examination era would appear to prove that despite all the rhetoric, nothing was ever really done to change provincial history examinations.

Criticism of the provincial examinations began early in their existence. In its October 1896 edition, just four school years after the provincial examinations were initiated, the *Journal of Education* wrote the following in a section titled “Notes on the Course of Study — Provincial Examinations”:

One great evil of written examinations (which is as yet our only possible plan of testing scholarship) is the mistaken effort made to cram the pupils with facts which are supposed to be useful in scoring high marks. And perhaps a majority of teachers yet think that the memorization of the text-book is the most likely means of making a good score. They forget that it is not the text-book on which students are expected to be examined. The text-book is expressly stated in many places to indicate generally the character of the knowledge of the subject. All our text-books are defective in some respect even when they do not become partially out of date. The examiners are thoroughly posted in their several subjects, and are instructed to give highest value for the best evidence of sound modern scholarship, even should it not agree with the text-book.¹

This section continues with the following related comments:

In the list of prescribed text books, it will be found, that it is the ‘character of the High School work in its various subjects’ which is ‘indicated’ — and indicated only — ‘by the books referred to in the high school course of study.’ Study the subject. Use the book as an aid, and as an index of the degree of detail expected.²

In 1896, the *Journal of Education* observed the effect of the provincial examinations on instruction. Indeed, it was the provincial examination that determined what was being taught and how it was being taught. The provincial examinations, according to the *Journal of Education*, caused the teachers to make their students memorize the factual information contained in their textbooks. Teachers were told that it was not the textbook on which students should be expected to be examined, but “sound modern scholarship” of the subject. The textbooks themselves were pointed out to be faulty and to be used only as an aid. Interestingly, despite such admonishments, the provincial examination questions, and the examiners’ comments, clearly indicate that it was precisely that factual information contained in the textbooks that the provincial examinations examined and continued to examine throughout the entire provincial examination era. Indeed, teachers were not forgetting that on which students were expected to be examined, they knew precisely what the examination would demand of their students.

One year later, the October 1897 *Journal of Education* issued another advisory to teachers, referring to the “General Directions”:

The Course of Study in the Registers is always likely to be too old on account of the necessity of distributing them several months in advance. But they substantially show the outline, the last JOURNAL being the legal authority.

Nearly by accident, it has been discovered, that there are many teachers who have been in the habit of ignoring the ‘*General Directions*,’ of the Course of Study, and concentrating their attention on the ‘*Special Directions*.’ This is a serious mistake; for the most important parts of the ‘prescribed course’ are the ‘GENERAL DIRECTIONS,’ no matter whether in a rural or graded school, in the lower grades or in the high school grades. The ‘*Special Directions*’ are simply the enumeration of the

portions of the text books to be covered in the different grades; the '*General Directions*' are of the utmost importance, as they indicate the manner in which the work should be done as well as the work itself common to all grades.

Inspectors are requested to value the work done in the schools they visit with special reference to the 'GENERAL DIRECTIONS.'³

In this excerpt, teachers were chided for concentrating on the courses of study (referred to here as the "Special Directions") instead of "the manner in which the work should be done", or the "General Directions." While the observation and the attempt to set the teachers straight on how to teach was noteworthy, the provincial examination questions and the examiners' comments continued to demand that students recall factual information from their prescribed textbooks. It is not surprising, then, that teachers focused on the courses of study and the textbooks, and not the "General Directions"; it was the former on which their students were being examined and, indirectly, on which their performance was being critiqued.

Despite the reprimands and criticism of teaching early in the provincial examination era, little improved. The provincial examinations in history continued to demand that students recall factual information from their textbooks and, as a result, the teachers were left to demand the same in their classrooms. Criticism of teaching practices continued as was evidenced by the Superintendent of Education for Nova Scotia, Henry F. Munro, delivering a withering critique of history teaching, in an address to the Canadian Educational Association in Winnipeg on 01 November 1927. This address appeared in the October 1928 *Journal of Education*, under the title "Canadian History," from which the

following extract is taken:

...probably history is the most poorly taught subject on the whole curriculum. Speaking from my own observation, I should say that there are fewer competent teachers of history in the schools and universities than in any other field. Why is that? Very likely because it is a difficult subject to teach — possibly the most difficult — for it demands rare endowments in the teacher. For one thing he should possess a reconstructive imagination. He must create background for himself by wide reading and must invest the subject with an interest that does not lie ready to hand — particularly difficult to do when the pupils lack those very essentials of background and imagination....⁴

It is hard to argue with the attributes that Munro assigned to a good teacher of history.

His suggestion that it might be the most difficult subject to teach is open to debate, but it is the main reason that he suggests for history being such a poorly taught subject. The provincial examinations in history, at the secondary level, were also a good reason as to why history was not taught in the manner that Munro said he hoped. As the examinations demanded that students recall factual textbook information, it was precisely that on which teachers focused in their classrooms. Interestingly, as the Superintendent of Education for Nova Scotia, Munro would have been in a position to effect change; perhaps if he had altered the nature of the provincial history examinations, he might have elicited teaching more to his liking.

In 1931, just a few years after Munro's criticism, the *Journal of Education* published the "Report of the Chief Inspector of Schools, 1930." It too leveled a blistering attack on history instruction in the schools:

In listening to the average instruction in history and the history of English literature one hears much to lead one to despair of the value of the effort. A very much smaller body of historical matter interpreted by teachers who know the subject would be infinitely more worth-while. There would then be some chance of eliciting the opinions of the pupils, and of encouraging them to form a judgment in human and social matters. As it is, the texts are extensive, and, back of words glibly reproduced, there may be no clear idea; while the teacher will excuse the meagreness of discussion on the ground of an extensive prescription. In many cases the teacher is overborne by the lecture habit acquired at college, an institution generally characterized by both very skilful and very unskilful teaching.⁵

The Chief Inspector lamented the state of history instruction and made some suggestions as to how it could be improved. He noted that the textbooks were extensive and suggested it would be preferable to have a much smaller body of historical matter taught by teachers more knowledgeable in the discipline of history. He maintained that this would allow students to voice opinions and develop "...a judgment in human and social matters." As with Munro's comments, it is hard to argue with the suggestions put forward by the Chief Inspector. Once again, however, a person in a position to bring about change, and one so obviously aware of the need for change, continued to work within a system that demanded students write provincial history examinations that required the recall of factual information from extensive textbooks and rarely, if ever, asked students for their opinions or judgments on matters historical. Perhaps if the Chief Inspector and the Superintendent had attempted to alter the provincial history examinations, they could have moved closer to observing the type of history instruction that they claimed they wished to see. The importance of the provincial examinations in history, and their unceasing demand for students to recall factual information from their prescribed textbooks, doomed any chance

of reforming the way in which history was taught in Nova Scotia's secondary schools.

This is borne out time and time again, including just a year after the Chief Inspector's comments in 1932, when in the *Journal of Education*, the "Chief Readers' Report on the Examinations in General" noted, of the 1932 provincial examinations:

In all subjects there was considerable evidence that the teachers were aiming their instruction at the answering of questions. The readers would like to see more evidence of a general grasp of the various subjects rather than the specific answering of little items of work.⁶

While the criticism of the provincial examination system continued, so did the very system that was being criticized. Provincial examinations in secondary history continued, despite continuing lament to the contrary, to demand that students recall information from their history textbooks. In the mid-1930's, however, it looked as if change might happen; the examination system in Canada was to be examined with Nova Scotians playing key roles. An editorial in the December 1936 *Journal of Education*, entitled "The Report on Examinations," reported that the Departments of Education in Nova Scotia and British Columbia had been appointed, at the 1934 meeting of the Canadian Education Association, to study examinations and to report at the next biennial meeting of the association in 1936. Nova Scotia's Superintendent of Education, Dr. H. F. Munro, sat on this special committee. The report was written by H. P. Moffatt of the Department of Education in Nova Scotia. The involvement of Nova Scotia in the report was substantial as the editorial noted, "The study was almost wholly carried out at the Nova Scotia

Education Office....”⁷ The editorial noted that the Canadian Education Association took no course of action following the report but added, of the report, “...it represents only the opinions of the committee responsible for its preparation.”⁸ The report, thus, represented the beliefs of Nova Scotia’s Department of Education in respect to the provincial examinations.

The *Journal of Education* published the entire report later in the same December 1936 edition. The report was wide ranging and quite critical of examination systems. The report observed, in a section titled “Their Effect on School Life,” a “cramping effect” that external examinations had on schools.⁹ The same section goes on to explain how programmes of study, “in practice,” were generally confined to subjects which could be evaluated on a written examination.¹⁰ It added, “Legitimate objectives of school studies, often mentioned in courses of study...are ignored because they cannot be measured.”¹¹

In a later section titled “Attainments versus Facts,” the report expanded upon the effect of external examinations on objectives in courses of study. The report argued that in subjects where examinations were still viewed as essential (it argued for abolishing external examinations in certain subjects), examinations should be constructed so as to examine intended course objectives and not simply the ability to recall factual information. The following passage contrasted the typical external examination with that which the report advocated:

Objectives of secondary school courses fall mainly into two classes - development of power to use knowledge creatively, and development of skill in its application. Ability to draw inferences from the

study of history is an example of the former; to speak French or to solve original problems in mathematics examples of the latter. But very rare indeed are examination papers which call for, or allow pupils to display, power of judgment or skill in the application of knowledge. In a typical history examination used in 1936, ten of the eleven questions required nothing more than statements of fact.¹²

The call for a new type of examination also appeared in the report's final recommendations. The seventh recommendation, of nine, clearly called for change:

That essay-type examination papers be drastically remodelled, so that they may allow creative ability and independent judgment to be shown by the pupils; and that, whenever possible, the examinations should require pupils to perform the activities listed as desirable in the printed courses of study. To this end, we recommend the adoption of oral tests as part of the examinations in all modern languages, and the use of dictionaries in foreign language examinations, text books for at least part of the social studies papers, and tables for scientific and mathematical papers. In Science and English Composition we recommend that students be required at the time of the examination to submit, respectively, laboratory notebooks and theme work done during the year.¹³

These extracts clearly demonstrated an awareness, on the part of leading officials in Nova Scotia's Department of Education, of the debilitating affect of examinations on broad programmes of study and individual courses of study and their objectives, as well as the need for reform. Despite what might actually be written in, and intended by, the documents which organized secondary history courses, Munro and Moffatt were cognizant that they were interpreted and implemented differently, if not ignored, because of the external examinations. In fact, in the last extract, they even outlined the types of

questions they felt would more appropriately examine students. Notwithstanding the criticism leveled, and alternatives proposed, by those who might affect change, examinations in Nova Scotia remained, largely unchanged, to dispense their “cramping effect” for another thirty five years or so.

In addition to the effect of examinations on programmes and courses of study, the report also assessed the related, and similar, effect of examinations on teaching. The following passage reveals the report’s concern:

The passing of examinations becomes the be-all and end-all of teaching, with over-emphasis on memorization and assimilation of facts and neglect of special aptitudes and a general grasp of the subject. Recall of facts demanded by the examination discourages training in the use of reference material; correlation of closely related subjects is discouraged; the attitude of the academic specialist prevails and the teacher is continually deprived of the opportunity to relate his teaching to the immediate environment and individual needs of his pupils. For as we all know, but rarely admit publically, teachers *will not* pay any attention to exhortations to be modern in their methods when the examinations continue to reward those who ‘stick to the facts.’ Except for a few rare spirits, teachers generally will only change their methods when examinations [sic] methods are changed or external examinations abolished. To expect them to do otherwise is to be much too optimistic of human nature.¹⁴

Munro and Moffatt understood that examinations dictated the manner in which teachers instructed their students. Since examinations demanded the recall of factual knowledge, teaching methods generally involved the memorization, assimilation, and recall of facts. Again, it is significant to note that while they were aware of this situation, and indicated that they were not happy with it, Munro and Moffatt, and subsequent educational leaders

in Nova Scotia for many more years, did nothing to change the nature of, or abolish, the examinations: even though they saw it as necessary to improve instruction. Teachers were victims of a "Catch 22" situation in which they were told, in theory, to instruct in a certain manner and frequently criticized by educational authorities when they did not; yet, in practice, the teachers were instructing in a manner consistent with the examinations and in a manner in which these same educational authorities were aware.

The March 1950 edition of the *Journal of Education* provided a perspective on external examinations in Nova Scotia from beyond the borders of Canada. Dr. William W. Turnbull, Director, Test Construction and Research Educational Testing Service, Princeton, New Jersey, delivered a report on the Common Examining Board of the Maritime Provinces and Newfoundland. The entire text of the "Turnbull Report" appeared in the *Journal of Education*. While the report was broad in scope, Turnbull did take time to discuss what he calls the "Content of the Examinations." Turnbull introduced this topic by observing, "Perhaps the most fundamental question faced by the Board is the nature of the material upon which the students are to be examined. The *examining* problem is secondary in this instance, of course; the primary question is 'What are the objectives of instruction? What should the students be taught?'"¹⁵ While Turnbull noted that the instructional objectives should come before the examinations in determining the content on which students would be examined, he quickly added, however, that many of the published objectives in Nova Scotia's *Handbook to the Course of Study* were not represented on examinations.¹⁶

Turnbull did not stop with his observation that stated objectives were not tested on

examinations. He argued that it was the examinations, and not formal objectives, that determined how courses were taught. Turnbull, himself, explained this clearly in his report.

It seems likely that the examination in each subject bears a closer relation to the course as it is taught than to the formal declaration of objectives in the *Handbook [to the Course of Study]*. If the objectives stated and those generally accepted disagree and if the functioning objectives are satisfactory to all, then the present situation is not particularly disturbing. If the published objectives represent goals toward which the teaching should move, however, it would be important to represent those objectives on the examinations, since the latter constitute the most powerful single influence on teaching.¹⁷

Turnbull observed, if not condoned, a rather cavalier attitude towards objectives. He also asserted that examinations, not objectives, dictated instruction; to the extent that if formally stated objectives were truly desirable, they should be found on examinations.

Turnbull's differentiation between "formal" and "generally accepted" objectives is noteworthy. It might offer some insight as to why Nova Scotia's provincial examination system, despite constant criticism, often by those who could have altered it, never changed. Perhaps, for appearances, it was important to have impressive "formal" objectives. Despite the periodic rhetoric (largely recounted in this section) lauding such formal objectives and lamenting the extent to which examinations, and not objectives, dictated instruction, perhaps it was understood in, for example, history courses that the acquisition of facts was the "generally accepted" objective and, thus, that is what the provincial examination demanded.

Fourteen years after Munro and Moffatt's report to the Canadian Educational Association, Turnbull observed the same basic problems with external examinations. The criticism and alternatives offered by Munro and Moffatt led to no change in the nature of provincial examinations in Nova Scotia. A study of provincial history examinations subsequent to the Turnbull Report also show no meaningful change. This American expert, like a number of Nova Scotian educational authorities before him, observed fundamental problems with the examination system; a system which lumbered on, virtually unchanged in nature, despite criticism and proposed alternatives.

The only period of external examination in Nova Scotia for secondary-school history students was the provincial examination era from 1893 until 1972. A study of the evidence from this era, the courses of study, the prescribed textbooks, and the provincial examinations, reveals that while they were closely linked, the history education system was driven by the influence of the provincial examinations. Other sources, such as the examiners' comments, as well as the comments by various other educational authorities and the views set forth in the *Journal of Education* recounted in this chapter, affirmed that the provincial examinations forced a straitjacket upon the organization and content of secondary-school history education. It is also apparent that the influence of the provincial examinations was not only real but was also detrimental to secondary education in Nova Scotia. The provincial examinations made history courses into exercises in memorizing and recalling textbook content. Interestingly, many of those who commented on the negative affect of examinations were in positions to have effected change: yet, none was ever forthcoming. Given that so many interests desired and strove for success on the

provincial examinations, the examinations' emphasis on the acquisition of factual information from their prescribed textbooks was allowed to permeate the entire secondary-school history program during the provincial examination era. History education, thus, was powerfully, and negatively, influenced by the provincial history examinations.

Chapter 6: Summary and Conclusion

From 1893 to 1972 in Nova Scotia, provincial examinations were administered in a variety of secondary history courses. These examinations severely circumscribed history education during this time. The history examinations were the focus of the entire history education system, and everything else worked in lock step to provide that which the examination demanded. As the provincial history examinations almost solely asked for the recall of textbook content, history courses obliged. Secondary history courses of study simply named the prescribed textbooks. These textbooks, both organizing and providing content for the history courses, provided a tightly organized and chronological mass of historical information to be memorized for, and recalled on, the provincial history examinations.

The secondary history provincial examinations asked questions designed to elicit answers that demonstrated an ability to recall information from the prescribed textbook. At all grade levels with provincial examinations, and throughout the entire provincial examination era, the examinations almost exclusively asked recall questions. Examination questions rarely asked students to think, judge, analyse, apply knowledge, be creative, or to give opinions. Examinations questions sometimes even required that students recall their understanding of the views in, or structure of, their history textbooks.

Secondary history courses were set up to permit success on the provincial history examination. History courses of study, the primary document that organized the courses, illustrated the importance of the provincial examinations. They often included information about the provincial examination such as its format, point value, duration, or even the

number or type of questions that would be asked. Documents which articulated a view of history beyond that of the prescribed textbook never had that view represented in provincial history examination questions. Indeed, provincial examinations exerted an influence on history courses even before those courses had begun. Courses of study obliged the examinations by providing little more direction for courses than the listing of the name of the textbook and its author. The prescribed textbooks, in effect, assumed the role of organizing history courses by default from the courses of study.

The importance of the provincial history examinations made the prescribed textbooks central to history courses. The organization of the textbooks became the *de facto* organization of the history courses and provided the content that students would need to memorize for recall on the examinations. The prescribed history textbooks used in the provincial examination era were lengthy and chock full of historical details that needed to be learned for the examinations. They were strictly and chronologically organized into numerous divisions and subdivisions and presented a particular view of the history they surveyed. The textbooks tightly organized their mass of historical information in a manner that aided the memorization required for success on provincial history examinations which almost exclusively demanded the recall of textbook information.

Directed by the provincial examinations, the examinations, textbooks, and courses of study worked in unison to provide a history education system that was geared towards preparing students for the examination. This system was handcuffed by the examinations and, as a result, students and teachers were limited in their study of history. The comments of the examiners reinforces this observation. With the provincial examinations

in history as their starting point for discussing education, and history education, during the provincial examination era, the examiners showed the provincial examinations to be that which drove the secondary history education system in Nova Scotia during the provincial examination era. The examiners' comments reveal that the provincial examination demanded the memorization, and the recall, of textbook information. They also demonstrate that the provincial examinations strongly affected the instruction in, and content of, secondary history courses. Some examiners scolded students and teachers for not undertaking study that properly prepared students for the provincial examinations. Others lamented the crippling affect that the provincial history examinations imposed on history examinations.

The observations of a variety of educational officials and comments published in the *Journal of Education* throughout the provincial examination era underline the view that provincial examinations had a limiting effect on history education. In fact, the Canadian Education Association's "Report on Examinations," published in the December 1936 *Journal of Education*, which was largely prepared by the Nova Scotia Education Office declared, "The passing of examinations becomes the be-all and end-all of teaching, with over-emphasis on memorization and assimilation of facts and neglect of special aptitudes and a general grasp of the subject."¹

From 1893 to 1972, Nova Scotia administered an external assessment, through provincial examinations, to various subjects, grades, and levels of secondary history students. This study reveals that the provincial history examinations directed the secondary history education system during the provincial examination era due to their

tremendous importance to everyone involved with secondary history courses in Nova Scotia. Not only did the provincial examinations direct history education, they did not direct it in a positive way. The examinations in generally asked recall-type questions that demanded students had thoroughly studied their textbooks. Each information-laden textbook provided students with myriad accepted historical details and views of its time. Teachers and students, thus, undertook a study of history that emphasized the acquisition and retention of textbook information so that it could be recalled, on request, for the questions on the provincial history examination.

Provincial examinations imposed a straitjacket on secondary history education in Nova Scotia during the era of provincial examinations. The influence of the provincial examinations was not a positive influence. The implementation of external assessment for present day secondary history education in Nova Scotia, as suggested in the Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation's document *Foundation for the Atlantic Canada Social Studies Curriculum*, published in 1999, would represent a major change in secondary-school history education in Nova Scotia today. In a broad perspective, however, it would not be a change to something unknown. Much evidence endures from a period of external assessment, the provincial examination era from 1893 to 1972, in Nova Scotia. This evidence strongly suggests that the present day move towards external assessment would be the wrong move and would negatively affect secondary history education in Nova Scotia.

Endnotes

Title Page

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**APPENDIX 'A': PRESCRIBED TEXTBOOKS IN SECONDARY HISTORY COURSES WITH PROVINCIAL EXAMINATIONS
DURING NOVA SCOTIA'S PROVINCIAL EXAMINATION ERA (1892-1893 TO 1971-72)**

<p align="center"><u>Grade 12 (1892/93 - 1971/72)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ <i>A Short History of the English People (Green)</i> 92/93 - 06/07 & 27/28 ▶ <i>History of Canada (Clements)</i> 98/99 - 06/07 ▶ <i>Ancient History (Myers)</i> 07/08 - 13/14 ▶ <i>Mediæval and Modern History (Myers)</i> 07/08 ^ ▶ <i>A Short History of Mediæval and Modern Times (Myers)</i> 14/15 - 26/27 ▶ <i>Modern Progress (West)</i> 27/28 ▶ <i>Ancient Times (Breasted)</i> 28/29 - 57/58 ▶ <i>North America and the Modern World (McInnis)</i> 58/59 - 64/65 ▶ <i>Democratic Government in Canada (Dawson)</i> 58/59 - 70/71 ▶ <i>The North American Nations (McInnis)</i> 65/66 - 71/72 <p align="center"><u>Grade 12: General (1963/64 - 1969/70)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ <i>Canada -- A Nation (Chafe/Lower)</i> 65/66 - 71/72 	<p align="center"><u>Grade 11 (1907/08 - 1968/69)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ <i>General History (Swinton)</i> 07/08 - 13/14 * ▶ <i>A Short History of Ancient Times (Myers)</i> 14/15 - 26/27 ▶ <i>Modern Progress (West)</i> 27/28 - 33/34 ▶ <i>A New World or The League of Nations (a booklet)</i> 28/29 - 34/35 ▶ <i>The Story of Civilization (Seary/Paterson)</i> 34/35 - 51/52 ▶ <i>The Record of Mankind (Roehm et al)</i> 52/53 - 68/69 ▶ <i>Dent's Historical and Geographical Atlas</i> 63/64 - 68/69 <p align="center"><u>Grade 11: General (1962/63 - 1967/68)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ <i>Patterns in Time (Coulthard et al)</i> 65/66 - 68/69 	<p align="center"><u>Grade 10 (1907/08 - 1930/31)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ "Outlines" or <i>Calkin</i> (British History) 07/08 - 11/12 * ▶ <i>Outlines of British History</i> 12/13 - 14/15 * ▶ <i>How Canada is Governed (Bourinot)</i> 12/13 ; 28/29 - ▶ <i>Canadian Civics</i> 12/13 - 15/16 and <i>Canadian Civics (N.S. Edition)</i> 16/17 - 27/28 ▶ <i>Ontario High School History of England (Wrong)</i> 15/16 - 21/22 ▶ <i>High School History of England (Wrong)</i> 22/23 - 27/28 ▶ <i>History of Canada for High Schools (McArthur)</i> 28/29 - 30/31 ▶ <i>A New World or The League of Nations (a booklet)</i> 28/29 - 30/31 <p align="center">LEGEND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * no proper title given ^ Grade 13 or Grade 12 (Final) - for one year only
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**APPENDIX 'B': AN OVERVIEW OF SECONDARY HISTORY COURSES, TEXTBOOKS AND PROVINCIAL EXAMINATIONS
DURING NOVA SCOTIA'S PROVINCIAL EXAMINATION ERA (1892-1893 TO 1971-72), BY SCHOOL YEAR**

School Year	Grade(s) with a Provincial Examination in History	History Compulsory Yes/No?	Principal Textbooks Prescribed for Students	Provincial Examination Year	Length of Provincial Examination
1892-1893	Gr 12	Yes	Gr 12 - <i>A Short History of the English People</i> (Green)	1893	1 Hour
1893-1894	Gr 12	Yes	Gr 12 - <i>A Short History of the English People</i> (Green)	1894	1 Hour
1894-1895	Gr 12	Yes	Gr 12 - <i>A Short History of the English People</i> (Green)	1895	1 Hour
1895-1896	Gr 12	Yes	Gr 12 - <i>A Short History of the English People</i> (Green)	1896	1 Hour
1896-1897	Gr 12	Yes	Gr 12 - <i>A Short History of the English People</i> (Green)	1897	1 Hour
1897-1898	Gr 12	Yes	Gr 12 - <i>A Short History of the English People</i> (Green)	1898	1 Hour
1898-1899	Gr 12	Yes	Gr 12 - <i>A Short History of the English People</i> (Green) and <i>History of Canada</i> (Clement)	1899	1 Hour
1899-1900	Gr 12	Yes	Gr 12 - <i>A Short History of the English People</i> (Green) and <i>History of Canada</i> (Clement)	1900	1 Hour
1900-1901	Gr 12	Yes	Gr 12 - <i>A Short History of the English People</i> (Green) and <i>History of Canada</i> (Clement)	1901	1 Hour
1901-1902	Gr 12	Yes	Gr 12 - <i>A Short History of the English People</i> (Green) and <i>History of Canada</i> (Clement)	1902	1 Hour
1902-1903	Gr 12	Yes	Gr 12 - <i>A Short History of the English People</i> (Green) and <i>History of Canada</i> (Clement)	1903	1 Hour
1903-1904	Gr 12	Yes	Gr 12 - <i>A Short History of the English People</i> (Green) and <i>History of Canada</i> (Clement)	1904	1 Hour

**APPENDIX 'B': AN OVERVIEW OF SECONDARY HISTORY COURSES, TEXTBOOKS AND PROVINCIAL EXAMINATIONS
DURING NOVA SCOTIA'S PROVINCIAL EXAMINATION ERA (1892-1893 TO 1971-72), BY SCHOOL YEAR (CONTINUED)**

School Year	Grade(s) with a Provincial Examination in History	History Compulsory Yes/No?	Principal Textbooks Prescribed for Students	Provincial Examination Year	Length of Provincial Examination
1904-1905	Gr 12	Yes	Gr 12 - <i>A Short History of the English People</i> (Green) and <i>History of Canada</i> (Clement)	1905	1 Hour
1905-1906	Gr 12	Yes	Gr 12 - <i>A Short History of the English People</i> (Green) and <i>History of Canada</i> (Clement)	1906	1 Hour
1906-1907	Gr 12	Yes	Gr 12 - <i>A Short History of the English People</i> (Green) and <i>History of Canada</i> (Clement)	1907	1 Hour
1907-1908	Gr 13 Gr 12 Gr 11 Gr 10	No	Gr 13 - <i>Medieval and Modern History</i> (Myers) Gr 12 - <i>Ancient History</i> (Myers) Gr 11 - <i>General History</i> (Swinton) Gr 10 - <i>British History</i> ("Outlines" or Calkin)	1908	2 Hours
1908-1909	Gr 12 Gr 11 Gr 10	No	Gr 12 - <i>Ancient History</i> (Myers) Gr 11 - <i>General History</i> (Swinton) Gr 10 - <i>British History</i> ("Outlines" or Calkin)	1909	2 Hours
1909-1910	Gr 12 Gr 11 Gr 10	No	Gr 12 - <i>Ancient History</i> (Myers) Gr 11 - <i>General History</i> (Swinton) Gr 10 - <i>British History</i> ("Outlines" or Calkin)	1910	2 Hours
1910-1911	Gr 12 Gr 11 Gr 10	No	Gr 12 - <i>Ancient History</i> (Myers) Gr 11 - <i>General History</i> (Swinton) Gr 10 - <i>British History</i> ("Outlines" or Calkin)	1911	2 Hours

**APPENDIX 'B': AN OVERVIEW OF SECONDARY HISTORY COURSES, TEXTBOOKS AND PROVINCIAL EXAMINATIONS
DURING NOVA SCOTIA'S PROVINCIAL EXAMINATION ERA (1892-1893 TO 1971-72), BY SCHOOL YEAR (CONTINUED)**

School Year	Grade(s) with a Provincial Examination in History	History Compulsory Yes/No?	Principal Textbooks Prescribed for Students	Provincial Examination Year	Length of Provincial Examination
1911-1912	Gr 12 Gr 11 Gr 10	No	Gr 12 - <i>Ancient History</i> (Myers) Gr 11 - <i>General History</i> (Swinton) Gr 10 - <i>British History</i> ("Outlines" or Calkin)	1912	2 Hours
1912-1913	Gr 12 Gr 11 Gr 10	No	Gr 12 - <i>Ancient History</i> (Myers) Gr 11 - <i>General History</i> (Swinton) Gr 10 - <i>British History</i> ("Outlines")	1913	2 Hours
1913-1914	Gr 12 Gr 11 Gr 10	No	Gr 12 - <i>Ancient History</i> (Myers) Gr 11 - <i>General History</i> (Swinton) Gr 10 - <i>British History</i> ("Outlines")	1914	2 Hours
1914-1915	Gr 12 Gr 11 Gr 10	No	Gr 12 - <i>A Short History of Mediæval and Modern Times</i> (Myers) Gr 11 - <i>A Short History of Ancient Times</i> (Myers) Gr 10 - <i>Outlines of British History</i>	1915	2 Hours
1915-1916	Gr 12 Gr 11 Gr 10	No	Gr 12 - <i>A Short History of Mediæval and Modern Times</i> (Myers) Gr 11 - <i>A Short History of Ancient Times</i> (Myers) Gr 10 - <i>Ontario High School History of England</i> (Wrong)	1916	2 Hours
1916-1917	Gr 12 Gr 11 Gr 10	No	Gr 12 - <i>A Short History of Mediæval and Modern Times</i> (Myers) Gr 11 - <i>A Short History of Ancient Times</i> (Myers) Gr 10 - <i>Ontario High School History of England</i> (Wrong)	1917	2 Hours
1917-1918	Gr 12 Gr 11 Gr 10	No	Gr 12 - <i>A Short History of Mediæval and Modern Times</i> (Myers) Gr 11 - <i>A Short History of Ancient Times</i> (Myers) Gr 10 - <i>Ontario High School History of England</i> (Wrong)	1918	2 Hours

**APPENDIX 'B': AN OVERVIEW OF SECONDARY HISTORY COURSES, TEXTBOOKS AND PROVINCIAL EXAMINATIONS
DURING NOVA SCOTIA'S PROVINCIAL EXAMINATION ERA (1892-1893 TO 1971-72), BY SCHOOL YEAR (CONTINUED)**

School Year	Grade(s) with a Provincial Examination in History	History Compulsory Yes/No?	Principal Textbooks Prescribed for Students	Provincial Examination Year	Length of Provincial Examination
1918-1919	Gr 12 Gr 11 Gr 10	No	Gr 12 - <i>A Short History of Mediæval and Modern Times</i> (Myers) Gr 11 - <i>A Short History of Ancient Times</i> (Myers) Gr 10 - <i>Ontario High School History of England</i> (Wrong)	1919	2 Hours
1919-1920	Gr 12 Gr 11 Gr 10	No	Gr 12 - <i>A Short History of Mediæval and Modern Times</i> (Myers) Gr 11 - <i>A Short History of Ancient Times</i> (Myers) Gr 10 - <i>Ontario High School History of England</i> (Wrong)	1920	2 Hours
1920-1921	Gr 12 Gr 11 Gr 10	No	Gr 12 - <i>A Short History of Mediæval and Modern Times</i> (Myers) Gr 11 - <i>A Short History of Ancient Times</i> (Myers) Gr 10 - <i>Ontario High School History of England</i> (Wrong)	1921	2 Hours
1921-1922	Gr 12 Gr 11 Gr 10	No	Gr 12 - <i>A Short History of Mediæval and Modern Times</i> (Myers) Gr 11 - <i>A Short History of Ancient Times</i> (Myers) Gr 10 - <i>Ontario High School History of England</i> (Wrong)	1922	2 Hours
1922-1923	Gr 12 Gr 11 Gr 10	No	Gr 12 - <i>A Short History of Mediæval and Modern Times</i> (Myers) Gr 11 - <i>A Short History of Ancient Times</i> (Myers) Gr 10 - <i>High School History of England</i> (Wrong)	1923	2 Hours
1923-1924	Gr 12 Gr 11 Gr 10	No	Gr 12 - <i>A Short History of Mediæval and Modern Times</i> (Myers) Gr 11 - <i>A Short History of Ancient Times</i> (Myers) Gr 10 - <i>High School History of England</i> (Wrong)	1924	2 Hours
1924-1925	Gr 12 Gr 11 Gr 10	No	Gr 12 - <i>A Short History of Mediæval and Modern Times</i> (Myers) Gr 11 - <i>A Short History of Ancient Times</i> (Myers) Gr 10 - <i>High School History of England</i> (Wrong)	1925	2 Hours

**APPENDIX 'B': AN OVERVIEW OF SECONDARY HISTORY COURSES, TEXTBOOKS AND PROVINCIAL EXAMINATIONS
DURING NOVA SCOTIA'S PROVINCIAL EXAMINATION ERA (1892-1893 TO 1971-72), BY SCHOOL YEAR (CONTINUED)**

School Year	Grade(s) with a Provincial Examination in History	History Compulsory Yes/No?	Principal Textbooks Prescribed for Students	Provincial Examination Year	Length of Provincial Examination
1925-1926	Gr 12 Gr 11 Gr 10	No	Gr 12 - <i>A Short History of Mediæval and Modern Times</i> (Myers) Gr 11 - <i>A Short History of Ancient Times</i> (Myers) Gr 10 - <i>High School History of England</i> (Wrong)	1926	2 Hours
1926-1927	Gr 12 Gr 11 Gr 10	No	Gr 12 - <i>A Short History of Mediæval and Modern Times</i> (Myers) Gr 11 - <i>A Short History of Ancient Times</i> (Myers) Gr 10 - <i>High School History of England</i> (Wrong)	1927	2 Hours
1927-1928	Gr 12 Gr 11 Gr 10	No	Gr 12 - <i>Modern Progress</i> (West) or <i>A Short History of the English People</i> (Green) Gr 11 - <i>Modern Progress</i> (West) Gr 10 - <i>High School History of England</i> (Wrong)	1928	2 Hours
1928-1929	Gr 12 Gr 11 Gr 10	Yes	Gr 12 - <i>Ancient Times</i> (Breasted) Gr 11 - <i>Modern Progress</i> (West) and <i>A New World or The League of Nations</i> (a booklet) Gr 10 - <i>History of Canada for High Schools</i> (McArthur) and <i>A New World or The League of Nations</i> (a booklet)	1929	2 Hours
1929-1930	Gr 12 Gr 11 Gr 10	Yes	Gr 12 - <i>Ancient Times</i> (Breasted) Gr 11 - <i>Modern Progress</i> (West) and <i>A New World or The League of Nations</i> (a booklet) Gr 10 - <i>History of Canada for High Schools</i> (McArthur) and <i>A New World or The League of Nations</i> (a booklet)	1930	2 Hours

**APPENDIX 'B': AN OVERVIEW OF SECONDARY HISTORY COURSES, TEXTBOOKS AND PROVINCIAL EXAMINATIONS
DURING NOVA SCOTIA'S PROVINCIAL EXAMINATION ERA (1892-1893 TO 1971-72), BY SCHOOL YEAR (CONTINUED)**

School Year	Grade(s) with a Provincial Examination in History	History Compulsory Yes/No?	Principal Textbooks Prescribed for Students	Provincial Examination Year	Length of Provincial Examination
1930-1931	Gr 12 Gr 11 Gr 10	Yes	Gr 12 - <i>Ancient Times</i> (Breasted) Gr 11 - <i>Modern Progress</i> (West) and <i>A New World or The League of Nations</i> (a booklet) Gr 10 - <i>History of Canada for High Schools</i> (McArthur) and <i>A New World or The League of Nations</i> (a booklet)	1931	2 Hours
1931-1932	Gr 12 Gr 11	Yes	Gr 12 - <i>Ancient Times</i> (Breasted) Gr 11 - <i>Modern Progress</i> (West) and <i>A New World or The League of Nations</i> (a booklet)	1932	2 Hours
1932-1933	Gr 12 Gr 11	Yes	Gr 12 - <i>Ancient Times</i> (Breasted) Gr 11 - <i>Modern Progress</i> (West) and <i>A New World or The League of Nations</i> (a booklet)	1933	2 Hours
1933-1934	Gr 12 Gr 11	Yes	Gr 12 - <i>Ancient Times</i> (Breasted) Gr 11 - <i>Modern Progress</i> (West) and <i>A New World or The League of Nations</i> (a booklet)	1934	2 Hours
1934-1935	Gr 12 Gr 11	Yes	Gr 12 - <i>Ancient Times</i> (Breasted) Gr 11 - <i>The Story of Civilization</i> (Seary & Paterson) and <i>A New World or The League of Nations</i> (a booklet)	1935	2 Hours
1935-1936	Gr 12 Gr 11	Gr 12 - No Gr 11 - Yes	Gr 12 - <i>Ancient Times</i> (Breasted) Gr 11 - <i>The Story of Civilization</i> (Seary & Paterson)	1936	2 Hours
1936-1937	Gr 12 Gr 11	Gr 12 - No Gr 11 - Yes	Gr 12 - <i>Ancient Times</i> (Breasted) Gr 11 - <i>The Story of Civilization</i> (Seary & Paterson)	1937	2 ½ Hours

**APPENDIX 'B': AN OVERVIEW OF SECONDARY HISTORY COURSES, TEXTBOOKS AND PROVINCIAL EXAMINATIONS
DURING NOVA SCOTIA'S PROVINCIAL EXAMINATION ERA (1892-1893 TO 1971-72), BY SCHOOL YEAR (CONTINUED)**

School Year	Grade(s) with a Provincial Examination in History	History Compulsory Yes/No?	Principal Textbooks Prescribed for Students	Provincial Examination Year	Length of Provincial Examination
1937-1938	Gr 12 Gr 11	Gr 12 - No Gr 11 - Yes	Gr 12 - <i>Ancient Times</i> (Breasted) Gr 11 - <i>The Story of Civilization</i> (Seary & Paterson)	1938	2 ½ Hours
1938-1939	Gr 12 Gr 11	Gr 12 - No Gr 11 - Yes	Gr 12 - <i>Ancient Times</i> (Breasted) Gr 11 - <i>The Story of Civilization</i> (Seary & Paterson)	1939	2 ½ Hours
1939-1940	Gr 12 Gr 11	Gr 12 - No Gr 11 - Yes	Gr 12 - <i>Ancient Times</i> (Breasted) Gr 11 - <i>The Story of Civilization</i> (Seary & Paterson)	1940	2 ½ Hours
1940-1941	Gr 12 Gr 11	Gr 12 - No Gr 11 - Yes	Gr 12 - <i>Ancient Times</i> (Breasted) Gr 11 - <i>The Story of Civilization</i> (Seary & Paterson)	1941	2 ½ Hours
1941-1942	Gr 12 Gr 11	Gr 12 - No Gr 11 - Yes	Gr 12 - <i>Ancient Times</i> (Breasted) Gr 11 - <i>The Story of Civilization</i> (Seary & Paterson)	1942	2 ½ Hours
1942-1943	Gr 12 Gr 11	Gr 12 - No Gr 11 - Yes	Gr 12 - <i>Ancient Times</i> (Breasted) Gr 11 - <i>The Story of Civilization</i> (Seary & Paterson)	1943	2 ½ Hours
1943-1944	Gr 12 Gr 11	Gr 12 - No Gr 11 - Yes	Gr 12 - <i>Ancient Times</i> (Breasted) Gr 11 - <i>The Story of Civilization</i> (Seary & Paterson)	1944	2 ½ Hours
1944-1945	Gr 12 Gr 11	Gr 12 - No Gr 11 - Yes	Gr 12 - <i>Ancient Times</i> (Breasted) Gr 11 - <i>The Story of Civilization</i> (Seary & Paterson)	1945	2 ½ Hours
1945-1946	Gr 12 Gr 11	Gr 12 - No Gr 11 - Yes	Gr 12 - <i>Ancient Times</i> (Breasted) Gr 11 - <i>The Story of Civilization</i> (Seary & Paterson)	1946	2 ½ Hours

**APPENDIX 'B': AN OVERVIEW OF SECONDARY HISTORY COURSES, TEXTBOOKS AND PROVINCIAL EXAMINATIONS
DURING NOVA SCOTIA'S PROVINCIAL EXAMINATION ERA (1892-1893 TO 1971-72), BY SCHOOL YEAR (CONTINUED)**

School Year	Grade(s) with a Provincial Examination in History	History Compulsory Yes/No?	Principal Textbooks Prescribed for Students	Provincial Examination Year	Length of Provincial Examination
1946-1947	Gr 12 Gr 11	Gr 12 - No Gr 11 - Yes	Gr 12 - <i>Ancient Times</i> (Breasted) Gr 11 - <i>The Story of Civilization</i> (Seary & Paterson)	1947	2 ½ Hours
1947-1948	Gr 12 Gr 11	Gr 12 - No Gr 11 - Yes	Gr 12 - <i>Ancient Times</i> (Breasted) Gr 11 - <i>The Story of Civilization</i> (Seary & Paterson)	1948	2 ½ Hours
1948-1949	Gr 12 Gr 11	Gr 12 - No Gr 11 - Yes	Gr 12 - <i>Ancient Times</i> (Breasted) Gr 11 - <i>The Story of Civilization</i> (Seary & Paterson)	1949	2 ½ Hours
1949-1950	Gr 12 Gr 11	Gr 12 - No Gr 11 - Yes	Gr 12 - <i>Ancient Times</i> (Breasted) Gr 11 - <i>The Story of Civilization</i> (Seary & Paterson)	1950	2 ½ Hours
1950-1951	Gr 12 Gr 11	Gr 12 - No Gr 11 - Yes	Gr 12 - <i>Ancient Times</i> (Breasted) Gr 11 - <i>The Story of Civilization</i> (Seary & Paterson)	1951	2 ½ Hours
1951-1952	Gr 12 Gr 11	Gr 12 - No Gr 11 - Yes	Gr 12 - <i>Ancient Times</i> (Breasted) Gr 11 - <i>The Story of Civilization</i> (Seary & Paterson)	1952	2 ½ Hours
1952-1953	Gr 12 Gr 11	Gr 12 - No Gr 11 - Yes	Gr 12 - <i>Ancient Times</i> (Breasted) Gr 11 - <i>The Record of Mankind</i> (Rochm et al)	1953	2 ½ Hours
1953-1954	Gr 12 Gr 11	Gr 12 - No Gr 11 - Yes	Gr 12 - <i>Ancient Times</i> (Breasted) Gr 11 - <i>The Record of Mankind</i> (Rochm et al)	1954	2 ½ Hours
1954-1955	Gr 12 Gr 11	Gr 12 - No Gr 11 - Yes	Gr 12 - <i>Ancient Times</i> (Breasted) Gr 11 - <i>The Record of Mankind</i> (Rochm et al)	1955	2 ½ Hours

**APPENDIX 'B': AN OVERVIEW OF SECONDARY HISTORY COURSES, TEXTBOOKS AND PROVINCIAL EXAMINATIONS
DURING NOVA SCOTIA'S PROVINCIAL EXAMINATION ERA (1892-1893 TO 1971-72), BY SCHOOL YEAR (CONTINUED)**

School Year	Grade(s) with a Provincial Examination in History	History Compulsory Yes/No?	Principal Textbooks Prescribed for Students	Provincial Examination Year	Length of Provincial Examination
1955-1956	Gr 12 Gr 11	Gr 12 - No Gr 11 - Yes	Gr 12 - <i>Ancient Times</i> (Breasted) Gr 11 - <i>The Record of Mankind</i> (Rochm et al)	1956	2 ½ Hours
1956-1957	Gr 12 Gr 11	Gr 12 - No Gr 11 - Yes	Gr 12 - <i>Ancient Times</i> (Breasted) Gr 11 - <i>The Record of Mankind</i> (Rochm et al)	1957	2 ½ Hours
1957-1958	Gr 12 Gr 11	Gr 12 - No Gr 11 - Yes	Gr 12 - <i>Ancient Times</i> (Breasted) Gr 11 - <i>The Record of Mankind</i> (Rochm et al)	1958	2 ½ Hours
1958-1959	Gr 12 Gr 11	Yes	Gr 12 - <i>North America and the Modern World</i> (McInnis) and <i>Democratic Government in Canada</i> (Dawson) Gr 11 - <i>The Record of Mankind</i> (Rochm et al)	1959	2 ½ Hours
1959-1960	Gr 12 Gr 11	Yes	Gr 12 - <i>North America and the Modern World</i> (McInnis) and <i>Democratic Government in Canada</i> (Dawson) Gr 11 - <i>The Record of Mankind</i> (Rochm et al)	1960	2 ½ Hours
1960-1961	Gr 12 Gr 11	Yes	Gr 12 - <i>North America and the Modern World</i> (McInnis) and <i>Democratic Government in Canada</i> (Dawson) Gr 11 - <i>The Record of Mankind</i> (Rochm et al)	1961	2 ½ Hours
1961-1962	Gr 12 Gr 11	Yes	Gr 12 - <i>North America and the Modern World</i> (McInnis) and <i>Democratic Government in Canada</i> (Dawson) Gr 11 - <i>The Record of Mankind</i> (Rochm et al)	1962	2 ½ Hours

**APPENDIX 'B': AN OVERVIEW OF SECONDARY HISTORY COURSES, TEXTBOOKS AND PROVINCIAL EXAMINATIONS
DURING NOVA SCOTIA'S PROVINCIAL EXAMINATION ERA (1892-1893 TO 1971-72), BY SCHOOL YEAR (CONTINUED)**

School Year	Grade(s) with a Provincial Examination in History	History Compulsory Yes/No?	Principal Textbooks Prescribed for Students	Provincial Examination Year	Length of Provincial Examination
1962-1963	Gr 12 Gr 11 Gr 11: General	Yes	Gr 12 - <i>North America and the Modern World</i> (McInnis) and <i>Democratic Government in Canada</i> (Dawson) Gr 11 - <i>The Record of Mankind</i> (Rochm et al) Gr 11: General - none	1963	2 ½ Hours
1963-1964	Gr 12 Gr 12: General Gr 11 Gr 11: General	Yes	Gr 12 - <i>North America and the Modern World</i> (McInnis) and <i>Democratic Government in Canada</i> (Dawson) Gr 12: General - none Gr 11 - <i>The Record of Mankind</i> (Rochm et al) Gr 11: General - none	1964	2 ½ Hours
1964-1965	Gr 12 Gr 12: General Gr 11 Gr 11: General	Yes	Gr 12 - <i>North America and the Modern World</i> (McInnis) and <i>Democratic Government in Canada</i> (Dawson) Gr 12: General - none Gr 11 - <i>The Record of Mankind</i> (Rochm et al) Gr 11: General - none	1965	2 ½ Hours
1965-1966	Gr 12 Gr 12: General Gr 11 Gr 11: General	Yes	Gr 12 - <i>The North American Nations</i> (McInnis) and <i>Democratic Government in Canada</i> (Dawson) Gr 12: General - <i>Canada -- A Nation</i> (Chafe & Lower) Gr 11 - <i>The Record of Mankind</i> (Rochm et al) Gr 11: General - <i>Patterns in Time</i> (Coulthard et al)	1966	2 ½ Hours

**APPENDIX 'B': AN OVERVIEW OF SECONDARY HISTORY COURSES, TEXTBOOKS AND PROVINCIAL EXAMINATIONS
DURING NOVA SCOTIA'S PROVINCIAL EXAMINATION ERA (1892-1893 TO 1971-72), BY SCHOOL YEAR (CONTINUED)**

School Year	Grade(s) with a Provincial Examination in History	History Compulsory Yes/No?	Principal Textbooks Prescribed for Students	Provincial Examination Year	Length of Provincial Examination
1966-1967	Gr 12 Gr 12: General Gr 11 Gr 11: General	Yes	Gr 12 - <i>The North American Nations</i> (McInnis) and <i>Democratic Government in Canada</i> (Dawson) Gr 12: General - <i>Canada — A Nation</i> (Chafe & Lower) Gr 11 - <i>The Record of Mankind</i> (Rochm et al) Gr 11: General - <i>Patterns in Time</i> (Coulthard et al)	1967	NA
1967-1968	Gr 12 Gr 12: General Gr 11 Gr 11: General	Yes	Gr 12 - <i>The North American Nations</i> (McInnis) and <i>Democratic Government in Canada</i> (Dawson) Gr 12: General - <i>Canada — A Nation</i> (Chafe & Lower) Gr 11 - <i>The Record of Mankind</i> (Rochm et al) Gr 11: General - <i>Patterns in Time</i> (Coulthard et al)	1968	NA
1968-1969	Gr 12 Gr 12: General Gr 11	NA	Gr 12 - <i>The North American Nations</i> (McInnis) and <i>Democratic Government in Canada</i> (Dawson) Gr 12: General - <i>Canada — A Nation</i> (Chafe & Lower) Gr 11 - <i>The Record of Mankind</i> (Rochm et al)	1969	NA
1969-1970	Gr 12 Gr 12: General	NA	Gr 12 - <i>The North American Nations</i> (McInnis) and <i>Democratic Government in Canada</i> (Dawson) Gr 12: General - <i>Canada — A Nation</i> (Chafe & Lower)	1970	NA
1970-1971	Gr 12	NA	Gr 12 - <i>The North American Nations</i> (McInnis) and <i>Democratic Government in Canada</i> (Dawson)	1971	NA
1971-1972	Gr 12	NA	Gr 12 - <i>The North American Nations</i> (McInnis)	1972	NA