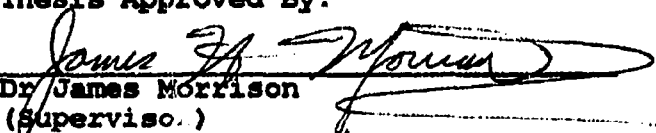



**"The Origins & Early Development of
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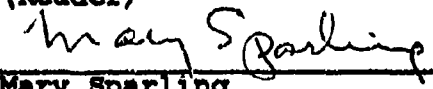
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ABSTRACT

The Nova Scotia Provincial Museum was founded in 1868. In 1994, 126 years later, the heritage community of Nova Scotia is reeling as this Museum undergoes, what some have called, its most radical reorganization. The Museum's management structure, funding structure, and branch support networks have all been reviewed, revised and reorganized. Is this due to the "tough economic times" of the 1990's? Or is this part of a pattern which repeats itself as a periodic response of a socially sensitive and public-serving institution? The Nova Scotia Museum has been growing for the last 126 years, its growth has required it to stay abreast of changing social needs, public expectations and the government's financial capabilities.

Nova Scotians have supported museums individually and collectively through government for over a century. But, it is only recently that researchers have begun to look, assess and challenge the role these institutions play in society. Museums are often regarded as virtuous institutions dedicated to the preservation of natural and human history which is then interpreted and exhibited for the public. The tools of interpretation and exhibition are powerful mediums and therefore analysis and critique are essential in order to fully comprehend the museum's role in relation to the contemporary needs of the public it serves.

This thesis will examine the origins and early development of the Nova Scotia Museum and its development from 1868-1940. It will examine how the Museum, through its collection, responded to the needs of the Nova Scotian public and how these needs affected the evolution of the Museum as an institution.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are many persons who with out their help this thesis could not have been completed. I especially would like to thank my thesis advisor Dr James Morrison for his guidance and wisdom. To all the staff of the Atlantic Canada Studies program who through their course-work help prepare students for the thesis, thank-you.

I would like to acknowledge the Nova Scotia Museum and its staff who supported this study. I am indebted to the staff of the Public Archives of Nova Scotia for assistance and cooperation.

Most importantly, I gratefully acknowledge the love and support of my husband, Mitchell Allan McNutt, for endless hours of discussion, debate, and guilt free baby-sitting. To my son, Bennett James McNutt, I dedicated this work as a building block for our future and with whom I look forward to a life-time of exploring the world's museums.

Introduction

The past is always altered for motives that reflect present needs. We reshape our heritage to make it attractive in modern terms; we seek to make it part of ourselves, and ourselves part of it; we conform it to our self-images and aspirations. Rendered grand or homely, magnified or tarnished, history is continually altered in our private interests or on behalf of our community or country.¹

In Nova Scotia there exists a long tradition of collecting. Since the early explorers, humankind has gathered samples which exhibit the natural history and culture of this province. In a broader context, the institutionalization of this human disposition towards collecting can be traced back to the Alexandrian Museum, an institution devoted to learning founded by Ptolemy Soter in 332 B.C. Ptolemy's "mouseion", literally a place where the muses dwelt, was a place for contemplation. The Mouseion of Alexandria, consisted of a collection of buildings, a library, botanical and zoological collections, and objects such as astronomical and surgical instruments. The institution was essentially what we might call a university or a philosophical academy. The name mouseion was given as a tribute to the muses, mythological figures symbolising the humanities, including history, tragedy, comedy, music, dance, astronomy, oratory, love poetry and the epic. The Greek term mouseion is the root from

¹ David Lowenthal. The Past is a Foreign Country. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985) p 348.

which derived the Latin term museum, the contemporary term for such institutions of learning and collecting.

Later, the Romans continued the tradition of collecting and were the world's first massive collectors. Acquiring often by conquest, the Romans gathered predominantly paintings and sculptures. Objects were displayed in public gardens, theatres and baths very unlike the Greek temples. It was not until the Middle Ages that the term museum is widely used again and then mainly in the realm of church collections. The Church throughout the Middle Ages collected art, gold works, jewels, rich fabrics, relics and manuscript writings. The Crusades acted as a vehicle for many collectors to acquire exotic art objects. Many of these collections were displayed in cathedrals and monasteries.

The modern museum, says J. Mordaunt Crook, is the product of Renaissance humanism, eighteenth century enlightenment and nineteenth century democracy.² The sixteenth century collectors began to throw off the confines of superstition and take a keen interest in the world around them, progressing towards a scientific method. Through this period two museological terms were employed: the cabinet and the gallery. The cabinet was usually a square-shaped room filled with stuffed animals, botanical rarities, small works of art, artifacts, and curios. The gallery, a long hall lighted from the side, came to signify an exhibition area for pictures and sculptures. Sixteenth century collecting spread beyond the exclusive domain of the Church to include the secular rich and powerful. Such

² Edward P. Alexander. Museums in Motion. (Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1986) p 8.

collections were not open to the public but remained the hobby of the elite. The sixteenth century also saw the rise of the university where botanical collections were used for scientific research by physicians and botanists.³

During the seventeenth century the museum returned to the public forum. In 1671 the first university museum was open to the public at the University of Basel and only twelve years later the second at the Ashmolean Museum of Oxford. Such emancipation of museums may have been in response to Francis Bacon's writings in The New Atlantis in which he visualized a national museum of science and art for the purpose of study and display. As progressive as this theory seems, museums were public but not universally accessible as admission fees barred all but the elite.

During the eighteenth century, concerned with discovering the basic natural laws that governed the universe and humanity, connoisseurs collected natural specimens as well as human artistic and scientific creations. These collections were to educate and aid in humanity's progress towards perfection. Out of this philosophy was founded the British Museum in 1753 and the Louvre opened as the Museum of the Republic in 1793. Most importantly, a shift from private collections to national (and democratic) collections had taken place. The eighteenth century also saw the beginning of American museums which from their inception were aimed at public education and profit. Owned or sponsored by independently-wealthy philanthropists, museums

³ Archie F. Key. Beyond Four Walls: The Origin and Development of Canadian Museums (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1973) p 22-29.

such as the Charleston Museum (1773) and Peale's Museum (1794) were founded. Later examples include Barnum's American Museum (1841) and the Smithsonian Institution (1846).

The popularization of museums and the democratization of modern life was exemplified throughout the mid to late nineteenth century in the popular World Fairs and Industrial Exhibitions. London's Crystal Palace was the site of the first World's Fair in 1851 followed by the International Exhibitions of 1862 and 1865, the Paris Exhibition of 1867, the Philadelphia Exposition of 1876, the Chicago World Fair in 1879, the Colonial Exhibition at Amsterdam in 1883, and the Paris World's Fair in 1889. Such expositions and exhibitions dedicated to the display of progress in the arts, sciences, and manufacturing also had a profound effect on museum collections and development.

Still two more influences of the nineteenth century impacting upon the development of museums were the promotion of public education as a means of economic success and the rising sense of nationalism. In the wake of industrialization came the need for a technically trained middle class. A trained middle class was essential in order for a nation to remain industrially competitive in a growing international market. The need for "useful knowledge" led to the development of learned societies, founded on the principle that "the mechanic who was knowledgeable would advance; would promote manufacturing and industry in Canada. But, the one that did not cultivate learning would decline. A prey to animal passions, he would be left far behind,

to remain, presumably, a mere operative all his life."⁴ Also rooted in the need to create a "respectable" middle class was the rise of formal and self education. The manifestations of respectability which the middle class praised and promoted were refined manners and taste, respectable religion, proper speech and, finally, the ability to read and write proper English.⁵ The effect on museums was that for the first time, they needed to question their purpose, organization, and arrangement; curators were compelled to develop collections which would answer the needs of diverse social groups. Often museum curators were expected to reconcile the conflicting needs of public expectations and the requirements of the new professional scientific elite.⁶

The subject of nation building was also very prevalent in mid-nineteenth century values. The use of science was one tool to exploit the natural resources of a region creating national prosperity. The collection of natural history for the purpose of development and prosperity was exemplified in the participation of learned societies in Industrial Exhibitions in hopes of encouraging investment.

It is out of this milieu of a rising middle class, the promotion of public education and respectability, rising

⁴ Alison Prentice. The School Promoters: Education and Social Class in Mid-Nineteenth Century Upper Canada. (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1991) p 96.

⁵ Alison Prentice. p 68.

⁶ Susan Sheets-Pyenson. Cathedrals of Science: The Development of Colonial Natural History Museums during the Late Nineteenth Century. (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988) p 4.

nationalism and progressive ideals that the Nova Scotia Provincial Museum was founded in 1868. Although it is difficult to name the first museum in Canada,⁷ apart from the religious institutions in Quebec which had natural history collections in the eighteenth century for use as educational visual aids, Nova Scotia's Provincial Museum was one of the earliest in Canada.

The Provincial Museum grew out of a well-established tradition of collecting and of learned societies in Nova Scotia. Collecting in a formal style had been going on since the 1790's when, in the interest of promoting mining, geologists amassed mineralogical collections to illustrate the mining and industrial possibilities of the province. Private collecting was pursued in the botanical, entomological and geological fields by several early collectors such as Titus Smith, Thomas McCulloch, and James Miller.

The Nova Scotia Museum⁸ acknowledges its roots in the Halifax Mechanics' Institute and the Nova Scotian Institute of Natural Science, established in 1831 and 1862 respectively. Both these Institutions grew out of the pursuit of useful knowledge, the belief in science as the means to prosperity, and society's quest for perfection. The amassing of collections resulting from these Institutions and the exhibits created for International Exhibitions necessitated the creation of an institution dedicated to the collection, preservation, and study of artifacts.

⁷ Archie F. Key. p 99.

⁸ The Nova Scotia Provincial Museum 1868-1946 then known as the Nova Scotia Museum of Science from 1947-1960, the Nova Scotia Museum from 1961-1993, and finally as the Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History in 1993.

Since 1868 the Nova Scotia Provincial Museum has developed into a unique institution in Canada. Today the Nova Scotia Museum consists of over one hundred and twenty-five buildings at twenty-four branches with the twenty-fifth under discussion. The Museum also helps support fifty local museums through its museums assistance program. This decentralized provincial museum system is the only one of its kind in Canada. The Museum has also, since 1951, been part of the Department of Education, testifying to its dedication to the advancement of general knowledge of the natural history and human history of the province.⁹ The causes of these developments have not been the topic of any academic study to date.

This thesis will examine the founding of the Provincial Museum of Nova Scotia in 1868 and its development through the careers of its first two directors, the Rev. Dr. David Honeyman and Mr. Harry Piers. The activities of these pioneers offer a framework through which to explore the development of the Museum and the relationships it fostered and relied upon through its founding and early development . The personalities of both Honeyman and Piers of course greatly affect the development of the Museum but these developments cannot be isolated from the external societal demands upon the developing institution.

This thesis will explore the Museum's growth as a public institution which struggled to remain useful, vital and responsive to the social, economic and political changes within Nova Scotia between 1868-1940. The themes which will be dealt

⁹ Department of Education, Nova Scotia Museum Complex. "Report of the Board of Governors", June 1990. p 1.

with are the museum's utility, the museum's commitment to education, the influence of progressive and anti-modernist philosophies and the dynamic relationship between the museum and the social, economic and political realities of Nova Scotia.

The museum's development has been influenced by intellectual movements, social trends and economic developments and government policies; but, the museum has also played a vital role in the development of the province's adult education, economic development, tourism and culture. The relationship between the Nova Scotia Provincial Museum and the provincial social, economic and political climates is a dynamic one, each influencing, affecting and effecting the other. This thesis will ultimately explore and prove that the Provincial Museum of Nova Scotia has been throughout its development up to 1940 an institution with agency, that is, an institution whose development and activities have been self determined in accordance to social, political and economic influences. This "agency" is revealed through reorganizations and evolving mandates which continually articulate the relevancy of the Museum to the changing needs of its public.

The history of museums is not a well documented one despite their great increase since the late nineteenth century. "This remarkable history has largely escaped the notice of historians who have paid more attention to the universities and learned societies that sometimes nurtured and supported museums."¹⁰ As for museums themselves, as institutions of preservation and conservation they spend time collecting, documenting and

¹⁰ Susan Sheets-Pyenson. p 5.

researching the world around them. Rarely though does this examination turn inward towards the institution itself and how it relates to its environs - political, social, and economic. The museum histories¹¹ that do exist frequently expound the efforts of the founding "fathers" and directors or chart the evolution of the institution through documents and policies. Often institutional histories are told through the people which work within them, but studies such as these isolate the institution from the forces of change - the museum's audience, the museum's utility, contemporary philosophies, and economic pressures. This thesis will use Rev. Dr. David Honeyman and Mr Harry Piers as a framework, and will then go on to explore the Nova Scotia Museum as a window through which one may discover the society which formed it, influenced it and is still moulding it. To do this the main tool of analysis will be the collection and the collecting practices of the Nova Scotia Museum.

Museums collect. Who defines what they shall collect or how much they should collect? The relationship between the Nova Scotia Museum, the Nova Scotian public and the Nova Scotian government is over a century old and can not be over-simplified nor ignored. The dynamics of these relationships is what has and will continue to mould the Museum.

Museums offer a unique opportunity to study society. Through its function of collecting, a museum is actively and

¹¹ See for instance The Museum Makers: The Story of the Royal Ontario Museum (Toronto: Royal Ontario Museum, 1986); W. Austin Squires, The History and Development of the New Brunswick Museum (1842-1945) (Saint John: New Brunswick Museum, 1945); Archie Key, Beyond Four Walls: The Origins and Development of Canadian Museum (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1973).

functionally making statements on the values and ideology of its contemporary society. All societies collect, some collect oral tradition others collect material goods. The material that is collected and preserved is what that particular society deems important. By collecting, a society therefore influences what is later perceived as representative. For example, having been collected a tin cup is raised to the status of an artifact, an item which in some way is representative of that society which deemed the cup worthy of preserving. Therefore, institutions which collect have a great effect on what society perceives as representative, valuable, important. This effect, once internalized into a bureaucratic system is a powerful social tool with the potential to shape and mould a society's memory, image and future.

The first chapter will deal with the founding of the Provincial Museum and the legacy of the Halifax Mechanics' Institute and Nova Scotian Institute of Natural Science . The second chapter will discuss the collecting practices of Honeyman, the first curator, and the effects of religion, progressive philosophies and the rise of technical education in Nova Scotia. The third chapter will address the first twenty years of Piers' collecting practices, the growth in accessions, the definition of the collections mandate and the professionalization of the museum field. The final chapter will explore the shift in collection practices under Piers from 1920-1940, social influences such as anti-modernism, changing museum audience and government involvement in cultural tourism.

The driving force behind these changes was the Museum's

drive to remain useful, to be a public serving institution. In order to achieve this goal the Museum and its directors had to respond and stay abreast of society's needs, government demands and economic pressures. In being responsive the Museum forced its policies, mandates and organization to remain effective.

Chapter 1

"Ward of the Government, Child of the Institute": The Founding of the Nova Scotia Provincial Museum 1832-1868

The Nova Scotia Provincial Museum founded in 1868, known today as the Nova Scotia Museum, claims to be the product of two institutions, the Halifax Mechanics' Institute (1831) and the Nova Scotian Institute of Natural Science (1862).¹ In founding the Nova Scotia Provincial Museum these institutions promoted and lobbied for the establishment of a museum which in principle would collect, preserve, and conserve a museum collection for public study and to promote the resources of Nova Scotia. The core of the museum's collection was donated by the two institutes, and thus defined the scope and nature of the museum's original mandate. These institutes also introduced Nova Scotians to many of the principles upon which the museum would develop such as public education, development of the province's natural resources, and the utility of natural science. The Halifax Mechanics' Institute and the Nova Scotia Institute of Natural Science are also responsible for introducing and establishing an awareness in Halifax and throughout the province, for the practice of collecting objects for study and display.

In an effort to expand upon the contribution of each these organizations to the formation of the Provincial Museum and the

¹ Department of Education, Nova Scotia Museum Complex. "Report of the Board of Governors", June 1990. p 1.

impact they had on the future of the museum this chapter will focus on the founding principles of these two societies, their operations and programs, and their effect on the Nova Scotian population which thus saw fit to support a Provincial Museum.

As part of the British Empire and British North America, Nova Scotia during the 1830's was very much influenced by the contemporary ideology of British society. One trend which has received much academic attention and study was the growing popularity of public education and learned societies. Two major influences in the development of learned societies was the nineteenth century's growing faith in science and its economic value, the rise of a technically trained middle class, and the need to educate this class to ensure national prosperity. In order to understand the formation of the Halifax Mechanics' Institute and the Nova Scotian Institute of Science these issues must first be discussed.

The utilization of science for economic and national power was much on the minds of British North Americans. As Carl Berger writes in Science, God and Nature in Victorian Canada:

"Natural history (or science) was born of wonder and nurtured by greed, and it combined an intellectual fascination with the strange forms of life in northern America with an intense interest in exploiting new resources."²

Therefore the pursuit of science was recognized as having profitable gains. The purist, who researched solely for the pursuit of knowledge, still existed but the entrepreneur was increasingly interested in seeking ways science could be applied

² Carl Berger, Science, God and Nature in Victorian Canada. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982) p 3.

to industry, especially through the exploitation of natural resources in British North America. Thus, the need for "useful knowledge" as opposed to scholarly knowledge became paramount with industrialization. With the need for faster, better and more advanced technology the role of the machine overtook the role of the artisan and the race for technological supremacy translated into national power.

Suzanne Zeller in Inventing Canada: Early Victorian Science and the Idea of a Transcontinental Nation defines science as the "spearhead of the age of progress mainly due to its power to promote utilitarian ends."³ Zeller further defines the rise of science in early Victorian Canada as imparting a sense of direction, stability and certainty for the future.⁴ Attributes which had great appeal to a population of immigrants forging a new life in a still largely undefined continent.

By the 1840's the world was being viewed as an organism still expanding and developing. The scientists' challenge was to find order or a pattern in the development enabling them to predict and map the earth's evolution. This knowledge would enable industrialists to map the earth's resources and to find rich mineral deposits and farmers to find the best soils. The mapping and classification lead to the popularity of the inventory sciences.

In light of these developments the economy of Nova Scotia

³ Suzanne Zeller, Inventing Canada: Early Victorian Science and the Idea of a Transcontinental Nation. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987) p 3.

⁴ Zeller. Inventing Canada: Early Victorian Science and the Idea of a Transcontinental Nation. p 9.

could not remain unchanged, the staples of farming, fishing, lumber, trade and mineral resources would be greatly affected by the application of science. Moreover, local entrepreneurs began to look to manufacturing and the exploitation of the province's natural resources as the province's niche in industrial world trade. The application of science to the vast mineral resources of the province would develop and improve existing industries with higher production and profit which translated into power for the state.

Joseph Howe in his opening address to the Halifax Mechanics' Institute, 11 January, 1832 stressed this pursuit of science for national power. Founded in belief of the Baconian adage "knowledge is power" Howe encouraged the pursuit of science not only for the pleasures and advantages to themselves (members of the Institute) but also for the higher aims, the advancement of resources, and the advancement of national happiness. Looking to the New England States Howe cited an example where skilful artisans, through the general education and encouragement of the working class, had engaged in domestic manufacturing. By pointing out how advanced their competitors were, Howe attempted not to discourage the newly formed institute but instead, to spur them on towards economic prosperity.⁵ Howe further implied that the pursuit of knowledge for external good was superior to the pursuit of knowledge for personal gain. In comparing "those who are sedulously improving their intellectual powers, by

⁵ John S. Thompson Papers'. Papers and Proceedings of the Halifax Mechanics' Institute 1832-1844. An opening address delivered at first meeting of the Halifax Mechanics' Institute by Joseph Howe. January 11, 1832. Public Archives of Nova Scotia.

pursuing knowledge into its farthest retreats, with those who are merely seeking the gratification of their animal propensities, we (mechanics) shall gather evidence to cheer us along the path we have chosen, and to warn us from that which leads in a downward course to the level of brute creation."⁶ Therefore, not only is the pursuit of knowledge imperative to national and provincial success but also the motive must be pure and unselfish.

At the same time nineteenth century Nova Scotia was enthralled by the application of useful science it was experiencing an intellectual awakening in which the process of self-education was never ceasing. D.C. Harvey writes in "The Intellectual Awakening of Nova Scotia" that between 1812 and 1835 the inhabitants of Nova Scotia were becoming conscious of their identity, separate from being British or American, as Nova Scotians. The blending of settlers from various origins combined to create a distinctive personality.⁷ Harvey follows up this period with what he refers to as "The Age of Faith in Nova Scotia 1834-1867". This period, as an extension of the Intellectual Awakening, saw Nova Scotians developing a faith in themselves and acting upon that faith with the promotion of newspapers, magazines, schools, libraries and native talents. A shift had taken place, where in preceding generations Nova Scotians looked to other countries to show the benefits of cultural progress they now looked to successful Nova Scotians who "aspired to self-

⁶ Thompson, Opening Address.

⁷ D.C. Harvey. "The Intellectual Awakening of Nova Scotia," The Dalhousie Review. April 1933, Vol. 13, No. 1. p 21-22.

reverence, self-knowledge and self-control"⁸ as models.

Support of such a philosophy can be seen through the development of libraries. In the past many individuals owned private libraries as symbols of their station in life, but self education had become so popular circulating libraries began to appear as early as 1806 in Halifax. Others soon followed with, Mr. Davis' circulating library in 1809, Mrs. Cuff's circulating library in 1813, David Spencer's circulating library in 1825 and the Halifax Library in 1823.⁹ Institutional libraries were also being establishing in the province with the Legislative Library, the Law Court Library, the Garrison Library and University Libraries.

The themes of education, applied science and local self-help can all be exemplified in the development of Agricultural Societies throughout the 1820's. John Young promoted through the writing and publication of 64 letters, under the pen name Agricola, the application of science and community co-operation to agriculture. Nova Scotian farmers were in a post war depression after the War of 1812 and the Napoleonic Wars. Young preached that agriculture, if properly tended, could be the salvation of Nova Scotia. The aim was to become self-sufficient, independent of American imports, and the development of domestic industries. In total 30 Agricultural Societies sprang up to

⁸ D.C. Harvey. "The Age of Faith in Nova Scotia 1834-1867," Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada. May, 1946, Vol. XL, Section II, Series III. p 1.

⁹ C. Bruce Fergusson, "Mechanics' Institutes in Nova Scotia," Bulletin of the Public Archives of Nova Scotia (Halifax: 1960)p 17.

educate in scientific farming, new machinery and methods.¹⁰

In reference to education, one also finds in nineteenth century Nova Scotia public programs beginning to educate the masses in the rudiments of literacy. Thus, the middle class's challenge was now to stay abreast of scientific subject matter. The middle class did this through the active amateur collecting of specimens, usually the provinces' natural history, for study and publication in order to promote the local resources and investment possibilities. Economic progress and national power were linked through useful or mechanical knowledge. Hence came the organization of adult education where the "desire of mechanics for general scientific knowledge and the willingness of the more intelligent part of the middle class to supply their demand"¹¹ gave rise to mechanics' institutes and learned societies such as the Halifax Mechanics' Institute. In doing so Nova Scotians were following the example of Britain, where mechanics' institutes began with the formation of the first institute in Glasgow, 1823.¹²

The rise of mechanics' institutes was the first large-scale attempt at popular adult-education. Patrick Keane in "A Study of Early Problems and Politics in Adult Education: the Halifax Mechanics' Institute" identifies three grounds, moral and religious, social and political, and utilitarian and

¹⁰ J.S. Martell, "The Achievements of Agricola and the Agricultural Societies 1818-1825", Bulletin of the Public Archives of Nova Scotia, Vol. II, No. 2. (Halifax: Public Archives of Nova Scotia, 1940) pp 1-12.

¹¹ Fergusson, "Mechanics' Institutes of Nova Scotia", p 5.

¹² Fergusson, "Mechanics' Institutes in Nova Scotia", p 5.

technological, upon which adult education was being advocated in the early nineteenth century. As Keane notes, the resulting effect of these motives were often conflicting as each promoted a different agenda in its educational content. The first motive, moral and religious, was "concerned with spreading a knowledge of the Bible and inculcating morality, piety and respect for established society"¹³ while the second motive, social and political, was "concerned with the emancipation of the working classes, with a commitment to democracy and progress rather than the established order."¹⁴ Finally, the third motive, utilitarian and technological, "reflected the desire to spread knowledge of the new scientific principles, in the hope of promoting industrial progress and economic improvements."¹⁵

C.B. Fergusson aptly summarizes the changes taking place in Nova Scotia and the need for action in this statement:

In Nova Scotia, until recently skilled mechanics and labour-saving devices had been few, but times were changing, steam had been introduced and new factories had gone into operation. To change the old state of affairs, to diffuse useful knowledge among workmen, to inspire them with pride in their pursuits, to teach them to rely more upon the resources of science, a mechanics' library was needed, particularly at Halifax, where the new Public Library, so called, had encouraged, if it had not created, among the higher classes of the town, a desire for general

¹³ Patrick Keane, "A Study in Early Problems and Politics in Adult Education: the Halifax Mechanics' Institute", Histoire Sociale-Social History. (Vol 8 No.16, Nov. 1975.) p 255.

¹⁴ Keane, "A Study in Early Problems and Policies in Adult Education: the Halifax Mechanics' Institute." p 255.

¹⁵ Patrick Keane. "A Study in Early Problems and Policies in Adult Education: the Halifax Mechanics' Institute" p 255.

reading and intellectual movement. Education for all classes was the order of the day; yet something must be done for those who could neither become members of the new library nor purchase books for themselves.¹⁶

Progress was undoubtedly linked with literacy and education. With this recognition support for a mechanics' institute began to be seen as in this letter from Mr. Deblois in which he recounts the present state of mechanical training in Halifax during 1830's:

few of the mechanics in this town (Halifax) have hitherto had the advantage of a good education. If a boy can read, write and has been taught the first rules of Arithmetic, he is supposed to be perfectly qualified to be apprentices to a tradesman. If by twenty-one the boy can weld two pieces of iron, saw to a mark, industrious and handy he can be his own master with nothing more than mere labourers practical knowledge.¹⁷

In support of such an institute of mechanical knowledge Deblois also stated that one must progress slowly with lectures once a week, in plain language, avoiding all technical terms in order to appeal to the working class.

Support also came through the writings of newspapers such as The Novascotian, The Acadian Recorder and The Colonial Patriot which regularly reported on the need for knowledge and information either through new schools and colleges or through public lectures as was the case in Britain. The Acadian Recorder published many of the speeches of Henry Brougham, a leading advocate of popular education in Britain, in which mechanics'

¹⁶ Fergusson, "Mechanics' Institutes in Nova Scotia", p 26.

¹⁷ John S. Thompson Papers. "Papers and Proceedings of the Halifax Mechanics' Institute 1832-1844." Letter from Mr. Deblois.

institutes were promoted for their association with useful knowledge which Brougham saw as a prerequisite to broader social change.¹⁸

In reply to such support the first step towards the founding of a mechanics' institute was taken 17 October, 1831 with the creation of the Halifax Mechanics' Library Association. Founded for the purpose of supplying useful knowledge, at an affordable rate to all who desired, it began loaning books 31 October, 1831. Its organization was a system of shareholders who for a subscribers fee of 10s¹⁹ yearly and 1s3d quarterly became full members of the Library, others for 2s quarterly and by signing certain by-laws were allowed to use the collection. The first stock of books was loaned to the Library by the shareholders; later the Library began acquiring through donations and purchases.²⁰

Early criticism of the Library Association described it as being "formed professedly for the benefit of mechanics"²¹ yet its management was in the hands of shareholders, a position most workers could not afford; consequentially, mechanics were encouraged to form their own institute. Other reactions were not so harsh but obviously displeased. The Acadian Recorder, December 10, 1831 printed

¹⁸ Patrick Keane, "Joseph Howe and Adult Education", Acadiensis (Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 1973) p 38.

¹⁹ The British currency of the nineteenth century: s = shilling, one twentieth of a pound; d = a penny.

²⁰ Fergusson, "Mechanics' Institutes in Nova Scotia", p 27.

²¹ Acadian Recorder, December 3, 1831.

"we trust that the mechanics of Halifax and their friends will not let the present winter pass without making a noble effort to obtain such an establishment (mechanics institute). The present time seems particularly favourable for making the attempt. Ample success, we not doubt, will follow."²²

Obviously the efforts of the Library Association were not fully satisfactory. In response, the Association convened a public meeting on 27 December, 1831 for the purpose of forming a mechanics institute and the following notice was submitted for print:

MECHANICS' INSTITUTE

The members of the Halifax Mechanics' Library and other persons who are interested in the formation of a Mechanics' Institute, are requested to meet on Tuesday evening next, 27th inst. at 7 o'clock, at Mr. Geo. Thompson's School Room, upper side of the Parade.

Halifax, Dec. 24
Secy.²³

By order of the Committee,
JOHN NAYLOR,

The result was favourable with a very respectable body of persons in attendance. As John S. Thompson, secretary, wrote in the Journal of the Halifax Mechanics' Institute a mechanics' institute shall be formed in connection with the Mechanics' Library Association and that the intention of this institute shall be directed to the accumulation of models and apparatus, the introduction of such mechanical improvements as have been discovered in other countries, the diffusion of the knowledge of such as may be invented here, and the procuring of lectures on

²² Acadian Recorder December 10, 1831.

²³ Fergusson, "Mechanics' Institutes of Nova Scotia" p 28.

scientific and other subjects from members of the society, or other persons competent to deliver them.²⁴

The organization of the Institute consisted of a membership who for a fee of 2s6d quarterly would become shareholders of both the Mechanics' Institute and the Mechanics' Library. The membership, having full rights and privileges of the Institute, was restricted to males; though females, families and the general public could attend lectures. The offices consisted of president, first and second vice presidents, treasurer, secretary, curator of models and apparatus and a nine person committee of management. The officers were elected at the general meeting held the last Wednesday of December each year. Members were also requested to present models and other apparatuses to the Institute's museum to facilitate study.

The lectures, which would become the core function of the Institute, were offered weekly. The lectures were prepared by the members and submitted to the committee three weeks in advance for approval. Each member was allowed to admit one non-resident, anyone living outside the Halifax Peninsula area or one who has been in Halifax less than three months, to the lecture.²⁵ Season ticket holders were admitted as well, the price of these tickets varied over the years from 7s6d for members, 2s6d for ladies and 3s9d for youths in 1833 to 5s for members, 2s6d for ladies and youths in 1835 due to the depression, and finally to 7s6d for members and 5s for ladies and youths in 1836 where it seems to

²⁴ Thompson, "Journal of the Halifax Mechanics' Institute: Public Meeting".

²⁵ Thompson, "Journal of the Halifax Mechanics' Institute", February 1, 1832.

have remained for the rest of the Societies duration.²⁶ The sale of family tickets began in 1835 as the yearly report shows the sale of fifteen such tickets. With regard to the family ticket the female portion was transferable but not the member's share. The sale of tickets was through the Secretary and Mr. Belcher's Store (January 27, 1834 until September 3, 1836 when Committee decided only the Secretary would issue tickets). Ticket holders were allow full privileges of the Institute from 1842 on when

due to difficulties experienced in carrying out a system of closed membership for the Institute and as the real propriety of the Institute should be the objective of any system...a person may become a member of the Institute and be admitted to all its privileges by taking out a membership ticket, paying its 7s6d fee and signing the rules, or authorizing some officer of the Institute to append his²⁷ signature.²⁸

The issue of fees had earlier been a topic of discussion in Halifax in 1825 when the Saint Andrew's Library was established. An article in the Novascotian by Joseph Howe notes that existing libraries such as the Garrison Library and the Halifax Library were not founded on the principle of popular improvement as their fees of thirty shillings per year were too high and necessarily excluded a multitude of readers. The Saint Andrew's Library thus set their fees at ten shillings per year with a view to include

²⁶ John S. Thompson, "Papers and Proceedings of the Halifax Mechanics' Institutes." Newspaper clipping of Report for December 30, 1835. Public Archives of Nova Scotia.

²⁷ The use of the pronoun "his" signifies this extension still was not to include females.

²⁸ Thompson, "Journal of the Halifax Mechanics' Institute", Annual Report May 2, 1842.

the middle class in their readership.²⁹

The sale of the Institute's tickets gives an accurate account of attendance to lectures and therefore the over all effect the Institute was having on the Halifax population. Also, by the type of ticket sold one can summarize the character of the audiences attending the Institute's lectures. The average attendance to any lecture was around two-hundred persons.

| | Members (male) | Ladies | Youths | Total |
|-------|----------------|--------|--------|-------------------|
| 1835* | 87 | 23 | 45 | 170 |
| 1837 | 102 | 31 | 59 | 192 |
| 1838* | 87 | 35 | 65 | 187 |
| 1839 | 118 | 48 | 44 | 210 |
| 1841 | 151 | 45 | 53 | 249 |
| 1842 | 105 | 55 | 35 | 195 |
| 1844 | 103 | 41 | 22 | 166 ³⁰ |

These ticket sale reflect an attendance rate which peaked in the early 1840's and from then slowly declined to the point where in the 1850's the Institution would be in membership trouble and become defunct. The Annual Reports note the influence of the economy and other functions on attendance; such as in 1844 when the general election forced the committee to simply maintain routine functions and not attempt any progress. In 1842 the "Journal of the Halifax Mechanics' Institute" notes that due to a season of much commercial anxiety and other causes meetings were

²⁹ Joseph Howe, *Novascotian*, May 25, 1825. p 174. (included in C.B. Fergusson's *Notes on History of Nova Scotian Institute of Science*, Public Archives of Nova Scotia.)

³⁰ Thompson, *Papers and proceeding of the Halifax Mechanics' Institute. Annual Reports of 1835, 1837, 1839, 1840, 1841, 1842, 1844.*

* figures taken from Thompson, "Minutes of the Halifax Mechanics' Institute."

suspended from May 11 to August 27.³¹

The ticket sales also reveal the growing interest of women in educational lectures. The number of women present at lectures reached its peak in 1842 with 55 in attendance. The influence of women was first addressed in a lecture given May 6, 1836 on the Moral Influence of Women by Joseph Howe.³² The Annual Report of 1840 mentions "that the mothers and sisters of the young men of the community will powerfully enforce, by their example, the importance and delights of intellectual pursuits."³³ But, to assume women attended purely to set an example does not explain why their attendance continued to increase even when the attendance of the youths declined. In 1842 the Annual Report notes that "the ladies who attend numbered nearly half the entire audience."³⁴ The ratio of ladies to youths at the beginning of the Institute was about two youths for every one woman yet by the 1844 that has almost completely reversed to nearly two women for every one youth.

The participation of these women at regular meetings is not revealed in the Journal or Minutes of the Institution but their role at special functions is elaborated upon. During bazaars, picnics and exhibitions the women were called upon to take charge

³¹ Thompson, "Papers and Proceedings of the Halifax Mechanics' Institute. Report May, 1844 and 1842.

³² Patrick Keane, "A Study in Early Problems and Policies in Adult Education: the Halifax Mechanics' Institute", (Histoire Sociale-Social History, 1975) p 263.

³³ Thompson, "Papers and Proceedings of the Halifax Mechanics' Institute." Annual Report 1840.

³⁴ Thompson, "Papers and Proceedings of the Halifax Mechanics' Institute", Annual Report 1842.

of the tables and interest themselves generally in the furtherance of the event. For the bazaar of 1843 the wives of many prominent Institute members were called upon to form a bazaar committee included were: Mrs. Slaytor, Mrs. William Stains, Mrs. Joseph Howe, Mrs. James McNab, Mrs. Lynch, Mrs. Rathburn, Mrs. J. Leishman, Mrs. James Norman Jr., Mrs. Boyde, Mrs. D. Grigor and Mrs. James Bell (Secretary).³⁵

Women also frequently donated objects and collections to the museum. For example Mrs. Bell in 1833 donated "gifts" to the museum for which she was given a free admission ticket.³⁶ The museum also actively commissioned the work of Miss Moriss. The Institute paid ten pounds for a bound collection of her water-coloured wild flowers of Nova Scotia.³⁷

Despite such participation the women referred to in the attendance records never enjoyed full membership in the Halifax Mechanics' Institute. Though denied full membership women still influenced the Institute's program and development. Although the women in attendance were not the prime target for the lectures, the lecture program of the Institute did accommodate them. The main thrust of the lectures was meant to be scientific in nature in order to meet the educational needs of the intended audience, young men. Despite this many topics of history, literature, art and music found their way into the program in order to appeal to

³⁵ Thompson. Journal of the Halifax Mechanics' Institute, May 16, 1843.

³⁶ Similar gifts from respectable gentlemen were usually reciprocated with an honourable membership.

³⁷ Thompson. Journal of the Halifax Mechanics' Institute, May 13, 1839.

the "mixed audience". If these lectures elicited any discussion from the women in attendance, it is not revealed in the Minutes or Journal of the Institute.

The digression from pure mechanical knowledge was discussed at many committee meetings, however, the outcome favoured the popular variety of lecture themes. Whether the decision was in reaction to the women's presence or the fact that larger attendances translated into more funds for the Institute is debatable.

The attendance of women to the regular lecture series combined with the aim of moral improvement through education also had an effect on the character of these gatherings. Due to this mixed audience, lecture meetings took on a certain decorum, the need for harmony at meetings and lectures had been stressed since the founding of the Society. During one of the first Committee meetings in 1832 it was agreed that discussion was to be confined to the topic of the lecture and not to involve party or domestic politics or controverted religious topics. To this effect a lecture submitted by W. Sutherland January 16, 1832 on the British Constitution was deemed inadmissible, by the Committee of the Halifax Mechanics' Institute, as it might lead to a political discussion.³⁸ Proper decorum also called for discussions not to be of a nature that attacked or criticize the lecturer but instead as a means of obtaining information in an amicable and gentlemanly manner. Violation of this rule would mean the loss of one's membership privileges as was the course of action

³⁸ Thompson, "Journal of the Halifax Mechanics' Institute." Committee Meeting January 16, 1832.

against Mr. Barry in 1832 when in consequence to his actions of the February 13th meeting his subscription fee was returned to him. Mr. Barry returned the money telling the Committee he would not consider himself expelled and the matter does not appear in the records again. Other reports of undesirable behaviour are confined to the "injudicious habit of the younger part of the audience of making numerous expressions of applause which required some check."³⁹ Therefore one may conclude the lecture meetings were of a controlled and generally non-confrontive nature.

Through the years the Mechanics' Institute succeeded in solidifying its character through rules and resolutions, and became a staple forum of public lectures; but never did gain the permanency which comes with the existence of their own building. The Institution first met at the Royal Acadian School Room with the permission of W. Atkin, and a room was taken on Hollis Street for the Apparatus Committee. Requests were made to Dalhousie College for the use of two rooms for the lectures and the museum starting in 1832 but the rooms were not obtained until November, 1833. By 1840 the Annual Report states that these rooms were now too small and that with a larger room single tickets could be sold bringing more profit for the Institute. But, this move never occurred, in fact Dalhousie continued to house the Institute's library and museum long after the Institute's activities ceased to attract the public's attention.⁴⁰

³⁹ Thompson, "Papers and Proceedings of the Halifax Mechanics' Institute" Annual Report May 1840.

⁴⁰ D.C. Harvey, "Early Struggles of Dalhousie," The Dalhousie Review, 1937-1938, Vol. 17, No. 3. p 321.

The mention of a building for the Institute is first found in the Minutes for the meeting of May 27, 1833 but it was not until 1836 that a Building Committee formed to look into building plans and possible funds. The 1839 Annual Report by J.S. Thompson, printed in the Novascotian May 1, 1839, contained news of the recently founded Saint John, New Brunswick, Mechanics Institute which already had members and funds far in excess of the Halifax Institute. The Mechanics' of New Brunswick had erected a hall within two years of its founding, financed through private donations and a Legislative grant of 500 pounds. This news was accompanied with the comment that this should be interpreted as a general triumph for Mechanics. This may have served as the impetus for the Halifax Institute to request the Sheriff to call a public meeting for the purpose of considering the erection of a building for the Institute. The meeting was held December 29, 1840, resulting in the acknowledgment that, due to difference of opinion and in anticipation of Municipal authorities adopting measures by which the Institution could be well and cheaply accommodated, the subject was dropped from further discussion.⁴¹ In 1842 the Institute was still hoping that the new City Building or the new Academy could accommodate them but this was not to be; the Institute failed to accumulate the funds necessary to build on their own and plans to be included in other buildings never materialized. One continuous problem was the Institute's financial security which was never established. The Institute petitioned the Provincial Legislature each year

⁴¹ Thompson, "Papers and Proceedings of the Halifax Mechanics' Institute," Annual Report May 1841.

from whom they received a grant of fifty pounds annually, twenty pounds of which went to the Mechanic's Library. In 1839 the Annual Report stated that the only funds of the Institute were obtained through the Legislative grant, subscriptions to members and the sale of session tickets.⁴² In 1841 the Legislature discontinued the grant "on the grounds that Halifax receives much public money and that societies in the country parts of the Province required assistance."⁴³ The Institute's Committee replied that the Legislature had not served the country societies as they look to Halifax as an example in popular education. Instead, the Committee replied, "the Government had only effected to depress the zeal of those who look to the Legislature for example."⁴⁴ The committee hoped that the grant would be reinstated in another session but, to save the embarrassment, did not petition the next year.

With still the hope of erecting a building the Institute looked for alternative funding. In 1842 the Institute hosted a bazaar which netted one hundred and ninety-three pounds (£193), one hundred and eighty-five (£185) of which went into a building fund. The bazaar was held at the Mason's Hall, wives of the members took charge of the tables and the event was well attended. Several years later, 1846, another fund raiser was organized, this time a picnic on McNab's Island. Guests

⁴² The Novascotian, "Halifax Mechanics' Institute Report", May 1, 1839.

⁴³ Thompson, "Papers and Proceedings of the Halifax Mechanics' Institute", Annual Report May 1841.

⁴⁴ Thompson, "Papers and Proceedings of the Halifax Mechanics' Institute", Annual Report May 1841.

purchasing an admission ticket for 1s3d were ferried to the Island by steam boat, where refreshments were sold (the principles of temperance prevailed), the Military Band performed, dancing took place on the provided platform, exhibits such as a steam engine, a telescope and a hot air balloon could be viewed, lectures and recitations were heard, and games of all sorts were available including quoits, balls and bats.⁴⁵ Other activities of the Institute, of a more permanent nature and not solely for the pursuit of money, was their hosting of competitions based on mechanical skill and knowledge and their collection of apparatus and models for their museum. In seeking to encourage original research in the field of mechanics the Institute offered a series of prizes in predetermined categories of essay writing and model designs. Categories included essay topics such as the benefits of science, the establishment of factories in Halifax, and the best means of supplying the town of Halifax with water; subject matter for models included a Corinthian column, the centre of an arch for a bridge, and a water wheel. The judging of these contests was performed by the Prize Committee and if no submission was up to their standard then the prizes were not awarded for that year. Competitions were held in 1833, 1835, 1836, 1837, 1839, 1845, and 1846.

In addition to being committed to popular education the Mechanics' Institute was also mandated to collect models and apparatuses. In this area the Institute excelled. The Institute actively collected and received donations of natural history,

⁴⁵ Thompson, "Journal of the Halifax Mechanics' Institute". Meetings of June 17, 22 and July 6, 7, 13, and 17, 1846.

models, scientific apparatus, art and material culture. The museum's collection was insured for the value of six hundred pounds (£600) in 1841 attesting to its value and size. A Curator was elected each year from the society and in June of 1832 a Deputy Curator was requested as the duties continued to grow with the collection.⁴⁶ The position of Curator paid a sum of fifteen pounds (£15) annually to offset the cost of paper and materials needed to arrange and label specimens and models. The Curator was responsible for all objects donated to the museum as well as assessing what should actively be acquired. Purchasing lists were submitted to the Management Committee for approval before purchases of apparatus and cases were made.

From this collection lecturers were free to borrow specimens, models and apparatuses to assist in their presentations. The museum was also approached by the President of Dalhousie College who requested permission for his staff to use the apparatus of the Institute for research and instruction, such privileges were allowed under the authorization of the Curator.⁴⁷ As well, the museum exhibited its artifacts for one hour before each lecture, annually displayed its new acquisitions, and was open to members at any time by appointment. The Curator also published a yearly list of the museum's holdings including the artifact's provenance if possible. In return for donations the Institute frequently issued honorary memberships or an admission ticket as well as publishing the donation and its

⁴⁶ List of Curators: Robert Lawson 1832, John Fairbanks 1833, John MacDonald 1835-46, Andrew Downs 1846-47, Errol Boyde 1847.

⁴⁷ Thompson, "Journal of the Halifax Mechanics' Institute."

donor in the Curator's yearly list of acquisitions.

In light of the success the Mechanics' Institute was having with its museum the Institute was approached by Thomas Akins in 1841 to become the repository for the Colonial Records. The proposal was accepted in theory but due to lack of funds was not enacted. The issue was raised again in 1845 but still funding was an obstacle.⁴⁸ Eventually, Akins was appointed Provincial Records Officer and the records became the responsibility of the Province.

The museum collection amassed by the Halifax Mechanics' Institute was perhaps the most permanent reminder of the Institute. Its specimens, apparatus, art work and books helped form the basis of the Provincial Museum in 1868. The Mechanics' Institute itself eventually lost its membership, many say to the new variety of learned societies developing in Halifax. How to measure its success is difficult, the members of the Committee constantly complained how few local mechanics actively participated in the Institute and, the Society's only attempt at evening classes aimed at the young or uneducated mechanic lasted but one season.⁴⁹ The forum in which the Institute administered their education on useful knowledge was instead more likely to attract those already possessing more than basic literacy, and

⁴⁸ Thompson, "Minutes of the Halifax Mechanics' Institute," January 20, 1841 and January 13, 1845.

⁴⁹ In a letter from George R. Young, sent from Britain, to the Institute Young promoted the introductory schools supported by the Institutes in London, Liverpool, Edinburgh and Sheffield and on his return to Halifax volunteered to teach such a course in Geometry and Perspective. The course was offered in 1835 but was not renewed due to lack in interested students.

those able and willing to participate in further improvement. The poor illiterate adult was unlikely to participate in institutional ventures where his inadequacies would be made manifest.⁵⁰ An educational hierarchy or elitism effectively barred those who might have benefitted most from the programmes of such an Institute. Martin Hewitt, in his "Science as Spectacle: Popular Scientific Culture in Saint John, New Brunswick, 1830-1850", cites the suspicions with which the mercantile elite approached the widening of civic culture through scientific endeavour in that city.⁵¹ This elite seemingly feared the "democratic and potentially subversive tendencies of such institutes"⁵², feared the emergence of a new community culture over which they would have no control. Perhaps to some extent the same fear was operating in Halifax, where the Mechanics' Institutes founders preached popular education but delivered a middle class lecture series.

In terms of popular awareness the Halifax Mechanics' Institute did succeed in bring to the public's attention the need to collect the province's natural history and material culture. The Institute was also able to establish the role of Government as a financier of museum-like institutions. Finally, the Institute also began a tradition of public lectures, aimed at a broad sector of the population. Later Institutes such as the

⁵⁰ Keane, "Joseph Howe and Adult Education," Acadiensis, p 48.

⁵¹ Martin Hewitt. "Science as Spectacle: Popular Scientific Culture in Saint John, New Brunswick, 1830-1850." Acadiensis. (Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 1988) p 94.

⁵² Hewitt. p 95.

Nova Scotian Institute of Natural Science would continue the forum of a lecture series but would not aim at popular education.

By the late 1850's, with the activities of the Mechanics' Institute in decline, the active members regrouped and in 1859 decided to continue their efforts in scholarly research through the establishment of the Halifax Literary and Scientific Society. The Society was composed of both members from the Institute and scholars outside of Halifax and had as its aim - to discuss literature, science, commerce and the arts.⁵³ The topics of discussion were aimed at an intellectual and mercantile membership and therefore the organization was exclusive in nature. Meetings were held behind closed doors with small attendance, where questions such as, should more than one College in Nova Scotia receive provincial aid?, and should domestic factories be aided by protective duties or should free trade be given unlimited scope?, were discussed.⁵⁴ Meetings were eventually discontinued as interest waned although officers were elected annually and the organization maintained until 1868 when the Provincial Museum took over the museum collection. Though the life of the Literary and Scientific Society was short lived one of its offspring is still in existence today.

On December 31, 1862 a meeting was held at the Hall of the Medical Society where for the "purpose of encouraging the study of natural science in all its branches, especially with reference

⁵³ D.C. Harvey. "The Age of Faith in Nova Scotia," Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada. Section II, Series III Vol. XL May 1946. p 12.

⁵⁴ Fergusson. "Nova Scotian Institute of Science", p 9.

to the productions and resources of this Provinces"⁵⁵ the Nova Scotian Institute of Natural Science was formed (not to be known as the Nova Scotian Institute of Science 1889 to present). This purpose would be accomplished through the holding of meetings, for the reading of original papers on geology, minerals, botany, zoology, meteorology, physical geography, and to publish a selection of these papers annually. The publication of these papers are known under three different names The Transaction of the Nova Scotian Institute of Natural Science (1863), Proceedings and Transactions of the Nova Scotian Institute of Natural Science (1864-1889), Proceedings (or Transactions) of the Nova Scotian Institute of Science (1889-present). These publications were exchanged widely with other Institutions such as the Smithsonian Institute, the Essex Institute (in return the Essex Institute included the Nova Scotian Institute of Natural Science in their Naturalist Directory) and the Academy of Science of St. Louis.⁵⁶

Unlike the Mechanics' Institute, the Institute of Natural Science clearly confined its lecture series to the confines of science. The Natural Science Institute encouraged the study of the natural sciences in all its branches but especially with reference to the products and resources of Nova Scotia. Most importantly as C.B. Fergusson points out in his "Notes on the Nova Scotia Institute of Science", the Institute had a defined membership and audience in that "it brought together doctors, lawyers, professors, army officers, priests and laymen with a

⁵⁵ C.B. Fergusson, "The Nova Scotian Institute of Science" Bulletin of the Public Archives of Nova Scotia. (Halifax:1963)p 13.

⁵⁶ "Nova Scotian Institute of Natural Science," General Minutes. Halifax 1862.

love of nature and interest in natural history."⁵⁷

The organization followed the example of the Mechanics' Institute with a fully elected Council and with meetings the first Monday of each month. Members paid an admission fee of 20s and a subscription fee of 10s for the publications, therefore beyond of the financial capability of most labourers. Meetings were first held at the Hall of the Medical Society but by April 6, 1863 a room had been secured in the Provincial Building where the Institute met thereafter.

The Institute had several goals, including those mentioned in the purpose of lectures and publications, but also the arrangement of yearly field meetings, and the collecting of natural history relevant to the Province of Nova Scotia. In keeping with the philosophy of progress for national prosperity the Institute emphasized the collection of Provincial specimens opposed to the indiscriminate collections policy of the Halifax Mechanics' Institute. The Institute reflected its dedication to science in its natural history collections which included rocks, minerals, and specimens of insects, plants and animals.

Other activities of the Institute included the society's field trips which also focused on the Province's natural resources. Originally the Institute thought four field trips a year would be the goal but this proved unmanageable. The first field trip took place in June, 1864, the members went to Saint Margaret's Bay to investigate Indian shell-heaps in the vicinity. In 1865 the second field trip was arranged to visit the Waverly

⁵⁷ PANS MG 1 Volume 1897 Number 4, C.B. Fergusson "Notes on the Nova Scotia Institute of Natural Science".

Gold Mines. Fourteen members, in two wagons provided by James Woodman, Dartmouth, visited the Barrel quartz formation, the Taylor pits (in operation), the German Company's Mines and Crushers after which the members retired to Mrs. Marshall's for dinner and conversation.⁵⁸ Eventually the field trips became too much work for the few members which attended them and were discontinued.

The Institute's lecture series was still the mainstay of its activities. The lectures and discussion sessions were offered on a weekly basis with the best papers selected annually for publication. Lecturers were actively sought out from collectors, academics and reserachers throughout the Province. Lecture topics often promoted new industries such as a fresh-water pearl industry, as well as advocated responsible management of resources as suggested in "Contributions to the Game of Nova Scotia" in which Mr. Dawson suggested the protection of endangered native species.

The Institutes most important involvement for the future museum was its involvement with the International Exhibitions. Much of the efforts of the Institute of Natural Science was consumed with preparations for the exhibitions. These exhibitions exemplified the international connection developing between science and national prosperity. The exhibitions "heralded in a new era in world diplomacy, to provide both a tangible measure of the progress of mankind and an arena for

⁵⁸ Nova Scotian Institute of Natural Science," General Minutes. May 1, 1865.

peaceful competition among nations."⁵⁹ The first, the London International Exhibition (1862) was one of the inspirations for establishing the Institute in the first place.

The rationale was to form an institution dedicated to science, collecting, research and the promotion of Nova Scotia's natural resources from which could come displays for such exhibitions. Exhibited at these events was an illustration of the Province's natural resources as well as the present state of the regions advancement in science, art and manufacturing.⁶⁰ Seen as the most important display of such exhibits was that of raw materials therefore the Commission dedicated most display area to these collections. The collections gathered for these exhibitions were enormous, eight hundred and ninety-two (892) items were sent to London for the International Exhibition. Once returned to Nova Scotia the problem was what to do with them.

For years societies such as the Halifax Mechanics' Institute and the Nova Scotian Institute of Natural Science partially filled the role of a museum but neither mandates had allowed for mass collecting of the entire Province's natural and material culture. A separate institution was needed. Individuals such as Dr. McCulloch, Andrew Downs and Richard Garland separately petitioned the Legislature for a Provincial Museum of natural history, but it was the Exhibitions which gave new impetus to the cause. In 1861 a petition to the legislature from Cape Breton

⁵⁹ Zeller, Inventing Canada: Early Victorian Science and the Idea of a Transcontinental Nation. p 79.

⁶⁰ Dr. David Honeyman, Exposition Universelle de 1867: Catalogue of the Nova Scotian Department at the Paris Exhibition of 1867, (Paris: Gustave Bossange, 1867) p 7.

"proposed the establishment of Geological Museums in several counties with a central institution of the same nature in Halifax."⁶¹ (Prophetic of the organization the Nova Scotia Museum has today.) Early in 1862 the Governors of Dalhousie College proposed a museum be established in connection with their institution. In 1863 another petition was sent to the Legislature from Dr. Honeyman proposing the establishment of a Provincial Industrial and Educational Museum and was tabled in the House of Assembly. Two years later, 1865, a subsequent petition from Honeyman was tabled in the House by John R. Willis regarding the establishment of a Provincial Museum and was forwarded to the committee on mines and minerals. The response from this committee was as follows:

The committee have examined the memorial of Dr. Honeyman and John R. Willis, advocating the establishment of a Provincial Museum, and have heard the latter gentleman in person; and while they entertain favourable views of the proposal, and fully appreciate the importance of the work, and the benefits to flow there from, yet the committee cannot recommend any active steps to be taken in the matter until the new provincial building is completed, and suitable apartments therein can be had as a depository for the proposed collection, free of charge. It appears, however, that there is at present a valuable collection of articles in the museum of the late Mechanics' Institute, and other places, which would be contributed to a Provincial Museum, and are being lost for want of proper care. The committee recommend the Government to take such steps as they may deem necessary to collect and preserve that same, provided the expense does not exceed three hundred (300) dollars.⁶²

Following this endorsement Honeyman made arrangements with

⁶¹ Fergusson, "The Nova Scotian Institute of Science", Bulletin of the Public Archives of Nova Scotia, p 29.

⁶² Fergusson, "Nova Scotian Institute of Science," Bulletin of the Public Archives of Nova Scotia, p 28.

A. MacKinlay⁶³ and J. Foreman, trustees of the defunct Mechanics' Institute, for the collection of the Institute to form the nucleus of the Provincial Museum. Dr. Honeyman then secured accommodations in the new Provincial Building through the office of the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council. Honeyman next secured the Nova Scotian exhibits of the International Exhibition of 1862, 1865 and 1867 (once it returned from Paris) and private collections from the Exhibitions were purchased by the Commission with the intent of being deposited in the Provincial Museum. Finally, in 1868 when the room in the new building was ready the collections of the Mechanics' Institute and the Exhibitions were transferred and Dr. Honeyman became the first Curator of the Provincial Museum.⁶⁴

The establishment of the Provincial Museum was the culmination of nearly fifty years of collecting and public education carried out by the Mechanics' Institute and the Institute of Natural Science, the former dedicated to popularization of knowledge and the later the increase of knowledge. These Institutes drew together people such as Dr. Honeyman, A. MacKinlay, J. Thompson, B. Gilpin, H. How, and G. Lawson in a structured and unified forum of discussion on a

⁶³ Andrew MacKinlay (1800-1867), a prominent Halifax businessman and philanthropist, was a member of the Halifax Mechanics' Institute and a founding member of the Nova Scotia Institute of Natural Science. He was instrumental in the founding of the Presbyterian Free Church College in Halifax and was a board member for Dalhousie College.

⁶⁴ Fergusson, "The Nova Scotian Institute of Science", Bulletin of the Public Archives of Nova Scotia, p 29.

regular basis.⁶⁵ The exhibitions also drew these same people together on the common ground of science and progress. These men then formed the backbone of support for the Provincial Museum and the Institute of Natural Science gave them the cohesion of a united voice to the government. To the government these people embodied the leading minds of progress and subsequently the future success of Nova Scotia. Therefore government, bound to respect the needs of their province and influenced by its leading proponents of science and research, lent it support.

Both Institutes were products of Victorian values in the pursuit of science and nation building. The economic thrust towards manufacturing forced society to train mechanics and the working class. Moreover, through their ambitions for social control, the middle class wanted to groom a respectable working class thereby committing themselves to the cause of public education. More importantly Nova Scotians had shown their commitment to natural history and to the Institutions dedicated to its study and collection. The provincial government had also begun a tradition of supporting learned societies early in the nineteenth century, this precedent allowed the petitioning of government to become the custodian and supporter of the provincial collection. In 1868, the Legislature having achieved responsible government in 1848 and having concluded the debate over Confederation may have been looking for an institute to solidify the Provinces past and future. Thus, a provincial museum was born.

⁶⁵ Report of Nova Scotia Commissioners for the International Exhibition 1862, Halifax: T. Chamberland, 1864.

Chapter 2

Pirate Heads and Other Curiosities: The Early Development of the Nova Scotia Provincial Museum 1868-1889

In 1868 the Provincial Museum of Nova Scotia was founded. The decision to create the Museum was the result of several factors. Kenneth Hudson, in his book Museums of Influence, suggests for influence to operate and for change to take place, three factors are necessary.

"First, there must be the people of exceptional vision and originality of mind to develop the new ideas. Second, the time and the social climate must be right and, third, there must be the means of transmitting the new thinking."¹

In the case of the Provincial Museum much credit for the inception and vision must be given to Rev. Dr. David Honeyman (1817-1889), the first Curator. His support came from various sources such as the Nova Scotian Institute of Natural Science, trustees of the Halifax Mechanic's Institute, the Provincial Commission for the International Exhibition and members of the Legislative Assembly such as John R. Willis.

The social climate of Nova Scotia was also receptive to the Provincial Museum. Inseparable from social climate are the economic and political atmospheres. In these areas Nova Scotia was looking towards technology and industrial development for prosperity. In this respect the Provincial Museum was to

¹ Kenneth Hudson, Museums of Influence. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987) p 4.

showcase the Province's natural resources to local prospectors, men of industry, and the international community through the exhibition of a mineralogical collection. Honeyman as Superintendent of the Nova Scotian collection at both the Great Exhibition in London, 1862, and the International Exhibition in Paris, 1867 advised the Provincial Government that a permanent collection in Nova Scotia was necessary. Therefore, not only was the time and social climate right but economically and politically the Government was looking to enter into an industrial stage of development making a resource centre such as a Provincial Museum a viable concept.

Finally, the means of transmitting these ideas was through petitioning the Legislature as Honeyman, Willis and the Institute of Natural Science all did. Also at work was a friendship between Honeyman and Sir Charles Tupper, Premier. Letters to Tupper from Honeyman appear in 1864, while Tupper is Provincial Secretary. Honeyman and Tupper's interest in the geological mapping of Nova Scotia was the topic of early conversations while discussions turned to the employment of Honeyman as the Inspector of Mines later that same year. Though Honeyman did not receive this appointment he stated he did put much faith in Tupper's influence and friendship.² Therefore, by using the channels of petitioning the Legislature and by having support from those with influence, the Provincial Museum was founded.

Having been established, what form did the Provincial Museum take, what was its function and its place in the Nova Scotian

² Public Archives of Nova Scotia (PANS), "Letters of the Provincial Secretary, Charles Tupper from David Honeyman" RG 7, Vol 50. Feb 23, 1864, April 19, 1864, date unknown, 1864.

political and economic climate? If one looks at the Museum Reports published by the Department of Public Works and Mines in the Journals of the House of Assembly a description of the Museum can be found for the years 1872, 1873 and 1874.

Located in the new Provincial Building on Hollis Street, the Museum's collection was an eclectic mix of foreign and local specimens. The major contributors had been the Halifax Mechanics' Institute, the Nova Scotian Institute of Natural Science and the exhibits from the Paris and London Exhibitions. Private collectors were also generous in their donations. Most significant amongst these donations was the Dr. William Bennett Webster collection³ of Nova Scotian minerals, Dr. Henry How's (King's College, Windsor) Nova Scotian mineral collection, Mr. Henry Poole's (Inspector of Mines 1871-1879) collection of rocks, fossils, minerals and relics, and others.⁴

The design of the Museum was stated in the 1872 Report as being a "permanent exhibition of the industrial resources of the province, combined with a museum of science and art."⁵ The collection was classified under the headings economic minerals, geology, mineralogy, botany, zoology, ethnology, fine arts and

³ The Webster Collection contained about 700 specimens of minerals, largely Provincial in nature. The collection was created by Dr. William Bennett Webster, M.P.P., a well known Nova Scotian doctor, geologist and politician. The collection was donated to the Museum after Dr. Webster's death by Mrs. Webster on the condition that it remain intact and distinct. Thus it is known as the Webster collection and not integrated into the mineralogy collection.

⁴ Journal of the House of Assembly, 1873 "Provincial Museum" App. No. 22. pp 2-5.

⁵ Journal of the House of Assembly, 1873. "Mines Report," App. No. 16. p 44.

miscellaneous. The most numerous specimens were found in the first three categories. An inspection of the collection by the British Society for the Advancement of Science in 1897 noted 3,300 of the 10,000 specimens in the collection were contained in the geological cabinet making it the largest section of the Museum.⁶ Honeyman noted in 1874 that the private donations had given an "industrial" character to the Museum. Therefore, the scientific and industrial usefulness of the Museum was a major aspect of its existence and purpose.

The second aspect of the Museum's purpose, also tied to its usefulness, was the Museum as an educational tool. The educational value of the collection was grounded in two methods of learning. First, the collection itself was to educate the public on the natural resources of the Province through exhibitions. In this respect, Honeyman reported that the Museum was very popular, that "multitudes" visited the museum though exact numbers were impossible. The Museum he stated was "the place of ready resort for those who desire information regarding our mineral resources and the natural history of the Province."⁷ Therefore, the process of viewing the collection was educational in itself.

With regard to the second method of learning the collection was to be a tool for active research. Students of natural history, technology and industry were to have access to the

⁶ The British Society for the Advancement of Science, Report on the Principle Museums in Canada and Newfoundland. (Toronto: 1897, Reprint) p 2.

⁷ Journal of the House of Assembly, "Provincial Museum" App. No. 22, 1874. p 10.

collection for research purposes. The aim being to unlock Nova Scotia's economic potential by developing skilled managers to operate progressive industries and factories. In 1874 Honeyman cited the frequent visits from capitalists and mining engineers, who used the Museum as an information centre. Therefore, the Museum was reaching and influencing industry. This prompted Honeyman to report the following passage in 1872:

The multitudes that visit the museum are from country and town. Our register shows that our visitors are of every class and from every country - many come to be amused, many to be instructed - of the latter there are inquirers who desire information which the museum is intended and fitted to impart - information relative to our natural history or in reference to the nature and extent of our resources.⁸

As the Reports in the Journal of the House of Assembly reveal, it was very important for Honeyman to recount the important economic role the Museum was playing. Obviously this was in response to the Government's perceived role for the institution. On the other hand, the Museum put forth a different face when wanting to attract public visitation.

Phyllis Blakeley in an article "Glimpses of Halifax 1867-1900", using the Acadian Recorder, the Halifax Evening Herald and a Halifax Guide Book of 1878 as sources, described a genial Honeyman who was always delighted to show visitors all the "treasures" of the Museum. Honeyman as Curator, would explain the origin, nature and purpose of each specimen. What is most interesting in this description is the list of specimens the public could expect to see. The list included: "birds, coins,

⁸ Journal of the House of Assembly, 1872. "Mines Report" App. No. 16. p 57.

animals, reptiles, shells, Indian relics, curiosities from Japan and China, skulls of pirates, ship models and minerals."⁹ One can readily see through this description the industrial and economic value of the collection is quite subdued in comparison to the Government reports. Therefore, perceptions about the public role and the governmental role of the Museum were quite diverse.

This dichotomy in exhibition purpose was not uncommon. Overseas the organizers of the International Exhibitions were faced with the same dilemma. Exhibitions began in 1851 with the Crystal Palace where the power of the exhibit as a mass-educator became apparent. In response planners took great care in creating an educational pattern to the exhibits. A shift in thinking amongst the organizers was apparent by the mid 1880's when the exhibitions were designed to be meaningful to the professionals at the expense of the masses. The emphasis was on commerce and industry instead of subjects of mass interest. In tandem with this shift were changing expectations from the public in how they were going to use the Exhibitions. What was beyond the control of the organizers was the way in which the public transformed their trip to the Exhibition into a holiday. Therefore education and entertainment became inextricably mixed. Organizers attempted to specialize the exhibits, but few would attend unless entertainment was offered. Therefore, exhibits did often sit on the fence of entertainment, in order to attract the crowds, while still clinging to validity with some educational

⁹ Phyllis R Blakeley, Glimpses of Halifax 1867-1900, (Halifax: Public Archives of Nova Scotia, 1949) p 64.

value.¹⁰

A further result of Honeyman's interest in the educational usefulness of the Museum, and perhaps a response to Joseph Howe's report in 1871 on the possible establishment of a School of Mines in Montreal, Honeyman established a School of Mines in connection with the Museum. The Provincial School of Mines was to be a cooperative effort with instructors being drawn from the Museum, the Departments of Mines and Crown Lands, and local Colleges and Academies. In 1873 Honeyman reported that in its formation the Museum had been intended to support a School of Mines and the collection was appropriate for such a purpose. Honeyman added since public opinion was favourable they only awaited Legislative assent. The School in 1873 was presently in its third session having had eight (8) students in the first session, eleven (11) attended the second and twenty-three (23) the third, therefore its popularity was growing and would soon require formal organization. The School taught geology, zoology and palaeontology relating to Nova Scotia and Cape Breton. Students attended lectures Tuesdays and Fridays, demonstrations in the Museums, and received field training under Honeyman during his frequent surveys and collecting trips around the Province.¹¹

The next year, Provincial assent still had not yet been received. Honeyman attempted to point out the School's provincial nature as the fourth session included three students from Halifax, three from Cape Breton, two from Dartmouth, two

¹⁰ Peter Vergo. The New Museology. (London: Reaktion Books, 1989) pp 75-82.

¹¹ Journal of the House of Assembly, 1873. "Mines Report" App. No. 11. p 63.

from Colchester, one from Hants, and one from Cumberland.¹² Such statistics were therefore, strengthening the case for Government assistance as the School was popular throughout the Province, and as every area of Nova Scotia recognized the value of such "practical geology".

Support for the School of Mines was wide spread. In 1872 William Garvie, Chief Commissioner of Mines and Works, included in his "Mines Report" of the Journal of the House of Assembly, that a school of mines was a necessity in the Province. Garvie stated the mineral riches of Nova Scotia as her source of progress and prosperity and in that vein, skills needed to be developed. Furthermore, "to attract capital and hence manufacturing, and stimulate employment a more general diffusion of accurate information on the mineral resources and the right modes for reaching and working them was required."¹³ To achieve this purpose Garvie stressed the need of a school of mines which taught technical mining, practical and economic geology, which properly defined the minerals of the Province and would be of value to the population.¹⁴ Garvie's report reveals the link between economic progress, geology and education which Honeyman also exhibited in his reports on the usefulness of the Museum.

The following year, 1873, A.S. Hunt, Superintendent of Education, in the "Education Report" lamented the absence of an

¹² Journal of the House of Assembly, "Provincial Museum" App. No. 22, 1873. p 10.

¹³ Journal of the House of Assembly, "Mines Report" App. No. 16, 1872. p 6.

¹⁴ Journal of the House of Assembly, "Mines Report" App. No. 16. 1872.

Academy in Halifax but noted that Halifax did have a School of Science operating in the Provincial Museum under the direction of Dr. Honeyman. This school, he wrote, had a promising future and was supplying a valuable source of education in the Province.¹⁵ The next year, 1874, Hunt again wrote of the need for better institutions relating to the natural sciences, with particular reference to those branches which would aid in the development of mineral wealth for the Province. He stated that the present School in operation under Honeyman was a beginning but it needed to be more fully utilized. Hunt felt further encouragements should be given to the Province's young men who were interested in mining operations, to spend time in these schools being properly trained and certified.¹⁶

Another supporter for the School of Mines can be found in Benjamin Pope who wrote W.B. Vail, Provincial Secretary, in 1873. In the letter Pope referred to the cramped conditions of the Museum and requested Vail to support the "noble scheme of a School of Mines." Pope stated that in its present quarters the Museum was not able to sufficiently serve the public in studying the natural resources of the Provinces without going abroad for training.¹⁷ The government assistance Honeyman and his supporters sought never did come forth for the Museum's School of Mines. Further mention of the School does not appear in Honeyman's

¹⁵ Journal of the House of Assembly, "Education Report" App. No. 14, 1873. p 11.

¹⁶ Journal of the House of Assembly. "Education Report" App. No. 15, 1874. p 16.

¹⁷ PANS "Letter form Benjamin G Pope to Hon, W B Vail, Provincial Secretary." Halifax August 28, 1873. RG 7, Vol. 73.

reports and therefore it is assumed to have closed. But, the movement for technical education continued as did Honeyman's participation.

For a more in depth look into the development of certified technical education in Nova Scotia one should refer to Donald MacLeod's article 'Practicality Ascendant: The Origins and Establishment of Technical Education in Nova Scotia'. Although, in reference to this discussion this article fails to make mention of the Museum's School of Mines. Considering the time frame of MacLeod's article, the topic and the movement's promoters it is unlikely that the demise of the Museum's School of Mines did not play a role in the founding of the Halifax Technological Institute in 1877. Rather, it can be argued that the School of Mines was the first in a series of technical institutions which lead to the eventual founding of the Nova Scotia Technical College in 1909. Despite this oversight MacLeod does mention Honeyman's position on the teaching staff of the Halifax Technological Institute. MacLeod sees this institution as a reflection of both the "educational idealism and of the desire for professional recognition felt by the Nova Scotian scientific community."¹⁸ Honeyman, later in life, also helped to found the first science faculty at Dalhousie University. Here he taught geology, without salary, as well as giving courses at the

¹⁸ Donald MacLeod, "Practicality Ascendant: The Origins and Establishment of Technical Education in Nova Scotia," Acadiensis, Vol. 15, No. 2, 1986. (Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 1986) p 58.

Museum.¹⁹ The calender for the 1877-78 session includes Honeyman as Professor of Geology, Palaeotology and Mineralogy, but, in 1883 the Bachelor of Science degree was suspended.²⁰

Therefore, from the evidence presented one sees that by 1875 the Museum had a definite character, program and mandate. The collection defined its character as a museum of economic minerals, natural history, and industry. The Museum's aim was in two areas, to promote education and the industrial future of the Province. Honeyman promoted these two aims as mutually essential. In these areas Honeyman found the Museum a great success. In 1874 he wrote:

It (the Museum) already confessedly stands in the first rank among the industrial and educational institutions of the Dominion, and I have no doubt that, with due liberality on the part of the Government, it will soon take the lead.²¹

The direction chosen for the Museum, that is a Museum of natural resources, and the confidence which Honeyman showed towards the unquestionable progress of Nova Scotia raises many questions about the Province's political, economic and social climate which effectively shaped the Museum. Questions which arise include: Why was Honeyman so dedicated to scientific education? Why was "practical geology" essential to the future

¹⁹ William D. Naftel. "Honeyman, David." The Dictionary of Canadian Biography. (ed) Frances Halpenny. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press) p 421.

²⁰ University Calender and Examination Papers of Dalhousie College and University, Session 1877-78, Halifax 1878. p. 6; Calender of Dalhousie College and University 1883-84, Halifax, 1883. p 43.

²¹ Journal of the House of Assembly, 1874, "Provincial Museum" App. No. 22. p 11.

role of a productive Nova Scotia? Why was geology and mineralogy of such importance that these areas would become the centre of the Museum's collection and educational program? What events or developments were occurring in Nova Scotia to prompt the Government to support an "industrial" Museum? The essential issues extracted from these questions include the importance of geology, education and progress in Victorian Nova Scotia and how the Provincial Museum in its mandate and aims typified these concerns.

In discussing the increased importance of education and geology the background of David Honeyman offers much information on the beliefs he held while Curator of the Provincial Museum. His Scottish origin, his religious affiliation which resulted in his emigration to Nova Scotia, and his early interest in geology all emerged as results of Honeyman's early education and career as a preacher in the Free Church of Canada. His interest in geology eventually led him away from the profession of a preacher and into the public service of the Nova Scotian Government.

David Honeyman was born at Corbie Hill, Fife County, Scotland in 1817. Educated at Dundee High School until the age of 17 he entered Saint Andrew's University in 1834 where he studied Oriental languages, including Hebrew, Chaldee, Syriac and Persian, under Professor Tennant, and natural science. It was in Dundee that Honeyman first became associated with natural history museums. Honeyman was employed by the Watt Institute²² of Dundee

²² The Watt Institute was founded in 1837 by a son of the famous engineer, James Watt, contains the public library, the Watt Scientific Library and the marble statue of James Watt. Adjoining it are the museum and lecture hall.

to assist in creating a natural history collection. As an avid collector of natural history his reputation was well enough known to earn him the placement.

After completing his studies at Saint Andrew's University Honeyman selected the Church as his profession and in 1836 entered the United Secession Theological Hall. Studying first in Glasgow and later in Edinburgh he was finally licensed in 1841. Shortly afterwards, following the Great Disruption in 1843, Honeyman joined the Free Church of Scotland. The Great Disruption was the result of a ten year conflict between the church and state over the power of the state, through civil courts, to control the church in matters in which the church regarded as spiritual.²³ The conflict resulted in the split of the Church of Scotland. On 18 May 1843 Thomas Chalmers led 454 ministers (about 40% of the communicants membership) out of the Established Church of Scotland to form the Free Church of Scotland.²⁴

Richard Vaundry in his book The Free Church in Victorian Canada 1844- 1861 states the Free Church was based on three ideals: Presbyterianism, Calvinism and Evangelicalism. From Presbyterianism came the belief of a church government as inseparable from the state, from Calvinism came the adherence to the Bible as the source of all true knowledge concerning God, and from Evangelicalism came the zeal and enthusiasm to spread the faith. From these distinct yet complementary ideals came two

²³ Richard W Vaundry. The Free Church in Victorian Canada 1844-1861. (Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1989) p xiii.

²⁴ Vaundry. p xiii.

themes; first, "the espousal of an evangelical Calvinism which undergirded all its activities from theological education to missions" and, second, "the consciousness of being involved in a crusade for a moral and God-fearing country."²⁵

In Canada the effect was felt directly as the ideology was culturally transmitted and adopted by the transatlantic Scottish Presbyterian community.²⁶ The Free Church of Canada, which was established in 1844, took "these evangelical ideas and institutions from the British setting and adopted them to Canadian issues and circumstances."²⁷ As Vaundry writes:

The ministers, elders and congregations who left the Church of Scotland Synod in July 1844 to establish the Canadian Free Church, saw themselves as part of a transatlantic movement for the defence of evangelical theology, congregational rights, and the Headship of Christ over His Church.²⁸

Such commitment forced Canadian Presbyterians to take sides in a conflict of which until now they had only been observers. But, with the visit of Dr. Robert Burns, Free Church Minister, the arrival of Peter and George Brown and the establishment of the Toronto Banner,²⁹ and the debate in the Canadian Synod over the Temporalities Bill, the Free Church of Canada was born.

With regard to the Free Church's relation to Honeyman and

²⁵ Vaundry. p xiv.

²⁶ Vaundry. p xiv.

²⁷ Vaundry. p xv

²⁸ Vaundry. p 1.

²⁹ The Banner was a Free Church newspaper use to voice and publicize debates. Its publisher George Brown also established The Globe in 1844. The Banner was published until 1848.

Nova Scotia one must look at its role as an educator and its view of science. Through its early years in Canada the Free Church drew its clergy from those who had received their education abroad. But, this situation could not be expected to continue. Therefore in 1844 the first Free Church College open in Toronto for the "education of young men of pious character and suitable gifts who may be aiming at the ministry."³⁰ The curriculum consisted of Latin, Greek, Hebrew, philosophy and ecclesiastical history. Vaundry writes the following in reference to the Free Church congregation in Ontario:

The Free Church brought to bear on an underdeveloped educational situation the best theological traditions and educational standards which Scotland had to offer. Equipped with six years of demanding literary, scientific, and theological training, the Free Church clergy were among the best educated in the province.³¹

As early as 1840 the Presbyterians of Halifax had a change in sentiment about sending men to Scotland for training. The Disruption only intensified the growing need for change.³² On October 7, 1848 the newspaper, The Presbyterian Witness, announced the opening of the Free Church College for the Lower Provinces of British North America in Halifax for November 1, 1848.³³ The previous month, word had been received from Scotland of the appointment of four gentlemen to the Halifax Synod. The

³⁰ Vaundry. p 79.

³¹ Vaundry. p 85.

³² E. Arthur Betts. Pine Hill Divinity Hall 1820-1970. (Truro: Executive Print, 1970.) p 8.

³³ The Presbyterian Witness, 1848, October 7. p. 2, col. 2.

gentlemen appointed were Rev. Andrew King of St Stephen's Glasgow and Rev. William Lyell of Free Uphall who would be Professors at the College and, Rev. Mr MacKenzie and Rev. David Honeyman who would be teachers in the Academy.³⁴

Honeyman arrived in Pictou, Nova Scotia, from Glasgow by September 30, 1848 but was detained as his ship, the Lula, was quarantined due to cases of smallpox on board.³⁵ The October 7, 1848 issue of the Presbyterian Witness announced that "the Rev Honeyman and Lady reached the city (Halifax) Thursday evening" and that Honeyman was scheduled to preach at St. John's Free Church, on Gerrish Street, the next day.³⁶ This same Church was the building later renovated to accommodate the College and Academy.³⁷ By 1861 the Free Church of Canada joined the United Presbyterian Church to form the Canadian Presbyterian Church. This Church in 1875 was one of four branches to join the national Presbyterian Church in Canada.³⁸ The Free Church College subsequently joined what was known as the Presbyterian College, later Pine Hill Divinity College.³⁹

Honeyman began teaching Hebrew and Oriental Literature November 1, 1848. This post he held, it is presumed, until 1851

³⁴ The Presbyterian Witness, 1848, September 2. p. 3 col. 3.

³⁵ The Presbyterian Witness, 1848, Oct 7. p. 3 col. 1.

³⁶ The Presbyterian Witness, 1848, 7 October. p. 3 col. 1.

³⁷ R. M. Hattie. "Old Time Halifax Churches," Collections of the Nova Scotia Historical Society. (Halifax: The Imperial Publishing Company Limited, 1945) p 100.

³⁸ Vaundry. p xiv.

³⁹ Betts. Pine Hill Divinity Hall. pp 18-19.

when Honeyman made application to the Presbytery of Truro through the Home Missionary Supply to be received into that body. His application was accepted and he was given the congregation of Gays River, Shubenacadie and Lower Stewiacke. In 1853 Honeyman received and accepted a call from the congregation of Antigonish. It was during this post that Honeyman became involved in Nova Scotia's geology, the work which perhaps brought him the most fame. As the Dalhousie Gazette wrote, "neither his theological and oriental studies, nor his pastoral work quenched his early love of science...while in Antigonish he acquired in his spare moments a profound knowledge of the geology of the eastern part of the Province."⁴⁰

Honeyman's fascination with geology is better understood if the manner with which the Free Church dealt with the rising conflict between religion and science is first outlined. In teaching Christian evidence geology played an important role in the Free Church's curriculum. "Like the Scottish common sense philosophy, certain strands of Victorian sciences were eminently useful in defending the faith...illustrating and confirming the work of the creator."⁴¹ Carl Berger in Science, God and Nature in Victorian Canada describes the role of "science as giving a sensibility and a medium for communicating something essential about nature and man's place in it."⁴² Natural theology dictated that an overall plan existed in nature and through the study of

⁴⁰ The Dalhousie Gazette. Nov 7, 1889. "The Late Rev David Honeyman." p 20.

⁴¹ Vaundry. p 59.

⁴² Carl Berger, Science, God and Nature in Victorian Canada. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983) p 31.

science man revealed God's divine plan of order and guidance. The intricacies of nature only served to prove the omnipotence of God, for only a divine being could put into motion and guide such a universal plan.

In the discipline of geology a problem arose as it became increasingly difficult to reconcile religion and science. Through the first half of the nineteenth century geologists were acknowledging patterns in the earth's development. The development of the earth was now believed to have occurred over millions of years, in distinct epochs, which conflicted with the Biblical account of creation in the first chapter of Genesis.⁴³ The Free Church in Canada never developed a separate or systematic response to nineteenth century science, but, instead relied on British scientists and theologians in their attempt to harmonize modern geology and Genesis.⁴⁴ The harmony they sought rested upon the two theories of Thomas Chalmers and Hugh Miller. Both theories argued that in Biblical accounts of creation a "day" did not necessarily equate twenty-four hours, but, instead an undetermined length of time. Using this explanation the Free Church of Canada asserted that religious belief and true science were never in conflict. The theory of geological epochs was no longer in opposition of God as creator of the universe, nature instead was seen as the reflection of God's plan and His transcendant guiding intelligence.⁴⁵ By 1859 Honeyman gave up his position in Antigonish in favour of the opportunity to

⁴³ Berger. pp 34-40.

⁴⁴ Vaundry. pp 59-60.

⁴⁵ Vaundry. pp 59-62.

devote his full attention to the study of geology. In relation to the religion verses science controversy, Honeyman's commitment to neither wavered. In 1889 the Presbyterian Witness and Evangelical Advocate wrote "the old controversy concerning Geology and Genesis was nothing to him (Honeyman), for his faith was strong in both regards and he treated with quick contempt the efforts at the reconciliation by men who understood neither Hebrew nor geology."⁴⁶ Therefore, though Honeyman left the active career of preaching for geology he took with him the same beliefs grounded in his faith. In fact, Honeyman continued to preach at Rockingham Hall in Halifax while he was Curator of the Museum when opportunity arose. Honeyman, in his later life, also published a series of geological articles in the Presbyterian Witness which were so well received they were later published in pamphlet form under the title, Giants and Pigmies: Earth's Order of Formation and Life, and Harmony of the Two Books.

The correlation between education, religion and geology does become very clear once Honeyman's past is considered. He was originally a teacher, attempted the career of preacher, but always held a love for science. The science his faith regarded as complementary with their evangelical calvinist roots was geology. Therefore as a man of faith, intelligence and with a passion for science the form of the Provincial Museum under Honeyman's directorship reflected these characteristics.

At the same time Honeyman chose to leave the profession of a clergyman the new profession of geology was emerging as a

⁴⁶ The Presbyterian Witness and Evangelical Advocate, October 19, 1889. "Death of Rev Dr Honeyman" p. 1 col. 4.

distinct entity. This rise in the professionalization of the sciences offered a new status to amateur geologists such as Honeyman. To examine this professionalism we will look briefly at its rise in Britain.

Through the first half of the nineteenth century both science and its mass popularity erupted. The proliferation of amateur societies and institutes introduced the rising middle class to the natural sciences. In keeping with the religious doctrine science was seen as an instrument of religious purpose as it "retraced" the thoughts of God.⁴⁷ Therefore, for the Evangelical Protestant natural history offered an outlet for leisure in keeping with the doctrine of moral discipline. To the Calvinist the study of natural history strengthened claims in predetermination and the existence of a supervisory agent.⁴⁸

It was out of this dedicated group of middle class amateurs that the specialization movement evolved and the eventual professionalization of the sciences occurred. As language and procedures developed, a higher level of training and skill was required resulting in a select few rising to the top of the amateur field and congealing into an identifiable profession. Geology itself emerged as a distinct science based on a body of clear, well-understood principles founded on observation and reasoning.⁴⁹ The underlying assumption was that the evolution of

⁴⁷ Berger. p 46.

⁴⁸ Berger. p 40.

⁴⁹ Morris Zaslow, Reading the Rocks: The Story of the Geological Survey in Canada 1842-1927. (Ottawa: MacMillan Company of Canada in association with the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources and Information Canada) p 23.

the earth had taken an enormously long period of time due to the operation of regular, ascertainable natural forces. It was also assumed that many of these same physical, chemical and biological processes were on-going. Therefore, through geological observations the principles of the earth's development could be deduced and predicted.⁵⁰

Even the development of the term "scientist" incorporated a new "consciousness amongst those who pursued science either as a career or as a dominant and serious leisure activity. It expressed their differentiation from those who pursued other culturally prestigious activities, such as music and the arts."⁵¹ After the development of this consciousness followed the fragmentation of the sciences into its disciplines or subjects. Therefore, where previously only law, medicine and the church legally held the exclusive rank of professions by the mid-nineteenth century chemists, botanists, geologist, zoologists, and others were sharing in this privilege.

The new specialist's consciousness was institutionalized through a large number of societies which sprang up throughout the first fifty years of the nineteenth century. In the case of geology the Geological Society of London, established in 1807, was the first learned society for geology alone.⁵² In the 1820-30's Oxford and Cambridge gave geology official recognition with professorships in each. The professionalization of geology

⁵⁰ Morris Zaslow, p 23.

⁵¹ Colin Russell. Sciences and Social Change 1700-1900, (The MacMillan Press Limited, 1983) p 194.

⁵² Colin Russell. p 195.

recognized certain factors about the discipline. First that it had a visibility amongst the public which identified it as a coherent group, second, that the number of followers of the discipline of geology were numerous enough to form such a group and, finally, that there was in some form an external pressure to bring this group together and to unite.⁵³

If this criteria is true how then does it apply to Nova Scotia and Honeyman? Assuming that Honeyman would have brought with him from Scotland the love of amateur science, what was occurring in Nova Scotia to allow the formation of a local profession of geologists? Close examination reveals Nova Scotia by the mid-nineteenth century had well established Colleges at which professors such as Nichols and How, both of King's College, Windsor, taught science while indulging in geology first as a hobby and later as a professional. Nova Scotia also had learned societies such as the Nova Scotian Institute of Natural Science which allow for the discourse of the sciences to circulate throughout the Province as well as facilitating the publication of research papers. Nova Scotia's participation in local and international exhibitions helped to disperse the ideas of professionalization to all participants who then returned home with the same zeal and enthusiasm. In the Provincial Government the position of Inspector of Mines was created in about 1864, first with the appointment of Henry Poole and later with Edwin Gilpin, both prominent local geologists. In the private sector mining companies such as the Londonderry Iron Mines, Acadia Coal Mines and Dominion Coal Company were hiring superintendents and

⁵³ Colin Russell. p 223

managers adding to the professional ranks of geologists. Finally, Nova Scotia's economic future was largely seen as being tied to technology and industry; both required scientific expertise and technically trained persons. Therefore, the promotion of the scientific professions was encouraged not only by outside forces but also from within the region where, for example, the Government sought the economic and consultative benefits of an advanced, reputable and recognizable group of geologists.

With Honeyman's resignation from the congregation in Antigonish he not only entered into the new profession of geology but also entered into a new period in his life. The changes were first, his commitment to geology, and second, his entering into the service of the Provincial Government. In 1859 Honeyman's first publication on the "Fossiliferous Rocks of Arisaig" in the Transactions of the Nova Scotian Literary and Scientific Society, the forerunner to the Nova Scotia Institute of Natural Science, brought him enough recognition that he was hired to prepare the geological display for the 1862 International Exhibition in London. Honeyman was later appointed Superintendent of the Commission and would take Nova Scotia's natural resources to a total of five Exhibitions, the London Exhibition, 1862; the Dublin Exhibition, 1865; the Paris Exhibition, 1867; the Philadelphia Exhibition, 1876 and the London Fisheries Exhibition, 1883.

Nova Scotia's involvement in these Exhibitions reveal much about its view of the Province's future, economically and politically. The popularity of these Exhibitions revealed a

growing linkage between science and national prosperity.⁵⁴ Sir Robert Peel's repeal of the Navigation Acts ushered in the "Age of Free Trade" in Britain. The exhibitions offered one avenue for state support of science and technology. Therefore the political climate was right, British manufacturers and designers felt confident that they could stand up to foreign competition, and the public was anxious to view the progress of science and the arts.⁵⁵ Most importantly the exhibitions offered a forum for international competition and communication before technology offered the means of mass travel and modern communication. Those nations participating in the exhibitions entered themselves into an international technological race.

Nova Scotia's aim was to use the exhibitions as a means of becoming industrialized. Through the exhibition of the Province's natural resources the hope was to attract capital and thus manufacturing. The exhibitions were also an opportunity to "seek out illustrations of mechanical genius, inventors or skill as well as improved instruments, tools and machinery."⁵⁶

In entering into the industrial age geology played a significant role at these exhibitions. Honeyman petitioned the Legislature in 1861 to grant him a commission to prepare a proper representation of the geology of the Province. Honeyman argued his point by stating that from reports of the 1851 Great Exhibition, Nova Scotia was not well represented i is

⁵⁴ Colin Russell. p 236.

⁵⁵ Kenneth Hudson. p 13.

⁵⁶ Journal of the House of Assembly, "Exhibition of Industry and Art" App No 19, 1862. J M Cramp of Acadia College to Earl of Mulgrave Feb. 23, 1861.

department and that an effort should be made to have it

"represent in a manner commensurate to its importance."⁵⁷

Honeyman went on to state the important commercial results a proper representation would produce. Honeyman was confident that in this area of geological diversity, Nova Scotia could not be surpassed by any region of the globe and as a whole would not suffer by comparison with that of any country of the same extent. Honeyman's petition resulted in the Committee's recognition that not enough was known of the resources of the Province.

Subsequently, the Committee recommended the employment of a competent person to prepare and furnish to the Government such specimens, with a short description of each, as would best exhibit to the scientific men the mineral wealth of the Province.⁵⁸ This collection would be forwarded to the 1862 Exhibition. The Committee went on to state that the time was fast approaching when a comprehensive geological survey of the Province would be needed.

In working with the Exhibitions Honeyman made several career advances. Not only was Honeyman hired by the Government for the first time, he won recognition as a professional geologist, working with such other provincially renowned geologist as Edwin Gilpin, Henry Poole and Henry How. Finally, Honeyman's encounters with leading scholars later flowered into several honorary memberships in such distinguished associations as the

⁵⁷ Journal of the House of Assembly, "Report of Committee on Crown Property" App No 40. Petition from Rev D Honeyman, Halifax, March 16, 1861.

⁵⁸ Journal of the House of Assembly, "Report of the Committee on Crown Property" App No 40, 1861.

Geologist Association of London, the London Horticulture Society and the Geological Society of France, and the Geological Society of America.⁵⁹

The Provincial Government's interest in the geology of Nova Scotia went far beyond the Exhibitions. The Province needed to know the exact extent and nature of its natural resources if it was to promote industry and trade. To do this, as mentioned by the Committee on Crown Property, a full and accurate geological survey was needed. This was in no way a novel thought. The Geological Survey of Canada had formed in 1842 in conjunction with two important trends. First, during this time of increased intellectual ferment geology was turning into a more exact science, operating under strict systems of working rules and directed towards expanding man's intellectual horizons. Second, this was a time of increased concentration on ways of winning greater quantities of minerals from the earth to meet the insatiable needs of the expanding industrial revolution.⁶⁰

The Geological Survey was a government-funded project but remained outside government control, an early "arms-length" arrangement. The Survey drew attention to Canada's resource opportunities and helped determine policies of resource management. With the industrial revolution, the demand for coal and iron grew making any region with these deposits open to

⁵⁹ Naftel. p 421.

⁶⁰ Morris Zaslow, p 36.

exploitation. Morris Zaslow writes, "minerals were the key to modernity and progress; hence countries began looking to their subterranean resources for these all-important gateways to wealth and national power."⁶¹ This description applied to Nova Scotia perfectly.

The Provincial Legislature, which had been disinclined to assist geological surveys because of a feeling that owners of the land should be expected to discover the value of their own property, was growing increasingly aware of the need to advertise the resources of the province in order to attract settlement and investment.⁶²

Discussions in Nova Scotia concerning the Geological Survey began as early as 1861 prompted by the discovery of gold in the Province. During this year Joseph Howe contacted Dr. William Dawson, then at McGill University, stating that a geological survey was desirable and Howe wanted to request Dawson's advice on the cost of such a survey, who should do it and how much time it would take. Dawson replied favourably. He suggested the Geological Survey of Canada under the direction of Sir William Logan to do the work. Dawson had consulted Logan on the time and cost aspects and the reply was that a survey would cost one thousand (£1,000) pounds over a five year period. Logan offered to direct the survey doing the office work from Upper Canada while employing local geologists to perform the field work. Dawson further suggested the employment of two field geologists, one from the Canadian Survey to concentrate on the metallic minerals and a second from Nova Scotia to concentrate on the more

⁶¹ Morris Zaslow, p 14.

⁶² Morris Zaslow. p 95.

recent formations such as coal. The survey would be general with specific attention given to "practical" minerals such as the gold and coal fields.⁶³

Geological Surveys were not always carried out for the primary reason of scientific contributions to theoretical geology, instead their objective was the advancement of the mining economy of the region.⁶⁴ This was the case in Nova Scotia. Mining was an economic staple and the Maritime Provinces expected to receive their due share of work as part of the Confederation bargain. Interest in developing mining at this time also came from the dismantling of the imperial trade system which opened up Canada to greater American investment. Therefore, by 1867 details were being worked out for the Geological Survey to come to Nova Scotia. When the time came for the Geological Survey to officially start work Honeyman was a logical employee choice as a resident geologist. In 1865, Honeyman had made application to the Legislature and was hired to follow up his work with the International Exhibition by further mapping the range and extent of the industrial resources of Nova Scotia.⁶⁵ Logan preferred using local geologists as he realized bringing in men from away only created resentment. Honeyman, who was actively working in the field, was well known to the region and the Government. Hence, Honeyman was hired as a part-time geologist along with How. The only full time employment opportunity was offered to

⁶³ Journal of the House of Assembly, "Geological Survey" App No. 8, 1862.

⁶⁴ Zaslow. p 34.

⁶⁵ Journal of the House of Assembly, "Geological Survey" App. No. 17, 1865.

Poole who turned it down and Edward Hartley was brought in to replace him. Honeyman was employed out of Antigonish and Pictou Counties, his area of expertise. His work was apparently unsatisfactory as his report was not published by the Survey due to its poor quality, and in 1868 Honeyman was refused further employment. But, by this time Honeyman was fully engaged with preparations for the opening of the Museum.

Without yearly Museum Reports, Honeyman's activities within the Museum throughout his career are difficult to assess. It is evident that the collection grew, that the Museum was open for visitors and that Honeyman acted as a guide. Honeyman's involvement in the International Exhibitions consumed much of his time. As well, Honeyman bore the title of Provincial Geologist, therefore one would assume he acted in a consultative role to Government and industry. But, the most spectacular of all his accomplishments is perhaps his geological writings.

Between 1859 and 1890⁶⁶ Honeyman published 65 articles and 1 book. His articles were published in scientific journals such as the Transactions of the Nova Scotian Institute of Natural Science, Journal of the Geological Society of London, American Journal of Science and the Proceedings and Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada.⁶⁷ Honeyman's early works dealt with the Provinces palaeontology, the collection of fossils, their study and correlation to the fauna, their distribution and conditions under which they lived. The influences of the international

⁶⁶ His final article was published postmortem, having been found on his desk ready for publication.

⁶⁷ Diane Gregory. "Biography of the Geology of Nova Scotia" Nova Scotia Department of Mines, 1975. pp 134-139.

exhibitions encouraged Honeyman to study rocks, ores and minerals for which he became most famous. In the early years Honeyman dealt mainly with the eastern portion of the Province. In 1873 he studied the exposed cuttings of the Intercolonial Railway in Halifax, Colchester and Cumberland Counties. Honeyman later expanded into the Western Counties and the Annapolis Valley. This transition marked a shift in his writings. Honeyman's research became occupied with the glacial period and its formative effects on the Province. His tracing of the ice-cap's path was considered one of the boldest and most innovative studies of its day. Only in his later years did Honeyman look to biology, particularly deep sea sponges which were found on the transatlantic cable during regular maintenance and repair.⁶⁸

Honeyman's only published book was Giants and Pigmies: Earth's Order of Formation and Life and Harmony of the Two Records. The book was originally published as a series of articles in the Halifax newspaper the Presbyterian Witness from December 25, 1885 to February 19, 1887. The total of 61 articles were published, at the suggestion of Rev. Robert Murray, editor of the Presbyterian Witness, in 1887. As the title suggests, the book dealt with the formation of the earth as revealed through the study of rock strata and the information they held. Honeyman believed in the geological theory that layers of rock and earth contain, in fossil form, the lives and stories of those creatures and plants which lived during that strata's formation, thus, enabling the scientist to delve into the far past of the earth's

⁶⁸ Edwin Gilpin. "The Geological Writings of Rev. D. Honeyman, D.C.L.," Proceeding of the Nova Scotian Institute of Natural Science, Vol. 3, Pt. 4, 1889-1890. pp 357-362.

formative years. The second theme revealed in the title is the sense of harmony which Honeyman wished to confirm between the Two Records, these being science and religion. As discussed earlier the debate between geology and religion was waged over the account of Creation in the Book of Genesis. Honeyman, as a faithful Presbyterian, held to the belief that harmony did exist between science and religion. MacGregor in his "Opening Address" to the Nova Scotian Institute of Natural Science described Giants and Pigmies as intending to facilitate the study of the collections of the Provincial Museum.⁶⁹ To accomplish this Honeyman described the collection, starting with the oldest formations, by "travelling" to the site of origin of specimens. As the collection was an eclectic mix of foreign and local specimens the book "travels" through ancient Egypt, France's Alps, the Himalayas, India and throughout Nova Scotia. Honeyman traced the successive development of the earth through the Museum's collection and continually related this development to the Biblical account of Creation.

The aim was to establish geological sequence. The geological epochs which formed the earth are related as the "days" as accounted in Genesis. Honeyman referred to the Bible as the oldest written geological record available to man.⁷⁰ The geological sequence remained in harmony with the Bible until what was called the grand "break in secession" occurred. This "break

⁶⁹ J.G. MacGregor. "Opening Address," Proceedings of the Nova Scotian Institute of Natural Science, Vol. 7, Pt. 4, 1889-1890. p 322.

⁷⁰ David Honeyman. Giants and Pigmies: Earth's Order of Formation and Life and Harmony of the Two Records. (Halifax: Museum and Booksellers, 1887) p 34.

in secession" referred to the geological evidence which placed living creatures in the sea before the appearance of plant life. As recorded in Genesis, the Third day God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yield seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth, and it was so." Whereas, on the Fifth day living creatures were for the first time unequivocally announced.⁷¹ Therefore, geological evidence clashed with the Biblical account. Honeyman tried to salvage the cause by deeming that food in some form must precede any creature. Yet, this question continued to be a problem to men such as Honeyman and William Dawson, who were committed to both religion and science.

Giants and Pigmies offers a wonderful commentary on how men of science were dealing with the conflict between their religious beliefs and the revelations of science. These men sought harmony between science and religion in order to accomplish their own inner harmony. Giants and Pigmies also proves that the values which Honeyman held when he entered into the profession of geology were the same he held in the last years of his life. Finally, the book revealed the usefulness of the Museum's collection in unlocking the mysteries of the earth's formation. The world-wide nature of the Museum collection enabled Honeyman to research and write about geological epochs which far predated the formation of the Nova Scotian land mass.

Honeyman was still actively working, researching and writing up until the time of his death on October 17, 1889. Newspapers

⁷¹ Ian F. MacKinnon. "Sir William Dawson: The Church and Science," The Dalhousie Review, Vol. 28, 1948-1949. (Halifax: The Review Publishing Company Limited, 1949) p 249.

reported that he left the Museum as usual at four o'clock and went to the Presbyterian Witness offices where he met with Rev. Robert Murray and showed a number of sketches of sponges he had complete the day before. Honeyman then proceeded home by way of Spring Garden Road. As he turned the corner onto Morris Street, where he lived, he collapsed. Honeyman was taken into Thomas Major's grocery where he received medical attention, but, died within the half hour.

Honeyman's death began a ten year period where the Museum lay functionally dormant. When it did reopen in 1899 with the employment of Harry Piers the Museum would be reorganized, marking a distinct departure from the Museum's mandate and function as under Honeyman. Therefore, with Honeyman's death the Museum's era as a collection of world-wide specimens and influence ended as well as its role in Nova Scotia's aim to become an international industrial power.

The Museum and its organization under Honeyman were truly products of their time, reflecting a faith in science and the interests of a world-wide scientific community. The rising need to industrialize the Province in order to insure a position of power in the new post-Confederation national order put new pressures on Government to increase education and mineral technology. The Museum as a show case of the provincial, national and international natural resources, combined with Honeyman's attempts to link the Museum with contemporary educational trends made the Museum a very avant garde institution for its day.

The Museum as a government funded organization was also

vulnerable to changing governments and mandates. The Museum was a political tool perhaps most vividly seen with a change in Government in 1886 which brought into power the Fielding Government and its anti-Confederation platform. After the death of Honeyman in 1889 the government did not fill the position of Curator for another ten years. The Museum lay dormant regardless of several parties lobbying for its revival, including the Institute of Natural Science and Harry Piers himself. Upon the sudden death of Honeyman his widowed daughter Mrs. Goudge appears on the pay roll for the Museum. Mrs. Goudge may well have assisted her father in the operations of the Museum, but purley on a voluntary basis. Despite Mrs. Goudge's presence in the Museum from 1889 to 1899 the position the Museum had once held as geological reference centre and educational centre would not be revived until Piers was employed full time as the Curator of the Provincial Museum.

In looking at the early years the Nova Scotia Provincial Museum indeed took its form from the issues which engulfed the Province. It reflected the social, political and economic realities of industrialization, Victorian professionalism and the progressive faith in science and technology. The Museum under the directorship of David Honeyman did embody the Victorian values of education, geology and progress. The Museum's mandate and aims typified the concerns of nineteenth century Nova Scotians. The Museum was not an ivory-tower, but, instead was open and responsive to the social dialogue of its day.

Chapter 3

"A Sampling Room of Nova Scotian Specimens": The Establishment of a Nova Scotian Collection 1890-1910

With the sudden death of Honeyman in 1889 the Provincial Museum lost a most ardent supporter. Honeyman had been the sole employee of the Museum from 1868-1889, but, fortunately Honeyman had, in his later years as Director, taken on an assistant, Harry Piers (1870-1941). As a young man of not yet twenty, Piers worked without pay in the Museum, apprenticing under Honeyman. Piers eventually became Curator of the Provincial Museum in 1899 a position he held until his death in 1941. Piers' appointment as Curator came after a ten year period during which the Museum was without a curator due to the refusal of the Government to enlist anyone in that post. Throughout this ten year period Piers and other supporters of the Museum continued to lobby and press the government to reinstate its support.

Harry Piers was a native of Halifax, born, raised and educated in the city. The Piers' were a founding family who in 1776 came to Halifax from Boston. Harry Piers was born into the Sandemanian faith, which has its origins in the Glasite movement of 1725 in Scotland. Sandemanism was based on the principles of replacing worldliness with the positive

theory of Christian behaviour, a return to simple faith and the practices of early Christians in order to avoid interest in material matters.¹

Piers from a very young age was fascinated with natural history and perhaps was first and foremost a naturalist. His personal diaries recount many expeditions to Kearney's Lake, Birch Cove and St. Margaret's Bay. He observed and noted his environment with the coming of birds, flowers, foliage etc. As a young man Piers was the archetypical nineteenth century naturalist. These qualities, of collecting, documenting and observing, fostered in his young life, prepared Piers for his role as Curator in the Provincial Museum.

The study of the Provincial Museum under Piers is in some ways easy and in other ways daunting. Piers was a fastidious collector. With an eye for detail and a passion for precision he noted and documented everything, almost to the point of obsession. He kept personal diaries, letters, newspaper clippings, Christmas lists, accession books, statistics on visitorship, inquiries etc. To illustrate his attention to detail is a selection found amongst his personal papers (the Piers collection at the Public Archives of Nova Scotia, PANS), a description of himself dated January 1927. He describes himself as:

5 feet 10.25 inches tall (in slippers),

¹. Charles St.C. Stayner. "The Sandemanian Loyalists," Collections of the Nova Scotian Historical Society. (Vol 29, Halifax: The Halcraft Printing Limited, 1951) 63.

hair fairly white hair everywhere, with a small bald spot on top of back of head. Eyebrows dark blackish-brown with some grey hair. Eyes-grey? Moustache and a bit of a painted beard from lip to chin (somewhat goatee shaped). Cheeks and sides of chin shaved. Teeth - only 1 left in upper jaw (right side) and 4 in lower jaw (2 in front and 2 on right side). This enables me to hold pipe on right side. Happen to be wearing a dark grey corralid suit and stripped shirt and no. 15 white soft-turned down collar, with 4 in hand tie, boots-no. 7.5 to 8, brown. Wear eye glasses for reading.²

To sift through the documentation is daunting but very revealing. It is not surprising then that the collection of the Nova Scotia Provincial Museum flourished under the influence of Piers.

The directorship of Piers spans 41 years, an impressive career. A career which witnessed many social changes such as the wide spread use of the automobile and social crises such as the First World War and the Halifax Explosion. Piers' challenge throughout his career was to continue to adapt the Museum to the changing Nova Scotian context. As the career of Piers is perceived to have two separate and distinct phases this chapter deals with the appointment of Piers to the position of Curator and the development of the Museum under the Piers' directorship from 1899-1922. Through the discussion of Piers' early years with the Provincial Museum several important developments in the Museum's mandate, form

². PANS, MG 1 Vol 1049 Folder 1927, "Physical Description of Piers." January 1927.

and operation will be discussed, as well as influences affecting the role of the Museum and its staff. The aim is to begin to compile a complete history of the Museum's operations through this period and relate these developments to social influences.

Before entering the Piers era of the Provincial Museum a brief description of the Museum's organization at the end of the career of Honeyman will be given as background to further discussion. The 1898 the British Association of Advancement of Science's Report on the Principle Museums in Canada and Newfoundland stated the collection of the Provincial Museum in Halifax contained a geological cabinet including: minerals 1000 specimens, rocks 300 specimens; fossil organic remains 2000 specimens, for the most part collected and arranged by late Rev. Dr. Honeyman. The zoological department included 1500 specimens, and the botanical collection was that prepared by Dr. Henry How.³ The Report made no mention of any material culture collections such as a history collection, anthropology collection or archaeology collection.

The Museum was located on the third floor of the Halifax City Post Office on the corner of George and Hollis Street (today the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia), the property of the Dominion Government. For the last two years as

³. British Association of Advancement of Science. Report on the Principle Museums in Canada and Newfoundland. Toronto: 1898 (reprint). p. 2

Curator, Honeyman had enlisted the aid of Harry Piers, who helped classify and label collections in the Museum. Upon the death of Honeyman, Piers petitioned the government for the position of Curator.

A letter contained amongst the Piexs collection in PANS shows Piers intended to write the Premier, Honourable William Stevens Fielding. The draft letter dated October 24, 1889 stated that "in view of the probable early appointment of some person to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Rev. Dr. Honeyman I (Piers) wish to apply through you (Fielding) for such appointment."⁴ Piers also stated that in the last two years, while performing gratuitously a large part of the work in the Museum, he had gained a very intimate acquaintance with the institution's needs and internal management. Piers listed his accomplishments as the arrangement and labelling of the zoological collection as well as an education which qualified him for the position.⁵ The education Piers referred to was accomplished at the Albro Street School and the Halifax County Academy and post secondary schooling in art. The letter drafted to Fielding was never sent. To interpret why the letter was never sent one must understand the political, social and economic climate affecting Piers' decision. First, one must consider

⁴. PANS, MG 1, Vol 758. Harry Piers, "Letter to Hon. W.S. Fielding, Premier of Nova Scotia." Oct. 24, 1889.

⁵. PANS, MG 1, Vol 758, "Letter to Hon. W.S. Fielding, Premier of Nova Scotia." Oct. 24, 1889.

the financial difficulties the Fielding Government faced in the mid-1880's as a result of the failing maritime and international trade economy, which Fielding's government saw as a result of the Confederation deal.⁶ With this in mind one must also consider the role the Museum had played under Honeyman. The Museum's founding was directly allied with the progressive ideals of industry and technology as the economic future of Nova Scotia. With the apparent failure of these ideals by the late 1880's, the Government was not as likely to invest money and manpower into the Museum's maintenance until its role was more in line with the Government's needs. Therefore, with the change in government and economic development strategies the Museum found its policies and "usefulness" in conflict with the Government and thus a reorganization or realignment was necessitated. The Museum's lack of applicability to the current needs of the Nova Scotian public helped to contribute to its decade of ineffectiveness.

Piers' employment history reveals that instead of receiving the placement of Curator in 1889 Piers was taken on the Government payroll as Assistant Legislative Librarian.⁷

⁶. Colin Howell, "W.S. Fielding and the Repeal Elections of 1886 and 1887 in Nova Scotia," Acadiensis Reader: Atlantic Canada After Confederation. (ed) P.A. Buckner and David Frank. (Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 1985) p. 96-97.

⁷. PANS MG 1, Vol. 1050, Folder 1933. Harry Piers Province of Nova Scotia, Department of Public Works and Mines, Employment History File Card.

His pay was \$16.66 a month, substantially less than he had offered his services for as Curator at the rate of \$600.00 a year or \$50.00 per month. Despite his job appointment Piers seemingly continued to have much interaction with the Museum, especially its collection. Piers' correspondence reveals that as Assistant Librarian he was in communication with many museum officials in North America. Included as correspondents was Thomas Wilbon, Curator of the United States National Museum under the direction of the Smithsonian Institute, Washington ; J.A. Allan, Curator Department of Mammalogy and Ornithology American Museum of Natural History and George M Dawson, Director Geological Survey of Canada to name but a few.⁸ The contents of these responses indicates Piers was researching objects contained in the Museum collection, of special interest were the adzes and hatchets. Through this correspondence Piers also suggested the exchange of information gathered on similar collections such as mineralogy, botany and ornithology. Although, with Piers as Secretary of the Nova Scotian Institute of Natural Science much of this information may have been in fulfilment of that office.

Piers took up the post as Secretary of the Nova Scotian Institute of Natural Science after the death of Honeyman. The office of Secretary, which Piers held for the next forty years, put him in contact with many scientific institutes and

⁸. PANS MG 1 Vol 758. Harry Piers Papers.

several of the Province's leading proponents of natural history. The Institute and the Museum shared a close affiliation. In the past the Institute of Natural Science had petitioned the Provincial Government for the establishment of a provincial museum and in 1895 MacGregor, a long standing member of the Institute, petitioned Premier Fielding concerning the museums' curatorship on Piers' behalf. Later, in 1927 the Institute again petitioned the Government to reinstate the Science Library grant⁹, a branch of the Provincial Museum.

Since the death of Honeyman in 1889 the Museum was left to the care of Isabella Goudge,¹⁰ the widowed daughter of Honeyman. She appears as the only employee in the public accounts being paid out of the Provincial Museum budget, a salary of \$33.33 a month.¹¹ The entire budget for these years, 1890-1899, never matched what the Province had been spending during Honeyman's directorship. The annual budget under Honeyman usually amounted to roughly \$1265.07¹² whereas

⁹. Piers, "Report of the Provincial Museum and Science Library," Journal of the House of Assembly. 1927.p. 41.

¹⁰. Obituaries for David Honeyman provide various spellings for this name included are Goudge and Grouge, Goudge is selected here as it is the spelling which appears in the Museum accounts in the Journal of the House of Assembly.

¹¹. Nova Scotia House of Assembly Journal 1891. App. 4 "Report of the Department of Public Works and Mines." pp. 15-16.

¹². Number taken from the average expenditure for the period 1876 to 1886. Nova Scotia House of Assembly Journal, 1876-1886. App. No. 4. "Report of Works and Mines."

for the next nine years the annual expenditures would only be half that amount. As well, no formal Museum Reports were published with the Journal of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly all suggesting little active work being done in the Museum by Goudge.

Activities within the Museum for the years 1889-1899 are difficult to decipher as no Museum Reports were filed with the Department of Public Works and Mines. What one does find written is that the Deputy Commissioner of Mines, Edwin Gilpin Jr. was put in charge of mineral displays for the International Exhibitions, such as the Jamaica Exhibition of 1891, formally a duty of the Provincial Museum Curator. Gilpin also stated in his report that due to his other duties and the lack of sufficient notice, he could not do justice to the exhibit.¹³ Therefore the duties of the Curator had been handed on to other persons within government. One also finds contained in the Report of the Legislative Library petitions on behalf of the Provincial Museum for better accommodations and management, indicating that other government departments were in support of the Museum and its revitalization. In 1895 the Legislature did debate the proposal of \$50,000 going towards the erection of a building to house the Provincial Museum, the School of Art and Design, the libraries of the History Society of Nova Scotia, the Nova Scotia Institute of

¹³. Nova Scotian House of Assembly, Journal 1891, App, 6, "Report of the Department of Public Works and Mines." p. 48.

Natural Science, the Victoria School of Art and Design and the Nova Scotia Miners Association. No action was taken thereafter despite continued pressure from the staff of the Legislative Library.¹⁴

Despite the fact Piers was not working within the Museum his interests, as indicated, demonstrated his continued involvement in the Museum's future. In April, 1895 Piers received a letter from Anne M. Cricktor which stated,

seeing as Mrs. Goudge was soon to be married to Mr. Jordan who has something to do with the mines and as you (Piers) might apply for the post at Museum, which Mrs. Goudge tells, I send you this note wishing you every success.¹⁵

Therefore, though not employed by the Museum Piers' interest in the post was publicly known. Also, his contact with Mrs. Goudge was frequent enough that she knew of his intention to apply for the post on her retirement. A letter the following month proves Piers took some action in order to secure his future with the Museum.

In May of 1895 MacGregor, acquainted with Piers through the Nova Scotian Institute of Natural Science, wrote:

"(I) saw Mr Fielding ... and had a talk with him about the Museum Curatorship. He was of course where-by-non-committal but heard what I had to say with his usual courtesy. Do you know anyone who

¹⁴ Nova Scotia House of Assembly, Journal 1894, 1895, 1896. App, 11. "Report of the Legislative Library."

¹⁵. PANS MG 1 Vol 758, Letter to Piers from Anne M Cricktor. April 4, 1895.

will be likely to be able to influence the Blackaders. As prominent lobby-men who are strong partisans, usually their support would be of great value. But I fear it will be hard to get."¹⁶

This letter indicates many influences were at work. First, Piers was not satisfied with his appointment with the Legislative Library and did continued to actively pursue the post of Provincial Museum Curator. He did this not only by remaining active in the museum field and correspondence, but also through lobbying. Second, the Government had certainly not filled the post of Curator since the death of Honeyman, just over five years by 1895. The Museum was being taken care of to some extent by Mrs. Goudge but one could conclude no active collecting or research was being pursued by museum staff due to the cut in expenditures and lack of any formal reports on Museum activities. The Legislative Library's Report contained in the 1894 Nova Scotia House of Assembly Journal called attention to the fact "that the Provincial Museum ... is now so situated to be almost useless to the many who would, under more favourable conditions, visit it for the purpose of scientific study or practical investigation or through mere intelligent curiosity."¹⁷

Third, the Blackaders were a family with some influence over Premier Fielding and his government. This connection

¹⁶. PANS MG 1, Vol 758, Harry Piers Papers. Letter to Piers from Dr MacGregor, May 23, 1895.

¹⁷. Nova Scotia House of Assembly, Journals, 1894, App 11 "Report of the Legislative Library".

may have been through the newspaper business in which both were involved. Fielding had risen from clerk to managing editor of the Halifax Morning Chronicle while the Blackader family had been operating the Halifax paper The Acadian Recorder for three generations. Politically, both were liberals but whereas Fielding made a career of politics the Blackader brothers Charles and Henry declined several offers to become politically active; Charles Blackader had even declined a seat in the Senate.¹⁸ The Blackaders had also in 1892 donated an entire set of The Acadian Recorder, 1813 to date, to the Legislative Library¹⁹ perhaps indicating they favoured the institutional preservation of the province's material and documented history. The Blackaders were also granted the greatest amount of government printing for the fiscal year of 1895 to a total of \$6,205.75 as recorded in the Nova Scotia House of Assembly Journal, "Report of Public Printing"²⁰ indicating a profitable relationship existed between the Blackaders and the Fielding government.

No follow-up communications are found amongst the Piers papers but one might conclude that since Piers remained the assistant librarian until 1899 any active lobbying taken was

¹⁸. Gertrude E. N. Trent, A Survey and List of Nova Scotia Newspapers 1752-1957. Halifax: 1979.

¹⁹. Nova Scotia House of Assembly, Journal, 1892. App, 11 "Report of the Legislative Library."

²⁰. Nova Scotia House of Assembly Journal 1896. App 10 "Public Printing".

not successful. Lou Collins, a Research Associate at the Provincial Museum, concluded from his work on the Piers family that while being an old and respected family in Halifax they wielded little political power. Through several bad investments, made by Harry Piers' father, the family was not well-to-do but did remain influential amongst the intellectual and artistic circles of Halifax.²¹ The opportunity which Piers awaited came in 1899 when under George G. Murray, Provincial Secretary, the Legislative Library was reorganized resulting in the creation of a new Science Library. The new library, because of its scientific nature was to be affiliated with the Museum and both would be administered under a newly appointed Curator. Both institutes were to be moved to larger quarters in the "Burns and Murray" building located on Hollis Street, opposite the Provincial Building, which had recently been purchased by the Government.²² The Museum and Science Library occupied the entire third floor which had been reserved for their use. The Science Library was to draw its collection from the science related books and pamphlets of the Legislative Library, the library collection of the Nova Scotian Institute of Science and the library of the Nova Scotian Mining

²¹. Conversation with Lou Collins, Research Associate, Nova Scotia Museum, January 24, 1992,

²². E Gilpin Jr. Deputy Commissioner of Public Works and Mines. Report on Provincial Museum of Nova Scotia and Science Library 1900 Halifax: Kings Printer 1901. p. 3.

Association. Each of these institutions contained reference material of scientific nature but lacked the funds to provide public access. Therefore, the Science Library was to make accessible the "most modern scientific information to those interested in the natural science of Nova Scotia as well as those engaged in the examination and development of the Province's natural resources."²³ The Museum had long been recognized as an agent for the promotion of the Province's mineral and industrial products. This recognition was largely due to two factors; first, Nova Scotia's participation in the International Exhibitions where the Museum exhibited collections on the advanced economic and industrial state of the Province, and second, as early as the Museum's founding in 1868 the desire to be a "useful" government department in a Province seeking to enter into the industrial revolution.

With the combination of a museum and library under one administrative office Harry Piers became a likely choice as Curator. Having had museum training under Honeyman and library training under Mr. Blake Crofton, Provincial Librarian, Piers' combined talents brought him the long sought title of Provincial Museum Curator.

By accepting the position of Curator Piers' task was great. The Museum had been neglected for ten years, the

²³. Gilpin, Report on Provincial Museum of Nova Scotia and Science Library 1900. p. 3.

collection was outdated and out of touch with the Province's needs. Because a Curator had not been appointed in the interim Piers was walking into "Honeyman's Museum".

Honeyman, who was more qualified with a doctorate in geology and had had a long and successful career in the Museum, would have been a difficult figure to follow. Perhaps to Piers' benefit his first duty was to transfer the Museum to its new quarters making a clear departure from Honeyman's museum and allowing the Museum to enter into a new era. Piers commenced work at the old Museum in the Post Office October 30, 1899 and began making arrangements for the move. To this end Piers made new floor plans for the exhibit, ordered new display cases and reorganized the collection which would have great effect on the future nature of the Museum.

Therefore, by 1899 the Museum was finally given a new Curator, but only after nearly a decade of governmental indifference. Piers while remaining active in the Museum also attempted to influence Premier Fielding through MacGregor. Piers requested that MacGregor press the Premier to act and appoint a curator, but to no avail. More importantly, by the turn of the century Fielding had a seat in Laurier's Federal Government as financial minister. Furthermore, development of the Province's coal reserves had boosted the economy of Nova Scotia and the Museum's role as public information bureau of mineral and industrial resources was again important enough to gain increased Government

support and funding. Therefore with a change in the political and economic climates the Government renewed their endorsement of the Provincial Museum.

By October of 1899 the Museum once again had a full time Curator, Harry Piers. Along with the new Curator, location and library the Museum was redefined indicating a clear shift from the structure of the Museum as administered under Honeyman. Piers had certain aims, quite different from Honeyman's, as to what the Museum would collect and towards whom it would be focused. This evolution within the Museum reflected wider changes occurring through out Nova Scotia's political, economic and social development from 1900-1910. These Museum developments and their social counterparts will be the focus of the remainder of Chapter Three.

The first noticeable development within the Museum under Piers is the expansion, definition and use of the collection. At the time of Honeyman's death the collection contained 10,099 specimens. Due to its origins, the collection was an eclectic mix of foreign and local specimens and was primarily aimed at the promotion of the economic, industrial and technological future of Nova Scotia. At the time of Piers' death in 1941, after 41 years as Museum Curator, the collection contained 38,265 specimens. The character of this collection had become predominantly local in origin and reflected the cultural variety and natural history of the Province.

When entering the Museum Piers' first duty was to prepare the collection for its move to Hollis Street. In preparing for the move Piers did more than mere packing. Instead, Piers assessed the collection and redefined, or created, a collections mandate. Although not named a collections mandate the definition of what the Museum would collect acted in the same capacity, giving parameters for acquisitions and the ability to refuse other objects accordingly. The redefinition of the Museum collection marked a major change in the role the Museum would play in the Province and was probably Piers' first major impact upon the Museum.

It was decided in consultation with Gilpin, Deputy Commissioner of Public Works and Mines, that "the museum should be reorganized with every effort to collect all information, specimens, etc. bearing on the natural resources of our province."²⁴ The emphasis was to create a museum of "practical" importance as a permanent exhibition of every natural product of the province of Nova Scotia, from an industrial, economic and scientific standpoint. In 1911 Piers aptly writes in the "Report of the Provincial Museum and Science Library":

It may be mentioned that this museum now only aims at collecting and displaying products of our province and it will do well if it succeed in accomplishing this end. It can

²⁴. Gilpin, Report of the Provincial Museum of Nova Scotian and Science Library 1900. p. 3.

become a good local collection, but could only hope to be a very poor general one. The latter requires large means and ample room, and it is far from us; although perhaps some day a small general collection from various parts of the world might be obtained for educational purposes.²⁵

To facilitate this wider scope new departments were introduced into the Museum such as Nova Scotian agricultural products, horticultural products, woods and miscellaneous industrial products.²⁶

For the first time the Provincial Museum was stating that Nova Scotian material would be its only focus. The aim was to create a quality museum and faced with the limited space, staff and financial support Piers opted to specialize the collection. Under Honeyman, due to the varied sources of the nucleus collection many objects in the Museum were of world-wide origins. The source of many of these objects dated back to the mid-nineteenth century. The Halifax Mechanics' Institute regularly requested ship captains to collect specimens while travelling abroad, for the Institute's Museum. Furthermore, the varied origins of the collection left many objects with no official documentation, giving them little scientific or museological value in Piers' mind.

Piers, in his review of the collection, deaccessioned

²⁵. Piers, Report of the Nova Scotia Museum and Science Library 1911. p. 18.

²⁶. Harry Piers. Report of Provincial Museums of Nova Scotia and Science Library 1900 "Provincial Museum". p. 5.

many such objects returning some to their original owners, such as a paleontological collection believed to be the property of Honeyman was returned to Mrs. Honeyman. Other collections such as miscellaneous, unlabelled mineralogical and geological specimens were sent to the Provincial Normal School as they did have instructional value, whereas, most of the foreign ethnological specimens were packed in numbered boxes and stored in the basement of the Provincial Building.²⁷ This new mandate was very progressive, a duty many museums still struggle with today. Such a definition of what a museum will collect is the definition of the prime function and the target audience an institute will serve. Through such definition of purpose the Museum was stating its role as a public institution worthy of public support. The Museum was also defining itself in its role as a civil servant, that is, in serving the public through the collection of Provincial resources. Piers in the 1902 Provincial Museum Report identified the Museum as a "bureau for inquiries regarding the resources of the province." Similar to Honeyman's role as Provincial Geologist, much of Piers' time as Curator was spent in answering these inquiries which dealt principally with the mineral resources of Nova Scotia, despite the fact he never formally received the

²⁷. Piers, Report of the Nova Scotia Museum and Science Library 1900. "Provincial Museum" p. 5.

title.²⁸

The aim of the Provincial Museum was therefore to house a good representation of a defined collection, allowing the Curator to target specific specimens for collection and the ability to refuse others as defined by the Museum's collection mandate. Furthermore, by defining the collection the Curator could better define his role and serve the public through specializing his research and knowledge on Nova Scotian products rather than possessing a general knowledge of world wide specimens. In the true spirit of a museum, as stated by MacGregor in his "Opening Address" to the Nova Scotian Institute of Natural Science, the collection was to illustrate in a "systematic manner the present state of human knowledge, in one or more departments, and the various stages, but more especially the present stage, of the activity of one or more sections of the human race."²⁹

In relating these changes to the society which the Museum served one must look at the prevailing ideology of that time. At the turn of the century the view of human society was still a progressive one, therefore, this was the ideology the Museum reflected. The popular thought of the day was that industrial progress embodied the future of the

²⁸. Piers, Report of the Provincial Museum and Science Library, 1902. "Provincial Museum," p. 84.

²⁹. J.G. MacGregor. Proceedings and Transactions of the Nova Scotian Institute of Natural Science. Vol.7, Part 4, 1889-1890. p. 325.

Province. Science and its application to the resources of Nova Scotia was seen as the force propelling the Province forward. In the same Victorian tradition as seen during Honeyman's directorship, society very much believed in perpetual improvement and in the case of Nova Scotia a future in the development of natural resources.

The turn of the century also brought about in Nova Scotia the need for a regional identity. Ernest Forbes outlines the agents for division as the region's diverse economic, cultural and political traditions.³⁰ But in the face of the common struggles against the loss of political representation, decreased railway subsidies, and interest in the national transportation policy, regional unity was found under the slogan "Maritime Rights."³¹ At the root of the Movement was the belief in progressive optimism that legislation, education and practical reforms could create a new society in which order and efficiency prevailed.³² In light of the social, economic and political elements at work throughout this period it is not surprising that the Museum tried to define a Nova Scotian identity through its collection.

This ideology of technological progress and its

³⁰. Ernest R. Forbes, Maritime Rights Movement 1919-1927. (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1979) p. 2.

³¹. Forbes, p. 13.

³². Forbes, p. 30.

inherent goodness was reflected in the Museum's collecting. If one compares the collection figures contained in the Report on the Principle Museums in Canada and Newfoundland of 1898 by the British Association of Advancement of Science's, to Piers' report in the Nova Scotia House of Assembly Journal for 1910 the growth in the areas of minerals and rocks are revealed. In 1898 the geological cabinet as Honeyman had left it contained 1,000 mineral specimens and 300 rock specimens³³ compared to 1910 when the Museum contained 5,518 mineral specimens and 2,345 rock specimens.³⁴ The success of the collection mandate to acquire only Nova Scotian specimens was also revealed in the statistics filed in the 1910 Report by Piers. These collection statistics revealed that of 23,194 specimens 14,235 were Nova Scotian products. Piers also made specific reference to the geological collection, in which 3,567 of the 5,518 mineral specimens, and 1,868 of the 2,345 rock specimens were local in origin.

Piers not only collected the Province's raw material but also the manufactured products of Nova Scotian industries. Since the 1880's Nova Scotia had experienced the proliferation of manufacturing and industries in the Province. "The sheer scale of the expansion was impressive. In the decade of the 1880's, Nova Scotia increased its

³³. British Association of Advancement of Science. p. 2.

³⁴. Nova Scotian House of Assembly, Journal, 1910. App. 6, "Report of the Department of Public Works and Mines." p. 210.

industrial output by 66 percent, substantially greater than the 51 percent of Quebec and Ontario."³⁵ In response to these developments Piers reported in 1900 the addition of 43 jars of preserved Nova Scotian fruit; grain grown in Nova Scotia; tins of Nova Scotian lobster; cans of condensed milk, cream and cocoa; canned clams, shad, cod and halibut; manufactured barytes and cast iron rail to the Museum's collection. A large influence on these collecting practices was the Provincial Exhibition held yearly in Halifax.

For the first ten years in his term as Curator, Piers was in charge of the Provincial Exhibition of Economic Minerals held in Halifax each summer. The purpose of such exhibitions was to bring together the natural and industrial products of the Province, to showcase them to the visiting public, and to offer a forum for interchange between persons of industry and their companies. The Government's commitment to the yearly exhibitions shows its interest in promoting industry and manufacturing in Nova Scotia. In 1862 the Nova Scotia House of Assembly Journal referred to the international exhibitions as an opportunity to "seek out illustrations of mechanical genius, inventors of skill as well as improving instruments, tools and machinery."³⁶ The same hopes were held for the Provincial exhibitions. The

³⁵. John Reid, Six Crucial Decades. (Halifax: Nimbus Publishing Limited, 1987) p. 130.

³⁶. Nova Scotia House of Assembly Journal, "Exhibition of Industry and Art" App. No. 19, 1862.

effect on the Museum was the establishment of a permanent collection of the Nova Scotia's economic minerals which later travelled to the Jamestown Tri-centennial Exposition in Norfolk Virginia in 1907 and to the Canadian National Exhibition in Toronto in 1909 as representing the industrial potential of Nova Scotia.

The collection having defined the audience and purpose were articulated in the Museum's reorganization. The target audience for the "practical and useful" collection was outlined by Gilpin in the 1902 Report of the Department of Public Works and Mines as "the miner, the farmer, the manufacturer and all others interested in our natural resources."³⁷ The role of the Museum was as an educator, with the collection acting as a sampling room of what Nova Scotia contained. The collections were to be studied in order to reveal the industrial and natural potential of the province. To achieve this goal the Museum was to collect every native specimen, of natural and industrial product, and present the collection for research and observation. Combined with the Science Library the ultimate aim of the Museum was to educate the public in order to facilitate improved industrial production. The utility of the Science Library Piers articulated in the 1907 report. Piers stated:

the figures show a steady increase in
the use of the library, our mechanics

³⁷. Gilpin, Report of the Provincial Museum and Science Library. 1901. p. 3.

and men of industry in various lines of technological work see the advantage of a free library as assistance in becoming proficient in their work and as a source of the latest knowledge and modern methods. The existence of a library of such works...must thus help to increase the general proficiency of all technological work in Nova Scotia.³⁸

To illustrate this correlation between education and progress Piers further wrote the "better facilities for public access the sooner will good results be manifest in improved methods of various industries."³⁹

Education had played a major role in the Museum since its inception. In recent years the debate over a school of technology had arisen out of the need to provide highly skilled labour and management for the agricultural, industrial and manufacturing success of Nova Scotia. The aims of technical education were two fold. First, there was the hope to end the monopoly held by traditional liberal education in Nova Scotia, and second, to train and prepare men for agricultural or industrial pursuits.⁴⁰ The ideology behind the technical education movement is summed up by Donald MacLeod as the following:

³⁸. Nova Scotia House of Assembly Journal, 1907. "Mines Report" App. No. 6. p. 96.

³⁹. Nova Scotia House of Assembly, Journal. 1904. App, 6 "Report of the Department of Public Works and Mines." p. 89.

⁴⁰. Donald MacLeod, "Practicality Ascendant: The Origins and Establishment of Technical Education in Nova Scotia," Acadiensis, Vol. 15, No. 2, Spring. (Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 1986) p. 54.

...the belief that Nova Scotia natural resources were vastly abundant, but would be freed for use only by the educated technologist or scientist; that practical education would staunch emigration by unlocking the skills by which youth would find the possibilities at home revealed; that by encouraging self-improvement in the labouring masses, practical education served as a form of practical philanthropy; that agricultural and industrial work was not mere brute labour, but work permeated with intellectual worth; and finally, that scientific and technological education would restore to Nova Scotians the economic mastery and material advancement now slipping away to outsiders.⁴¹

Supported through these arguments the Province saw the proliferation of societies such as the Mining Society of Nova Scotia in 1892 which in 1902 prompted the House of Assembly to pass a resolution calling for government-sponsored technical education.⁴² By 1907 the Government passed an act relating to technical education at the university level and in 1909 the Nova Scotia Technical College was founded.⁴³ Therefore, as early as the nineteenth century Nova Scotians were arguing for "practical education on the grounds of its key role in economic growth and the full exploitation of the Province's natural economic potential."⁴⁴ By the twentieth century technical education was accepted and

⁴¹. MacLeod, p. 66.

⁴². MacLeod. p. 84.

⁴³. MacLeod, p. 53.

⁴⁴ MacLeod. p. 92.

institutionalized, Nova Scotians were participants of a cultural reform in modern industrial technology. The Provincial Museum reflected such social concerns through its collecting and exhibition practices.

A second development in the Museum was the definition or role of the curator. As in many other professions at the turn of the century, the museum-world was experiencing a period of professionalization through the defining of duties and practices for emerging professionals. As a provincially funded museum the Nova Scotia Provincial Museum was also dealing with remaining a "useful" branch of the public service. Due to changing economic realities and the concurrent political movements; by the turn of the century an industrial museum did not hold the same potency as it had in the 1880's under Honeyman. In the same sense, Piers was very conscious of his own "usefulness" as a public servant. His professional role as provincial consultant on matters of provincial history and natural resources became a prominent part of his curatorial duties.

In order for specimens to have educational and scientific value the object had to be supplemented with fully detailed labels, classifications and arranged for easy visitor access. These tasks constituted the curator's duties. These duties included soliciting or actively collecting specimens followed by complete documentation, comprehensive exhibition and finally acting as a resource

person to any one requesting information. The job of a curator was becoming more than a caretaker; specialized functions were being defined. Many of these tasks would require specific training and in the future further specialization. But, at the moment Piers performed all the duties required, he was a generalist in an evolving profession.

The first task was collecting and Piers took three approaches. First, he sent out correspondence and personally solicited donations. Private collecting had been particularly popular in Nova Scotia from the mid to late nineteenth century, therefore collections did exist which could be brought together in the Museum. His efforts were rewarded with an influx of private citizens donating their collections. With this in mind, in 1901 the Museum received collections from Mr. A. R. Campbell, Edward Davidson, Dr. Charles A. Hamilton and Mrs. George Creed.⁴⁵

The trend from private to institutional collecting was very common a century earlier in Britain. An institution offered the potential of continuity which a private collector could not. Where private collections were often dispersed upon the death of its collector an institution had a corporate life beyond the life of the members. Therefore, the idea of preserving for posterity became a very convincing

⁴⁵. Piers, Report of the Provincial Museum and Science Library 1902, pp. 7-14.

tool when soliciting collections for the Museum.⁴⁶

This solicitation also supplied Piers several valuable contacts in various communities who over the years continued to bring collections and specimens to the Museum. One such contact was a native Micmac known as Dr. Jeremiah (Jerry) Lone-cloud, alias Bartlet, alias J. Luxey who greatly helped to build the Museum's anthropological collection, others included Miss Lucy C. Eaton of Truro who donated insect and butterfly collections, and Mr. J. Perrin of McNab's Island who collected various specimens from the Island.⁴⁷ This solicitation also brought public awareness to the collection needs of the Museum and in 1902 Piers wrote: "in the work of obtaining specimens, I have been assisted by a number of voluntary collectors throughout the Province, who are very kindly on the alert to secure for us specimens we require."⁴⁸

Second, Piers petitioned for corporate support. Corporate support was greatly achieved through the common involvement of business and the Museum in the Provincial Exhibitions. Local companies became involved in the Provincial Exhibitions at the request of Piers and by 1906 thirteen (13) companies with operations in the Province were

⁴⁶. Michael Hunter. "The Cabinet Institutionalized: The Royal Society's 'Repository' and its Background", The Origins of Museums. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985. p. 159

⁴⁷. Piers, Report of the Provincial Museum and Science Library, 1901, p. 8, 14, 15, 16. 1902, p. 83.

⁴⁸. Piers, Report of the Provincial Museum and Science Library, 1902. p. 84.

displaying their products. The displays were judged and as the years went on exhibition techniques became more imaginative. In 1907 the Sydney Cement Company constructed for its display a "building of hollow concrete building blocks of various dressed-stone patterns including walls, cornice with doorways and windows, made from the Company's Rampart cement brand manufactured from slag of the Dominion Coal and Steel blast furnace."⁴⁹ Through the yearly contact at the Exhibitions many companies and Societies became regular contributors to the Museum's collection such as the Dominion Iron and Steel Company and the Nova Scotian Mining Association.

Finally, Piers himself was an active collector. During the summer of 1902 Piers spent several weeks in Cape Breton and Antigonish collecting a total of seven boxes (over 256 specimens) of "miscellaneous minerals and rock samples from various location, illustrating the coal-measures and pre-carboniferous formations in those sections of the Province."⁵⁰ In 1903 Piers travelled as far as Amherst, Sydney and Middleton collecting deposits of economic importance. That same year Piers requested the local fishermen to bring to the Museum any interesting or unusual specimens they came across, but, the response was poor.

⁴⁹. Piers, Nova Scotia House of Assembly, Journal, 1907. App, 6, "Report of the Provincial Museum" p. 89.

⁵⁰. Nova Scotia House of Assembly, Journal. 1903 App, 6. "Report of the Department of Public Works and Mines" p. 80.

Piers also sought out information for the Public Records of which he was Deputy Keeper. In 1904, because they were being threatened with destruction, Piers acquired the Boston Custom House Records. Even though they were not Nova Scotian in origin they contained much information on Maritime trade.⁵¹

As an active collector Piers examined the collection for its weaknesses and then pursued the acquisitions of specimens. To accomplish such systematic collecting Piers needed a keen awareness and knowledge of the collection which from 1900 to 1911 was averaging 1,235 new specimens a year.⁵² New acquisitions were made with the specific goal of completing the collection. The notion that the collection was nearing completion was one that was reported frequently throughout the early years. Gilpin often opened his yearly report with a statement on the completion of the collection; for example, in 1903, "it is assuming as rapidly as possible its ultimate design", in 1904, "the museum is approaching a comprehensive exhibit" and in 1905, "the Science Library and Museum are rapidly becoming complete."⁵³ This notion of completion was premature when one looks at the collection developments in the 1920's and 1930's.

⁵¹. PANS, MG 1 Vol 1051A "Note signed by Harry Piers, Curator Nova Scotia Museum, re: Boston Customs House Records."

⁵². Piers, Report of the Provincial Museum and Science Library, 1911. p. 6.

⁵³. Nova Scotia House of Assembly, Journal. "Report of the Department of Public Works and Mines." 1903, App 6 p. 1; 1904, App 6. p. 1; 1905, App 6. p. 1.

The Museum in its first ten (10) years had a limited scope as to what it would collect, meaning the natural history of the province and the present achievements of its industries. But, if one looks at the acquisition lists, Piers was in fact expanding into the areas of material culture, anthropology and ethnology. All these areas were of increasing interest during the early twentieth century as Nova Scotians are attempting to surmount cultural diversity with a unified political and economic identity. Added to the slogans for Maritime unity were the effect of industrialization on traditional lifestyles which revealed an increasing interest in defining who Nova Scotians were, not just what they were capable of doing. One group identified by Piers as being affected by industrialization was the Micmac population. Piers began collecting Micmac artifacts early in his career as Curator. In 1902 he wrote:

Recognizing the gradual disappearances of old customs among the Micmac Indians, we are securing such implements etc. as illustrate their habits during historic times...The Micmac names for articles obtained, are noted whenever possible.⁵⁴

Eventually the collection of such historical artifacts would out number the acquisitions of mineral and rock specimens, this shift will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

Once specimens were accessioned the second task of the

⁵⁴. Piers, Report of the Provincial Museum and Science Library. 1902. p. 83.

Curator was the documentation and exhibition of the collection in a fashion which Piers "thought to be of value to the student and the ordinary visitor."⁵⁵ Piers executed both these tasks of documentation and exhibition with extreme professionalism. Piers believed the scientific value of the collection rested on its documentation. The accessioning process for each specimen included documenting, in a series of accession books introduced by Piers, all information known about the object. For example, in 1904 the mineral acquisitions were all catalogued including a short history of each deposit, amount of development, output, nearness to shipping point, name of owner and when possible an analysis of the ores.⁵⁶ From such information labels were created for each object. The labels contained as much information as possible which Piers felt might be valuable to the student or ordinary visitor. For example, in the case of the fish collection Piers included the locality where the specimen was taken, the range of the species, length of an adult, quality of flesh, abundance in Nova Scotia, and in some cases the average catch per year, the season when it occurs and how it was caught, etc.⁵⁷ The accession books which contained this

⁵⁵. Piers, Report of the Provincial Museum and Science Library, 1900. p. 6.

⁵⁶. Nova Scotia House of Assembly, Journal. 1904, App 6, "Report of the Department of Public Works and Mines." p. 84.

⁵⁷. Piers, Report of the Provincial Museum and Science Library. 1900. p. 6.

information soon became an important part of the Museum's collection, so much so Piers requested a fire-proof safe for their well-being.

In exhibiting the collection Piers attempted to present an educational experience for students, professionals and the general public. The specimens were either displayed in glazed cases or ordered in drawers open to the public. The labels which were attached to each object, by linen thread and written in waterproof, non-fading Indian ink,⁵⁸ supplied the basic information. For further information the accession books were available for public use, and the Science Library offered fee access to research opportunities for the public.

On exhibit was the entire collection during Piers' curatorship. The routine of exhibiting only a specific theme or a selection of artifact was not practised by Piers. The collection was for educational purposes highlighting the products of Nova Scotia, this included the majority of the collection. The only objects in storage dated back to 1900 when the museum was reorganized and 1911 when the museum was relocated to the Technical College. In both these instances only the foreign materials were put into storage⁵⁹. Other than these references Piers does not make mention of a regular storage space for specimens not on exhibit.

⁵⁸. Piers, Report of the Provincial Museum and Science Library, 1902. p. 82.

⁵⁹. Piers, Report of the Provincial Museum and Science Library, 1900. p.5. 1911. p. 17.

The collection was exhibited in well lit rooms and care was taken to prevent the accumulation of dust and exposure to moths. Whether these measures were for the safety and preservation of the collection or for the general appearance of the Museum is debatable. Piers was constantly complaining about the lack of exhibit space and as the collection grew Piers reported the exhibits in disorder with specimens on top of cases obstructing the view of objects underneath, drawers of specimens under tables made access difficult and the general clutter making cleaning impossible.

In addition to the duties Piers performed within the confines of the Museum he was responsive to public inquiries. Piers performed "object research" for anyone requesting information on a product of Nova Scotia. This consultative role dominated much of Piers' time. As Provincial consultant Piers noted it was mostly the local prospectors who took advantage of the free services and in 1920 Piers recorded 135 lots of minerals which he analyzed at public request.⁶⁰ This duty as public consultant extended the "usefulness" of the Museum throughout the Province. As an outreach program it introduced many Nova Scotians to the Museum as a public resource, as well it heightened the role of the Curator as a public servant and the Museum as a Provincial facility.

If one looks at the state of the Provincial Museum in

⁶⁰. Piers, Report of the Provincial Museum and Science Library. 1922. p. 7.

1910 it becomes evident that a very different institution existed than ten years earlier. The collection had grown from 10,099 specimens to 23,194 specimens. The collection was dominated by mineral specimens but also represented was Nova Scotian wild life, flora and fauna, and objects of local anthropological and historical importance. Most important was that of the 23,194 specimens 14,235 were from Nova Scotia. Piers had succeeded in creating a predominantly Nova Scotian collection. The foreign specimens in the collection were largely accessioned during Honeyman's career and were only put on display if they offered comparative value to the visitor.

The role of the Curator had evolved as a profession. Piers, like Honeyman, as an active collector and researcher at the service of the public. But, the responsibilities of the Curator in the area of public access to the collection through collections management procedures such as accession records, object descriptions, and descriptive labels were Piers' contribution.

How secure Piers felt in the position of Curator during these first years is questionable. Having spent ten years pursuing the position and to finally have received it may have been overwhelming. Piers did not possess the formal training of Honeyman or many of his colleagues. For a Museum whose collection heavily favoured geology Piers may have felt out of his field of expertise, his specialty being

ornithology. The first ten (10) years of Piers' career appear to be dominated by a duality of focus. One, the legacy of the "Honeyman Museum" as a Museum of science and two, the struggle of Piers to make his imprint on the Museum. Piers' imprint is tied to the development of curatorial profession giving him set tasks to administer the collection. Piers unlike Honeyman processed the collection, he accessioned artifacts, kept strict account of accession numbers, classified the objects into departments and reported on the status of the Museum through these statistics.

Piers' major imprint on the Provincial Museum was the identification of a collections mandate. Piers' recognition that a Museum needed to identify its collecting parameters in order to collect effectively clearly had a large impact on the Museum and its relationship with the Nova Scotian public. Whereas Honeyman accepted accessions from around the world, Piers aimed to make the collection local in origin. The job of curator, as under Honeyman as well, required an in depth knowledge of Nova Scotia's natural and industrial product as well as the abilities to research, analyses, protect and exhibit the collection. But, the professionalization movement had begun to move beyond the definition of the schools of science and into the definition of tasks and responsibilities. The impact upon the Curator's role in the museum was the systematic accessioning, description and labelling of each artifact, the publication of accession

lists and strict visitor statistics.

Many of these developments were in direct response to the Province's political, economic and social realities indicating that the Museum was a responsive institution. In response to the Nova Scotian climate the Museum operated essentially as a science museum, making the industrial advancement of the Province its priority. Although change was occurring and the importance of material culture was beginning to reveal itself in the collection a definite shift will not be seen until the 1920's and 1930's.

The Museum which Piers took charge of in 1899 was a fragile one. Having been neglected by the Government for ten (10) years his largest challenge was to once again make the collection relevant and "useful" to a quickly changing society. Piers fashioned his role and responsibilities as Curator accordingly in order to facilitate this usefulness. It is this responsiveness and flexibility which allows the Museum to remain relevant during the cultural changes of the 1920's and 1930's. The next chapter will deal with this shift to a history museum during which the collection will be dominated by historical and anthropological accessions bringing a new focus to the Museum's operations.

Chapter 4

The Making of Museums: The Developments of the Provincial Museum of Nova Scotia 1911-1940.

The final chapter of this thesis looks at developments within the Nova Scotia Provincial Museum from 1911 to the death of Harry Piers in 1940 and the influence of the social, economic and political circumstances of Nova Scotia on these developments. In 1910 the Provincial Museum and Science Library were relocated to the new Nova Scotia Technical College on Spring Garden Road where two rooms had been reserved. The move began October 24, 1910 and by August 21, 1911 the Museum was once again open to the public in its new location. The Technical College was the ideal location for a collection of natural and industrial products. The students of the College and the Nova Scotian School of Mining made regular use of the specimens and library. Piers also took advantage of the opportunity during school events such as dances to open the Museum for public viewing.¹ Piers employed several techniques to draw attention to the Museum's new location such as borrowing from a T.G. Taylor an Inca mummy from Chile for display. During the 14 day exhibition Piers documented 6000 visitors in the Museum. On February 3, 1914 Piers wrote in his diary:

¹ For more on Piers' preparations in the Museum prior to dances refer to PANS MG 1, Volume 1046-1051 Harry Piers Diaries February 17-18, 1914, February 20, 1915.

Still crowds come to the Museum to see the mummy and also to examine the Museum in general. It is having a splendid effect in getting the public acquainted with the institution, and I am well pleased with this result.²

For the years 1912, 1913, 1914, and 1921 the Museum did not publish reports. But, during this period several significant developments and events occur which are worth discussing here. Due to the lack of reports the main reference source is the personal diaries of Harry Piers.³ It has been established that Piers was an excellent record keeper and this did not exclude his personal affairs. These diaries open up several new avenues of investigation for Piers including his family relationships and his pastimes which influence his work with the Museum. The entries usually contain comments on the weather, when he arrived at the Museum and when he left, social engagements of himself and his wife Constance, and the family's health. Of prominence in all his entries is his relationship with his only child Edward, referred to as "my dear little son" or "my dear son". Piers' writings leave the portrait of a dedicated and loving father. Harry and Edward spent time together each day, outdoors skating, tobogganing, tramping, going to moving picture shows and reading each night. The parenting responsibilities were shared between

² PANS MG 1, Volume 1046-1051. "Harry Piers Diaries", February 3, 1914

³ The Diaries of Harry Piers are contained in the Piers Paper collection housed in the Provincial Archives of Nova Scotia (PANS). The diaries give daily accounts of Piers' activities. The diaries focus on Piers' family life and personal hobbies, his life in the Museum is not written about in great detail, nor are his professional reflections a regular entry. Exceptional events in his working life are documented such as the Halifax Explosion and salary raises.

Harry Piers and Constance Piers. Constance was a very active member of the Halifax Ladies Musical Club and would frequently drop Edward off at the Museum while on her way to afternoon meetings and other social engagements. Harry Piers' writings about his son show a very close relationship. Piers took great pleasure in documenting Edward's accomplishments. For example, after taking Edward to his first moving picture show at the Orpheus Theatre the next day, January 7, 1914 Piers writes:

At 3:45 pm my son came to the Museum and then he went by himself to the Orpheus Theatre as he wanted to again see the moving pictures of Life in the British Navy which he had also seen yesterday. It is the first time he has ever gone to such a film alone and got his own ticket etc. He is beginning to get more confident and independent, and able to look after himself. I went to the Orpheus at 4 pm, and seeing his dear little head in one of the seats went and sat beside him."⁴

Piers' entries about the Museum are sketchy. Piers recorded what time he arrived at and left the Museum and whether he walked or drove the automobile. Piers' hours at the Museum were apparently flexible as he regularly arrived shortly before 10 am and left in time for 6 o'clock tea. In the meantime Piers would often venture to town to pay bills, conduct business at the Provincial Building or check on the mineral exhibits in the Mining Building. Piers was also available in the evenings when researchers required the use of the Museum or Science Library.

Piers was assisted with his work in the Museum by his family. When the Science Library became associated with the

⁴ PANS MG1 Vol 1046-1051 "Harry Piers Diaries" January 7, 1914.

Museum in 1899 a total of 962 books and pamphlets⁵ came into the collection. Compounded by the continuous donations from the Nova Scotia Institute of Science and the Nova Scotia Mining Society the accessioning of these books was more than Piers could accomplish alone. Therefore, Piers enlisted the help of his wife Constance. In 1922 at the instruction of the Commissioner of Public Works and Mines Piers submitted a bill of \$108.00 to the Department for "the excessive work done to accession books for the Science Library" by he and his wife.⁶ His sisters Nora and Bessie are also recorded in Piers' diary as coming to the Museum regularly to accession books and in 1911 Piers noted the accessions up to date for the first time since the Science Library moved,⁷ Piers also put his son Edward to work once he was old enough. Edward started by putting labels on specimen jars and eventually tended the Museum alone in 1916.⁸

A significant event during these years was World War I. One might expect a daily account of the war reports, victories, losses etc., but, this is not the case. Piers did not regularly report the happenings of the war. Piers noted once in 1914 the presence of 2-3 man of war in the harbour and in 1918 wrote:

⁵ Nova Scotia House of Assembly Journal, 1901. App. 10, "Report of the Department of Public Works and Mines." p 1.

⁶ PANS MG 1 Volume 1465 No. 163 "letter from Piers to Deputy Commissioner of Public Works and Mines" August 9, 1922.

⁷ PANS MG 1, Volume 1046-1051. "Harry Piers Diaries" 1911, February 13.

⁸ PANS MG 1, Volume 1046-1051. "Harry Piers Diaries" January 29, 1914 and February 3, 1916.

"German offensive (began) on western front this morning".⁹ The later note was not written into the text of the entry but instead jotted down on the bottom of the page. Piers made no mention of persons going to war nor did he mention losing any friends, relations or acquaintances to the war. Piers himself was well into his forties by the time war broke out and his son was only 11 years old, therefore it did not affect his immediate family.

One war-related event which did affect Piers and the Museum was the Halifax Explosion, December 6, 1917. On December 8 Piers ventured out to the Museum for the first time since the explosion. His first impression was that only minimal damage had been sustained by the Museum and not nearly as bad as he had expected. Piers noted glass from the windows and exhibit cases blown in, a heavy door smashed in and water on the floor from a broken hot water pipe.¹⁰ When Piers returned to the Museum on December 12 he found the Red Cross flag hanging in the atrium and the Museum being used to house relief supplies. Piled on top of display cases was beds, mattresses, and clothes. The following day Piers and Edward forged a path into Piers' office and began putting books back on shelves and generally tidying up. Piers was instructed by Mr. Dunkin, Deputy Minister of Public Works and Mines to close the Museum until the damage from the Explosion was assessed. The Museum remained closed to the public until October 24, 1919. In the interim Piers was available through his office but was otherwise occupied refurbishing the portraits in the

⁹ PANS MG 1, Volume 1046-1051. "Harry Piers Diaries" September 9, 1914, March 21, 1918.

¹⁰ PANS MG 1, Volume 1046-1051. "Harry Piers Diaries" December 8, 1917.

Legislative Council Chamber which had been scratched and torn in the Explosion.

The condition of the Mining Building and other buildings of the Provincial Exhibition was much worse. Piers noted in his diary after his first viewing on January 10, 1918:

Found Mines Building badly wrecked by Explosion. The middle third of east wing is blown completely in, windows and skylights blown in, heavy roof-girders somewhat, a hole in east wall where a piece of iron from the Mont Blanc had crashed through the wall and floor also, snow, ice and broken glass all about, a general destruction about.¹¹

Piers attempted to salvage some collections. The smaller, portable mineral objects he took out to the Museum while the larger displays had to wait until spring when the snow and ice thawed. The building was roughly boarded up to protect it against further snow and rain, but generally the building was in complete ruin.

By 1922 Piers was again making regular Museum Reports which are published in the House of Assembly Journal. October 24, 1919 the Museum reopened to the public but having been affected by the war, the explosion and now post-war realities - many changes lay ahead. The lack of interim statistics allow for a worthwhile comparison of the Museum's development during Piers' early and later years. By taking this approach some very well-defined changes do appear in the Museum's operations. The changes discussed here include a shift in collecting practices, the subsequent change in mandate from Nova Scotia's products to its

¹¹ PANS MG 1, Volume 1046-1051. "Harry Piers Diaries", January 10, 1918.

history, the Museum's changing audience, a changing role of the Curator due to the public demands for a "useful" museum, and the growing communication within the world-wide museum community.

At the same time the scientific collection was finally most accessible to the academic community located in the Technical College, a shift was occurring in the collecting practices of Nova Scotians and their Museum. The shift was from the products of the Province to the history and archaeology of Nova Scotia. If one compares the accession statistics from 1900-1910 to those of 1922-1940 a shift is noticeable in what objects and documents were being collected. During the earlier phase of Piers' career the collection was distinctly aimed at the progress of society; its success and future as defined in mastering nature for economic and social advancement. This policy reflected in the collection as shown in 1910 when the geology and petrology specimens number 7836 and history artifacts only 171.¹² Upon examination, a shift in collecting practice is noticeable by 1924 when the number of history artifacts accessioned in that one year outnumbered mineralogical accessions four to one.¹³

The departments to experience growth during the years 1922-1940 were the history, archaeology, ethnology and anthropology departments. The history collection being amassed most certainly reflected the contemporary view of history from the "top-down". The classifications of history artifacts collected, as outlined in 1929, included photographs, negatives and portraits of notable

¹². Nova Scotia House of Assembly Journal, 1910. App. 6, "Report of the Department of Public Works and Mines." p. 20-21.

¹³. Piers, Report of the Provincial Museum and Science Library, 1924. p.3.

persons in the history of the province, topographic views, historic buildings and various relics.¹⁴ These notable persons were usually men of politics, industry, the military and perhaps their wives or daughters; the buildings were usually public buildings, military buildings, churches, inns and hotels. The only designation in which "ordinary" articles appeared was as relics, including household utensils, spinning and weaving tools, agricultural implements and some personal effects.

The designation of these articles as historic artifacts is very telling of the concept of history in the early twentieth century. The history was of prominent white men, their buildings, wars and political achievements. As for the relics, there was only contained the articles from European settlers - Loyalist, French, or Scottish. The articles of Micmac origin were all classified as anthropological, not historical. A photograph of Chief Noel, "in ceremonial dress and red sash, with the silver medal presented to a former Chief by George III and the gilt medallion presented by the Pope,"¹⁵ is classified as anthropological in the 1910 Museum Report. Yet, it would be only assumed that a similar portrait of a military personnel in uniform and medals would be in the history collection.

While history definitely showed the greatest growth, other departments of archaeology, ethnology and anthropology demonstrated consistent increases which peaked during the mid-1930's when 470 (42%) specimens were accessioned outnumbering the

¹⁴. Piers, Report of the Provincial Museum and Science Library, 1929. p. 24.

¹⁵. Piers, Report of the Provincial Museum and Science Library, 1910. p. 17.

285 (25%) history accessions made that same year.¹⁶ The growth in the archaeological, ethnological and anthropology departments was due to the avid collecting of native Micmac artifacts. The nature of this collection is expanded upon in the 1936-1937 Report on the Provincial Museum and Science Library. Piers reported that 103 native specimens had been accessioned from Halifax County, Hants County, Colchester County and Pictou County. To break down the types of objects accessioned Piers classified 58 arrow heads, 32 spear heads and knives, 1 scrapers, 11 adzes and 1 celt.¹⁷ Although native culture had been an interest of Piers since he began his career in museums, these native additions to the collection were largely due to public collecting and donations to the Museum. The most significant donor was Jeremiah Lone-Cloud, a Micmac with whom Piers developed quite a rapport. In relation to the anthropology collection, this individual deserves further discussion.

Jeremiah (Jerry) Lone-Cloud first appears in the 1902 Museum Report for his regular contributions to the anthropology collection. In 1929, Piers acknowledged Lone-Cloud's contribution to the Museum. He referred to Lone-Cloud as "Dr" Jeremiah Lone-Cloud whose Micmac name was Ha-sel-ma. Piers stated Lone-Cloud was from half Micmac and half French ancestry. Born July 4, 1852, Belfast, Maine, he resided in the Bedford area. His father was Abram Bartlett Luxey, and his grandfather Bartlett Luxey; Lone-Cloud was known by all of these names.

¹⁶ Piers, Report of the Provincial Museum and Science Library, 1934-35. p. 6.

¹⁷ Piers, Report on the Provincial Museum and Science Library, 1936-37. p 17.

Lone-Cloud had been, Piers stated, the medicine man of the Micmac Tribe, and the sub-chief for Halifax County. Piers described Jeremiah as:

"a man of considerable intelligence and well versed in all the lore and traditions of his tribe ... he has willingly been of much service to the Museum in supplying information on subjects of which he has knowledge, such as Indian customs, words and folklore, and matters connected with our animals and woodcraft, a services which we desire to acknowledge."¹⁸

In the 1927 Museums Report, Piers accessioned a model of a Micmac birch-bark wigwam and a pair of yellow-birch snowshoes, both produced by Lone-Cloud. Lone-Cloud specifically made these articles for the Museum's collection while allowing Piers to document the construction process and technique. The Museum accession book contains the plans, dimensions, elevation and detailed illustrations, with the Micmac term for each part and material used.¹⁹ For example, the term snowshoes of yellow birch is accompanied by the Micmac phonetic spelling ne-be-e-jar-mitsh-(k); meaning little leaf (ne-be-a-jar) referring to birch, snowshoe (arkom), and (k) for the plural. This form of active collecting was unique to the anthropology department. In no other instance was such an expert brought in to demonstrate, for the purpose of preserving for posterity, a culturally distinct practice. The exercise reveals that perhaps there was a common recognition between the native community and the museum community of the possible loss of the Micmac traditional way of life,

¹⁸. Piers, Report of the Provincial Museum and Science Library, 1929. p. 21.

¹⁹. Piers, Report of the Provincial Museum and Science Library, 1927. p. 20.

including language, material culture and oral tradition. Four years later, in the 1930-31 Report, Piers stated that Lone-Cloud had since died. Piers noted the loss to the Museum.

Collecting for posterity, as Ian McKay suggests in "History and The Tourist Gaze: The Politics of Commemoration in Nova Scotia, 1935-1964", was of increasing interest to the growing group of history-conscious middle class. From the 1930s to the 1960s this group was "both alarmed by the threat to buildings that seemed to stand for a Golden Age of elegance and meaning, and highly susceptible to the appeal of antimodernist romanticism as an approach to the past."²⁰ Piers, though part of a larger social movement, differed in that he not only sought to collect from the wealthied past but also from the "ordinary" past and that he had been doing it for some time by the 1930s. Piers, being a meticulous observer, did notice the disappearance of native traditional ways and felt it vital to actively collect Micmac artifacts depicting their traditional way of life. But this collecting or preserving was not only seen as necessary for the Micmac culture. Piers saw society in general as losing its traditional ways and urged the preservation of all cultural and material history. In a 1933 interview reported in the Halifax Mail Piers stated:

If the keepers of museums of a hundred years ago had looked into the future and anticipated the value of articles which were then only ordinary appliances, in common use, the people today would have a much clearer and more comprehensive

²⁰ Ian McKay, "History and The Tourist Gaze: The Politics of Commemoration in Nova Scotia, 1935-1965," Acadiensis, vol. XXII, no. 2, Spring 1993. (Saint John NB: Keystone Printing & Lithography Ltd, 1993) p 110.

knowledge of the living habits of their
forbearers.²¹

Piers went on to say that the lack of vision in past collecting was responsible for losses that could never be replaced.

Ian McKay, in "History and the Tourist Gaze", also states that from 1870 to 1917 "there effectively was no state mnemonic apparatus: there were cemeteries and patriotic monuments, but no official network of words and things through which a consistent set of "memories" of the past could be constructed, preserved and popularized"²² when in reality the Museum had been fulfilling much of this mandate. The fact that Piers and Honeyman before him collected "things" has been well established. Piers also collected and housed archival materials in the Museum. Until the opening of the Provincial Archives in 1931 the Public Records²³ were housed in the Provincial Museum. In the 1907 Report of the Provincial Museum Piers wrote, "in addition to the Science Library and the Museum the Curator spends much time assisting in searches and other matters connected with the Public Records of

²¹. MG 1, Vol. 1050, Folder 1933 (clipping). PANS. Halifax Mail, April 21, 1933. "May Be Valuable Some Day: So Curator Adds to Collection."

²² Ian McKay, "History and The Tourist Gaze: The Politics of Commemoration in Nova Scotia, 1935-1965." p 105.

²³ The Public Records were first amassed and managed by Dr. Thomas Beamish Akins from May 29, 1857 until his death on May 6, 1891. After this Akin's nephew Francis Stephen Beamish, a barrister, took over the duties until the Province allocated the responsibility to Edwin C. Fairbanks, the marriage license clerk in the Provincial Secretary Office, in 1895. Finally the Records became the responsibility of Harry Piers as Curator of the Provincial Museum in 1899. MG1 Vol. 1051A PANS "Notes on History of Public Records of Nova Scotia", 1921.

the Province which are in his custody."²⁴ Again in 1909 Piers reported that in regard to the Public Records these duties "take much time to assist persons in searches for historical, legal and genealogical purposes."²⁵ With the establishment of a Board of Trustees for the Public Archives of Nova Scotia on March 13, 1929 by the Nova Scotia Legislature, Piers reported that once the construction of the Archives was complete he would handover the records which had been under his care for 32 years (May 25, 1899 - present). These records had been in the Museum's collection and under the care of Piers as part of the responsibilities of the Provincial Museum Curator as Deputy Keeper of Records. Piers goes on to document that in the transfer of materials would be 889 volumes, 317 plans, 42 chests (unbound, assorted docketed and catalogued papers) of which 320 volumes and 317 plans were accessioned during Piers' term of office.²⁶ Therefore, contrary to McKay's supposition, the state had been supporting the collection and maintenance of a "network of words" for some time and these documents were available to the public with the assistance of Harry Piers.

The collection of articles and documents for preservation defined a shift that had occurred in the collecting practices of the Museum. No longer was the collecting for the perpetual progress of human society, instead, there was a reminiscent,

²⁴ Piers, Report of the Provincial Museum and Science Library. 1907. p 94.

²⁵ Piers, Report of the Provincial Museum and Science Library, 1909. p 164.

²⁶ Piers, Report of the Provincial Museum and Science Library, 1929-1930. p 68.

gazing into the past. Society's view had turned from a progressive path to a historical path, a forward view to a backward view. No doubt the events of the past ten years, the Great Depression and World War I, made life of the past appear more idyllic, but this adoration was intermingled with a veneration for the pastoral days of Nova Scotia's past. Science had perhaps fallen from its pedestal of being inherently good. This reversal of attitude followed the same path as the sentiments of the Maritime Rights Movement. In reference to the Movement Forbes writes, "Maritime Rights was born amid a climate of optimism and progressive thinking. Only gradually as the decade (1920's) unfolded would there develop signs of the disillusionment, cynicism, and pessimism..."²⁷

This pessimism developed as society realized the industrialization of the late nineteenth century had not provided any guarantee of economic stability. Instead, Nova Scotia faced an economic crisis well before the onset of the Great Depression. Also, the end of World War I saw a surplus of industrial capacity which had been accelerated to meet war-time demands for iron, steel and other commodities. This meant a reduction in demand and hence production after the war.²⁸

The changing collecting practises of the Museum were reflecting a much broader social change taking place during the 1920s and 1930s. Piers was enveloped in this larger social shift which Ian McKay identifies as anti-modernism. McKay presents progressivism as "an approval of industrialization and

²⁷. Forbes. p. x.

²⁸. Reid. p. 161.

urbanization, often combined with a critique of certain of their attendant problems, whose remedy was thought to lie in the application of "scientific" reforms rather than in a change in the mode of production"²⁹ and anti-modernism as the "recoil from progress and its withdrawal in "nature" and "the folk".³⁰ If applied to Piers' collecting patterns, his early years would be termed progressive while his later collecting of anthropological, historical and ethnological materials would be termed anti-modern. McKay goes on to describe the role of the anti-modernist through the examination of Helen Creighton's career in "He is More Picturesque in his Oilskins:" Helen Creighton and the Art of Being Nova Scotian". Here McKay argues "before the 1920s and 1930s, Nova Scotians ... usually insisted the province was a modern, progressive place. But by the 1940s Nova Scotians were selecting from their past and present the things that suggested they were a "race apart", an island people: indeed, a Folk."³¹ Who were these folk, was a matter for debate, "but the idea that there were "folk" in society with their own oral culture who guarded the true history and traditions of "the people" goes back

²⁹ Ian McKay, "Tartanism Triumphant: The Construction of Scottishness in Nova Scotia 1933-1954" Acadiensis, vol XXI, no 2, Spring 1992. (Saint John NB: Keystone Printing & Lithographing Ltd.,) p12.

³⁰ McKay, "Tartanism Triumphant: The Construction of Scottishness in Nova Scotia 1933-1954", Acadiensis. p14

³¹ Ian McKay, "He is More Picturesque in his Oilskins:" Helen Creighton and the Art of Being Nova Scotian", New Maritimes. September/October, 1993. (Bridgewater, NS: Lighthouse Publishing) p17.

to the seventeenth-century."³² McKay argues that by the twentieth century the idea that these folk "guarded the national soul had seized the imagination of many middle-class city-dwellers who saw themselves as saving the cultural treasures of the folk from the modern society all around them."³³

As an anti-modernist Piers fits very well into the defined persona of a middle class city-dweller with a conviction of saving cultural treasures. His folk were any peoples whose way of life was being threatened by modernity, including the Acadian, the Scot, the Micmac and the Black's of Nova Scotia. His dedication to the collection of things both past and present is evident through the astounding growth in the Museum's collection.

Obviously, a change in perspectives had occurred within the career span of Piers. Whether Piers was consciously aware of this shift is questionable. Piers' actions and statements in the last twenty (20) years of his career reveal he was an anti-modernist. The accession books reflected the changing practices in collecting, yet, Piers continued to promote the Provincial Museum as one of the natural resources of Nova Scotia whose primary purpose was for the scientific advancement of the Province's economy; a statement not at all in line with his words or actions. Therefore, without thorough examination Piers and the Provincial Museum may at first appear out-dated, eclectic,

³² McKay, "He is More Picturesque in his Oilskins:" Helen Creighton and the Art of Being Nova Scotian", New Maritimes, September/October, 1993, p15.

³³ McKay, "He is More Picturesque in his Oilskins:" Helen Creighton and the Art of Being Nova Scotian", New Maritimes.pp 14-15.

when in fact its actions and practices were very much a product of the larger contemporary social condition.

A second development of the early twentieth century supported and contributed to the collecting shift. The development of the new social sciences presented society's past as new area of reputable study and therefore in need of collections to study. The growing interest in North American archaeology was reflected in the Museum's growing anthropological collection. Piers in researching the accessions began his own theorizing on the origins of the Micmac tribe in Nova Scotian. Piers concluded that based on the evidence of the stone implements in the collection that Nova Scotia was settled much later than Ontario and the United States. Furthermore, Piers hypothesized that the Eskimos inhabited Nova Scotia for much longer than before believed, at least until the time of the Norse expeditions.

Throughout this period of change the Museum had to remain a useful institution and therefore remain responsive to the needs of its visitors and public. To define this audience Piers supplied a detailed account of the Museum's attendance. Recorded were the local school visits, conventions, and special visitors (those of the museum community, university community, and notable researchers). In 1923 the Museum purchased an "automatic counting mechanism" to keep an accurate count of the number of visitors.³⁴ The numbers were then compared with attendance records of the major museums of London, England. From this

³⁴. Piers, Report of the Provincial Museum and Science Library, 1923. p. 6.

comparison Piers concluded that based on population ratios the Nova Scotia Provincial Museum's attendance was proportionately in line with the more notable institutes. The Provincial Museum was attracting 8.5% of Nova Scotia's population, the British Museum attracted 15%, the National History Museum of London 10% and the Science Museum of London 9%³⁵, therefore the average of 8,715.9 visitors a year³⁶ was a respectable showing for the Museum.

Through the keeping of such figures and comparisons, Piers was exhibiting the importance of the Museum to Nova Scotians and its progress in respect to the international museum community. The Reports containing these figures were submitted to the Commissioner of Public Works and Mines who made a report in the House of Assembly. Therefore, informing the Legislature of the popularity of the Museum was an essential portion of the report. One can only assume it had some bearing on the continued financial support for the Museum. Piers in his 1925 Report, using the attendance statistics, stated the "museum is an excellent opportunity to present natural resources of the province. No better place for displaying such things could be found. This is a matter which should be borne in mind."³⁷ Therefore, he was reminding the readers of the important role the Museum was fulfilling in Nova Scotia.

Piers took several other incentives to increase the

³⁵. Piers, Report of the Provincial Museum and Science Library, 1923. p. 7.

³⁶. Piers, Report of the Provincial Museum and Science Library, 1937-38. p. 8.

³⁷. Piers, Report of the Provincial Museum and Science Library, 1925. p. 6.

popularity of the Museum in the local community. First, in 1924 Piers had a signboard of a "neat and artistic design with Provincial Museum, Exhibits of Natural Resources of Nova Scotia in gilt letters on olive green panel"³⁸ placed on the lawn of the Technical College. Before this no outward sign made note of the Museum's presence in the College. Piers reported the result was an increase in attendance by 65% a day for the rest of the year.

Second, Piers made available to local newspapers the accessions books, whereby they reported on the interesting acquisitions of the Museum. The advertisement not only had an effect on attendance but also the collection. The articles "suggested to people the advantage of placing objects of local interest in the collection where they will be carefully labelled and preserved."³⁹ This no doubt had some effect on the rising number of history objects donated to the Museum during the 1920's and 1930's. Through signage and advertisements the Museum was entering into the main stream consciousness of Halifax, if not the Province.

The shift in collecting aims of the Museum did not occur in isolation but instead, in tandem with a changing museum audience. In 1922 Piers began to report on the presence of tourists and the season during which their attendance was most numerous. In 1925 Piers reported tourists were first noticeable on June 29 and the

³⁸. Piers, Report of the Provincial Museum and Science Library, 1924. p. 7.

³⁹. Piers, Report of the Provincial Museum and Science Library, 1925. p. 7.

tourist season lasted until late August.⁴⁰ By the late 1920's the tourist season had become the Museum's busiest time of year and February the slowest⁴¹, a pattern still very common in museum visitation today. Only in 1931-32 and 1932-33 Reports was a decrease in attendance noticed during the tourist season. Piers accredited this to the "financial stress in these times," indicating the Great Depression as having an effect on Nova Scotia travel as well as museum attendance.

In addition to tourists, Piers noted the attendance of "cruise ship" passengers as a large portion of the tourist season visitors. "English steamers arrived in Halifax in the Spring with many passengers going westward, while in port passengers spent two to three hours looking carefully over the specimens."⁴² Other ships in port, such as "show-boats" from New York, also brought a number of passengers to the Museum. Therefore, the popular trend of "summer vacations" was emerging during this period with the assistance of improved and accessible modes of travel. A special editorial of the New Maritimes 1987, author unknown, suggests there are five "ages" to Nova Scotian Tourism, the first two are of interest to this discussion. The first age is entitled Communing with Evangeline 1870-1920. The "age" is characterized by a fascination with Evangeline and the romanticized portrayal of the Acadians of Nova Scotia's Valley

⁴⁰. Piers, Report of the Provincial Museum and Science Library, 1925. p. 6.

⁴¹. Piers, Report of the Provincial Museum and Science Library, 1927. p. 7.

⁴². Piers, Report of the Provincial Museum and Science Library, 1928. p. 8.

region. Spurred on by Longfellow's poem Evangeline and the access provided through the opening of the Dominion Atlantic Railway, American tourists are drawn to Nova Scotia, "a land of Old European charm populated by Peasant folk."⁴³

The second "age" is entitled The Birth of Canada's Ocean Play Ground, 1920-1940. With World War One acting as a catalyst the author describes a society which longed to escape civilization and to seek out nature and quaint, natural people. Nova Scotia as Canada's Ocean Play Ground was promoted to embody these characteristics in its landscape and folk which were both portrayed as being untouched by modernity and civilization.

The Provincial government took an active role in promoting this early tourism. The government sponsored the development and improvement of the Province's infrastructure with paved roads, designating special tourist routes, parks, and the employment of artists and writers.⁴⁴ The driving force behind government involvement was Angus L. MacDonald, 1890-1954. In 1934, as Premier of Nova Scotia, MacDonald noted, "the importance as a tourist feature of retaining in Nova Scotia the distinctive habits and customs that characterize the various races represented in our population."⁴⁵ McKay in "Tartanism Triumphant" notes, "as a cultural figure, MacDonald was an anti-modernist who identified whole-heartedly with a rather hazily conceived

⁴³ Anonymous, "The Five Ages of Nova Scotian Tourism" New Maritimes, vol.5, no. 11/12, July-August, 1987. p8.

⁴⁴ Anonymous, "The Five Ages of Nova Scotian Tourism" New Maritimes, vol.5, no. 11/12, July-August, 1987. p8.

⁴⁵ McKay, "Tartanism Triumphant: The Construction of Scottishness in Nova Scotia 1933-1954", Acadiensis. p17

Scottish tradition."⁴⁶ It was this Scottish tradition which MacDonald packaged as Nova Scotia's cultural identity.

The additional government support for tourism and culture had repercussions on the Museum. The increased attendance and the importance of visitor numbers convinced the Museum to extend their hours through the tourist season in 1937. For the first time the Museum was open on Saturdays and Sundays from three to five o'clock. The increase in hours brought a total of 411 persons during these specific times, an average of 20.55 persons each two hour period as opposed to the average of 33.3 persons per day for that same year.⁴⁷

The increased numbers and public image of the Museum also brought a few incidents of vandalism. In the 1935-1936 Report Piers noted the theft of a valuable collection of Nova Scotian stamps valued at \$200.00. Piers also stated that on a yearly basis one or more specimens were lost to theft or vandalism.⁴⁸ The following year Piers reported the loss of a large silver Confederation Medal 1867-1927, a bottle of native pearls and a specimen was found behind the Museum torn in pieces. Piers accredited the latter to the vandalism of children.⁴⁹ Piers reacted by hiring two men from the Canadian Corps of

⁴⁶ McKay, "Tartanism Triumphant: The Construction of Scottishness in Nova Scotia 1933-1954", Acadiensis. p18

⁴⁷ Piers, Report of the Provincial Museum and the Science Library, 1937-1938. p. 8.

⁴⁸ Piers, Report of the Provincial Museum and Science Library, 1935-1936. p12.

⁴⁹ Piers, Report of the Provincial Museum and Science Library, 1936-1937. pp10-11.

Commissionaires to be guards and guides. In the Report of 1937-1938 Piers describes them as "neatly uniformed, intelligent, watchful yet helpful attendants who do their duty efficiently and in a discreet manner."⁵⁰

Perhaps Piers was protective of the collection in not allowing the exhibits to be touched, or to be loaned to other Museums, but, social changes had occurred and even today the Nova Scotia Museum and the Provincial Archives of Nova Scotia employ full time security to deter incidents of theft and vandalism. The growing popularity of the Museum obviously had its disadvantages. The public was encouraged to make use of the Museum yet a distance had to be kept between the viewer and the collection. The policy of "look but don't touch" was very evident in Piers' Museum. Lou Collins, a Research Associate with the Nova Scotia Museum, recalls a visit to the Provincial Museum when he was about eight years old. His recollection was of a room full of objects which were strictly to be looked at, never touched.⁵¹ Such policies only seem to undermine the original aims of an educational collection.

As Curator of the growing collection and Museum the strain on Piers was eased by the addition of Miss Florence Clark, a stenographer formerly with the War Records Office, to assist Piers in preparing a new and improved Catalogue of the Public

⁵⁰ Piers, Report of the Provincial Museum and Science Library, 1937-1938. p. 8.

⁵¹ Conversation with Lou Collins, Research Association, Nova Scotia Museum, January 24, 1992.

Records of Nova Scotia.⁵² The next year Mr. H. St.Clair Silver was appointed to the position of Museum and Library Assistant.⁵³ His main duty was to attend to the accessions, shelving, readers and borrowers, and other work in the Library while also assisting in the Museum.⁵⁴ On April 1, 1930 Silver terminated his employment only to return to the Museum in 1933. During the interim Miss Florence Archibald was hired. Archibald was a graduate of Acadia University where she studied Arts and had taken librarian courses offered through the library of the University. Archibald resigned in 1935 on the eve of her marriage; she was replaced the next year by Miss Evelyn M. Campbell, a graduate of Mount Saint Vincent University with a Bachelor of Arts and McGill University with a Bachelor of Library Science.⁵⁵ Both these women held the position of Assistant Librarian but in effect ran the Science Library. They updated the card catalogue using the Dewey Decimal System, introduced in the Library in 1927, and expanded the collection scope of the Library into texts of law, folklore, and home economics.

With the additional staff Piers made more of an effort to

⁵² PANS MG 1, Volume 1046-1051. "Harry Piers Diaries", January 13, 1921.

⁵³ Mr. Silver was appointed this position at the request of Premier Murray who told Piers to make work for Mr Harold St.Clair Silver (son of late William C. Silver) who was in a very bad way financially and was in need of money, he was to be employed for 2 months at \$20.00 per week. See PANS MG 1, Volume 1046-1051. "Harry Piers Diaries", March 20, 1921.

⁵⁴ Piers, Report of the Provincial Museum and Science Library, 1922. p.25.

⁵⁵ Piers, Report of the Provincial Museum and Science Library, 1935-1936. p. 88.

communicate the Museum's work outside its walls. Piers had taken an active public role in the Museum through the Provincial Exhibitions and correspondence but through the 1930's this role increased. First, Piers made an effort to speak publicly on the role of the Provincial Museum and the value of its collection. Piers regularly addressed the Nova Scotia Historical Society, the Halifax Progressive Club and the Nova Scotia Institute of Science. The addresses were usually on the topic of his latest research projects including many which were published such as Nova Scotia Master Gold and Silversmiths and Their Marks, Titus Smith: The Pioneer Naturalist of Nova Scotia 1768-1850 and the History of the Fortieth Regiment. Second, Piers' associations went beyond the museum field. In 1929 Piers was appointed the Nova Scotian representative on the Geographic Board of Canada, the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design Board of Governors and the Nova Scotia Science Library Commission. Piers frequently attended the Canadian Authors' Association Conventions and the Maritime Art Associations annual meetings. Such national involvement helped to broaden the profile and professional awareness of the Museum.

At the same time Piers was expanding the public role of the Provincial Museum's international interest in the museum profession was also growing through the development of professional journals and international standard setting committees such as ICOM (International Council on Museums). Britain began publishing museological developments and circulating ideas in 1902 with the establishment of the serial Museums Journal. By 1946 the International Council of Museums

was established by UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) and began publishing News providing an invaluable international information service.⁵⁶ Earlier publications coming out of both Britain and the United States aimed at surveying the influence and status of museums in North America had more direct relevance to the Provincial Museum. Included in these publications were the first surveys of Canadian Museums published in The Bulletin of the New York State Museum, 1903, which listed 21 museums in total, and the 1911 Museum Directory of the Museum Association which listed 40 museums and galleries in Canada. Of greater significance to Canadian museums was the 1932 Report on the Museums of Canada by Sir Henry A. Miers and Sydney Frank Markham, president and secretary of the Museum Association of Great Britain, for the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

Miers and Markham visited the Nova Scotia Provincial Museum August 31, 1930 at which time they inspected the collection, accession books and exhibit rooms. Piers stated in the Museum Report for 1930-1931 that the men had expressed approval of the collection and methods employed but thought the housing facilities to be very inadequate.⁵⁷ The publishing of the Report in 1932 sheds much light on the status of museums in Canada and allows for some comparison against which to measure the accomplishments and deficiencies of the Nova Scotia Provincial Museum. The study revealed 125 museums, of various kinds, in

⁵⁶ Kenneth Hudson, Museums of Influence (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987) p. 14-15.

⁵⁷ Piers, Report of the Provincial Museum and Science Library, 1903-1931. p. 9.

Canada. Nova Scotia with its population of 512,846 contained 11 museums, third only to Ontario and Quebec.⁵⁸ The most common types of collections were local antiquities, natural history and miscellaneous ethnological objects, which generally could describe the collection of the Provincial Museum.

In relation to the Provincial Museum the study, in short, called for better provincial and national organization and leadership. The lack of co-operation on both levels left many smaller museums unaware of wider museum developments. Such coordination was also to aim at upgrading the funding scheme in place for most museums including the Provincial Museum which was quoted as being "starved". Closely connected with the funding issue was administration and housing. To quote Miers and Markham:

in both building and equipment (the average Canadian museum) falls far below the average in the remainder of the North American continent. The average museum in Canada is housed in one or two rooms in a university, college, school, library or government building, scarcely any of which were designed with museum purposes in view.⁵⁹

This description is very apt in the case of the Provincial Museum which was reported as having very poor accommodation.⁶⁰ Miers and Markham further remarked that regardless of its disadvantaged quarters the Museum was a "bright spot in the Maritime Provinces, ... though congested and disordered[sic]

⁵⁸ Miers and Markham, p. 1.

⁵⁹ Miers and Markham, p. 9.

⁶⁰ Miers and Markham. p 10.

contains much material and might be made into a good museum."⁶¹

The ministerial administration system under which the Provincial Museum operated was seen as having serious drawbacks in the view of Miers and Markham. The Museum, as an office of the Provincial Government, was effectively administered and funded by the Department of Public Works and Mines through the Minister. The report defined such systems of administration as giving "ultimate control of a scientific or cultural institution over to men who may have neither the knowledge nor the interest with which to direct its affairs satisfactorily."⁶²

The Report concluded with a statement which for this study is very poignant. Miers and Markham stated:

The present museum situation may not unjustly be summed up by saying that for two generations, collectors and curators have devoted much time and labour to the making of museums, but that the time has come for a new generation to consider how to use them.⁶³

This statement is particularly poignant in relation to both Piers' and Honeyman's careers as Curator. Both men were devoted to building a museum, adding to its collection and making the collection a valuable research tool. Other than making the collection available to the public little structure existed to maximize the utility of the artifacts through exhibits. Displaying the collection was not designed around a specific theme, the passive process of viewing objects was to be inspirational and evocative in itself. However, society was

⁶¹ Miers and Markham, p. 10.

⁶² Miers and Markham, p. 26.

⁶³. Miers and Markham. p. 63.

defining the educational role of museums far beyond what the Provincial Museum was providing. To be "useful" a museum was not only to collect but to exhibit in a meaningful and educational method the material culture and natural history of a society.

Miers' and Markham's report was very important to the Canadian museum system as it provided a national survey of the existing museums in Canada. It helped to publicize the network of museums, of varying sizes and stages of development, evolving in Canada. With respect to the Nova Scotia Provincial Museum, the Report's value lay not in what it said but in the fact that someone else was finally saying it. The comments made on the Provincial Museum were not radical or new, Piers had been calling for better facilities, management and expanded role for the Museum long before 1932. The Report's importance lay in the fact that someone else was bringing weight to Piers' arguments by reporting the same conditions. The Report also, very wisely, distinguishes between the makers of museums and the users of museum.

The "new generation" which Miers and Markham refer to as necessary to decide how to use museums was not long in coming for Nova Scotia. On November 27, 1939 the Nova Scotian Institute of Science at their third council meeting addressed the condition of the Provincial Museum. Dr. Cameron, Deputy Minister of Mines, pointed out the overcrowded condition of the Museum and the need for space by the Technical College was creating a serious problem. C.B. Weld, Recording Secretary, noted a motion moved by Dr. Cooper and Mr. Todd that, Dr. King appoint a committee to

formulate a plan for consideration by council and the Institute.⁶⁴ On December 11, 1939 the resulting "Memorandum of Suggestion by the Nova Scotian Institute of Science Relative to the Provincial Museum" was submitted to D.C. Harvey, Provincial Archivist, for comment and later to the Honourable L.D. Currie, Minister of Mines. The memorandum addressed the Institute's concern for the present condition of the Museum, referring to its overcrowded and unsuitable building, its organization and future. Harold S. King, President Nova Scotian Institute of Science, wrote: "it seems probable that before long a general reorganization of the Museum, not only in respect to staff, but the general aims and purposes, may be necessary."⁶⁵

The fact that the Institute was taking such action is not surprising. The Institute and the Museum had long been associated due to the shared founding principles of promotion of science and industry. Dr. Honeyman had been a founding member of the Institute and Secretary from 1862 until his death in 1889 at which time Piers took over the office which he then held until his death in 1940. The relationship had been beneficial to both parties, the Museum had on many occasions relying on the lobbying power of the Institute's members and the Institute relied on the Science Library and Museum for housing its "Transaction" and specimens. The position of secretary was not formally designated in the records of the Institute as reserved for the Museum

⁶⁴ PANS MG 20, Vol 227 - "Minutes of the Nova Scotian Institute of Science, Third Council Meeting", November 27, 1939

⁶⁵ PANS, MG1, Vol. 1789 No. 2 Harold S. King, "Memorandum of Suggestion by the Nova Scotia Institute of Science Relating to the Provincial Museum", Dec. 11, 1939.

Curator but by practice a tradition seems to have developed.

Piers, having been Secretary for the Institute in 1939 may have instigated the Institute's intervention himself. Piers, being 70 years of age, may have hoped to make future arrangements for the Museum's management. The Institute of Science may also have been waiting for an opportunity to redirect the Museum to its original scientific emphasis. Regardless, both Piers and the Institute recognized the need for a new managerial system for the growing museum. The Memorandum stated:

a general policy in respect to the general management and future development of the museum should be formulated in the near future...and that the best interests of the Museum would be furthered by the establishment of a commission under the authority of the Minister of Mines with the duty of formulating the policy and of administering the affairs of the Museum.⁶⁶

The Commission, chaired ex-officio by the Minister of Mines, would include civil servants, presidents of colleges and universities, representatives from the Institute and two private citizens; hence, removing the curator from the governing role to a director-type role. The Commission also ensured that the Museum would benefit from the involvement of a variety of interested parties. Finally, the Commission would give continuity to the Museum's governance beyond the term of a government or Minister and the career of a curator.

The suggested reorganization was detailed under four headings: the Museum's purpose; desired qualifications in a curator; housing of the Museum and; the relationship between the

⁶⁶ PANS, MG1, Vol. 1789 No. 2 Harold S. King, "Memorandum of Suggestion by the Nova Scotia Institute of Science Relating to the Provincial Museum", Dec. 11, 1939.

Museum and the Institute. To expand upon the purpose of the Museum the Institute quoted Miers and Markham's Report and stated that the main functions of a museum as conservation, research and visual education. Therefore the Provincial Museum was to collect and conserve "in an unimpaired state objects of scientific importance as a heritage for future generations in this Province."⁶⁷ Research, the next purpose, was to have equal importance for "in this one word is combined the study of the collected objects,...the classification of materials, and publication of the results achieved."⁶⁸ The final function, visual education, was to be accomplished through the identification, labelling and arrangement of materials forming a comprehensive survey of all the natural resources of the Province; a function the Institute felt the Museum could accomplish better than any illustrated book.⁶⁹

With the purpose of the Museum identified its role could then be applied to specific interest groups. For the intellectual community the Museum could produce suitable travelling exhibits to be circulated through the schools. The Institute attempted to address the provincial role of the Museum

⁶⁷ PANS MG1, V. 1789, No. 2, Harold S. King, "Memorandum of Suggestions by the Nova Scotian Institute of Science Relative to the Provincial Museum", Dec. 11, 1939.

⁶⁸ PANS MG1, V. 1789, No. 2, Harold S. King, "Memorandum of Suggestions by the Nova Scotian Institute of Science Relative to the Provincial Museum", Dec. 11, 1939.

⁶⁹ PANS MG1, V. 1789, No. 2, Harold S. King, "Memorandum of Suggestions by the Nova Scotian Institute of Science Relative to the Provincial Museum", Dec. 11, 1939.

as well as avenues through which it could serve a larger population. Travelling exhibits for rural towns and schools was a means of decentralizing the collection.

With the changing purpose and role of the Museum the qualifications of the Curator were expanded upon. The professionalization of the museum field required specific skills and abilities be applied to each position. The curatorial skills for the Provincial Museum were based upon the qualifications set down by Sir Henry Miers. The curator should be a university graduate from a science background experienced in research and instruction, have administrative ability, be a skilled collector and possess the judgement necessary to build up the museum as a whole. Due to the nature of the Provincial Museum's collection the Institute noted a generalist, someone with a background in a variety of scientific fields, would be most applicable. This position would then hold the same rank, salary, staff and responsibility as the Provincial Archivist.⁷⁰

The third issue was the housing of the Museum. An argument since the founding of the Museum, the Institute insisted that a building comparable to the new Provincial Archives or the New Brunswick Museum was needed for the safety of the collection and the continued growth of the institution. The final issue was the relationship between the Institute of Science and the Museum. The Institute had remained active in the Museum's activities and development ever since it lobbied for its establishment in 1868.

⁷⁰ PANS MG1, V. 1789, No. 2, Harold S. King, "Memorandum of Suggestions by the Nova Scotian Institute of Science Relative to the Provincial Museum", Dec. 11, 1939.

In the 1901 "Presidential Address" to the Institute, Dr. A.H. MacKay stated: "the Provincial Museum, which although always the ward of the Government has always been considered to be the child of the Institute of Science...".⁷¹ In 1939 Harold S. King, President of the Institute, wrote: "The Institute of Science takes special pride and interest in the Museum, which is its offspring. Both organizations have a common scientific interest and are closely connected through long years of intimate association."⁷² This association, King writes, should continue and could flourish through a proper reorganization of the Museum's activities.

The response to the suggested reorganization was very favourable from D.C. Harvey, Provincial Archivist. A memo dated December 22, 1939 from Alan E. Cameron, Deputy Minister Public Works and Mines, to D.C. Harvey reports that the Minister has received the Memorandum from the Nova Scotian Institute of Science and was very appreciative of Harvey's comments.⁷³ In his correspondence to the Honourable L.D. Currie, Minister of Mines, King stated due to the Institute of Science's long relationship with the Museum and its present unsatisfactory condition and

in view of the great importance of the
Museum to the education and scientific life
of the Province and as a tourist

⁷¹ Dr. A.H. MacKay, "Presidential Address", 7 November 1901, Transactions vol.4, no. 10, 1901-1902, p xxxvii.

⁷² PANS MG1, V. 1789, No. 2, Harold S. King, "Memorandum of Suggestions by the Nova Scotian Institute of Science Relative to the Provincial Museum", Dec. 11, 1939.

⁷³ PANS MG 1 Vol. 1789 No. 2 "D.C. Harvey Papers: Correspondence Re: the Condition of the Provincial Museum" 1939

attraction, the Nova Scotian Institute of Science respectfully requests that as soon as possible adequate provisions be made for the Museum and for curators, and that in order to carry out these objects, the Government pass a Museum Act providing for the establishment of a commission to administer the Museum, subject to the authority of the Minister of Mines.⁷⁴

A Museum Act would by legislation outline Provincial responsibilities and the ongoing commitment of the people of Nova Scotia and its government to support and maintain a provincial museum. Contained in a following memo, dated December 27, 1939 from Harvey to Cameron, Harvey conveys his "hearty agreement" with the establishment of a Commission, which he felt once established would follow very much the lines of the reorganization laid out by the Institute. Harvey also said that the first course of action would be to get the commission to direct thought and action against the problem.⁷⁵

The changes suggested for the Museum did not occur during Piers' life time. Piers died while Curator of the Museum January 24, 1940. Evelyn M. Campbell wrote in the Report on the Provincial Museum and Science Library in 1938-39:

It is with profound regret I report the death of Mr. Harry Piers, Curator, Provincial Museum and Librarian of the Provincial Science Library on January 24, 1940. With over half a century of devotion to the history and science affairs of his native province, Nova Scotia may well mourn the passing of a distinguished scholar and

⁷⁴ PANS MG 1 Vol. 1789 No. 2 "D.C. Harvey Papers: Correspondence Re: the Condition of the Provincial Museum" 1939

⁷⁵ PANS MG 1 Vol. 1789 No. 2 "D.C. Harvey Papers: Correspondence Re: the Condition of the Provincial Museum" 1939

gentleman.⁷⁶

Piers' career with the Museum ended as the institution sat poised on the verge of a reorganization which would culminate in the bureaucratization and professionalization of the Provincial Museum. Piers' death symbolized the end of the "museum builders' era" and ushered in the new generation of "museum users". Piers, to review his entire career, can be seen as an innovator, a transitional personality in the history of the Provincial Museum. Piers allowed the Museum to adapt to changing social, political and economic environments. The main aim was to keep the Museum as a "useful" and "practical" institution. In the early years of Piers' career this was achieved by responding to public inquiries from prospectors and business, publicizing the Province's natural wealth at international, national and provincial exhibitions, and publishing widely the results of research on the Museum's collection. In Piers' later years the Museum responded with greater accessibility through extended hours, advertising, public addresses and collecting patterns which provided visitors with what they were interested in viewing.

The Museum was a responsive institution through turbulent times. The Museum's operations and structure reflected the social aspirations of progressivism, regional unity and anti-modernism. Therefore, not only did the Museum have its own history but its history is very much a part of Nova Scotia's political, cultural, social and economic history.

The Provincial Museum, over the forty-year career of Harry

⁷⁶ Evelyn M. Campbell. Report on Provincial Museum and Science Library, 1938-39. p 5

Piers, had made significant advances. As an institution it had grown out of an antiquarian tradition as a geological cabinet into a museum of industry and science, and eventually made steps towards becoming a museum of history. Throughout these developments occurred the enlargement and diversification of the collection, the articulation of a Museum mandate, the professionalization of the curator's function through defined tasks and skills, and the defining of the Museum as a public educational institution. Furthermore, as demonstrated by these developments the Museum was reflecting Nova Scotian's values, ideology and cultural identity.

Conclusion

The Provincial Museum of Nova Scotia was the product of two founding organizations, the Halifax Mechanics' Institute and the Nova Scotia Institute of Natural Science. Both these institutions believed in the promotion of science and education as a means towards economic success. The Mechanics' Institute aimed to educate the rising technically-trained, middle class in order to supply growing industries with imaginative and progressive workers who would participate in the advancement of technology. The Institute of Science aimed its efforts at the professional scientist to promote and disseminate research through publications and lectures.

These founding institutions promoted the nineteenth century progressive ideals of education and science. They drew together and created a forum of discussion for the scientific and educated persons of the Province. These institutions gave a collective voice for the newly emerging scientific professions. Their members actively collected and recognized the need for a Provincial institution to house and promote objects for public use and education. The collective voice these institutions provided possessed the political will and influence to demand and receive a government-funded Provincial Museum.

The Provincial Museum was designed to be a permanent exhibit of industrial resources and a museum of science and art. The aim was to promote industry and education. The responsibility of administering the collections donated by the Mechanics' Institute

and the Institute of Science fell to the first curator Dr. Rev. David Honeyman. With the background of a minister, educator and amateur-turned-professional, geologist Honeyman applied the resources of the Museum to the development of Nova Scotia. The collection was displayed for public viewing, show-cased at International Exhibitions and utilized in the formal educational setting of the School of Mines.

In its early years the Museum's collection lacked definition as the institution forged its role in Nova Scotia and the museum profession. Bringing a missionary-like enthusiasm, Honeyman collected world-wide specimens which constituted the majority of the collection. In his writings Honeyman did not confine himself to local controversies, but debated issues of universal appeal such as the conflict between religion and geology about the nature of Creation.

As the Museum matured, its direction, purpose, and audience was clarified. Honeyman's successor Mr. Harry Piers dealt much more with local issues and influences. A native of Halifax, his own interests were local and pragmatic. The Museum's reorganization under Piers reflected these qualities. Having not been catapulted into economic success and political power through the exploitation of its natural resources the Province questioned the "usefulness" of a Museum and failed to appoint a curator for ten (10) years after Honeyman's death. Piers in 1899 was therefore faced with reestablishing the Museum on local themes and collections, making it applicable to the regional economy and visitors. The Museum aimed to serve this audience through the collection and display of Nova Scotian products.

This need for "usefulness" influenced Piers greatly. Having waited ten years for the position of curator Piers was well aware that the Government was capable of halting funding. The Museum, without an Act of the Legislature, was not a permanent fixture and therefore had to continually remain relevant to the Nova Scotian people in order to secure its continued Government support.

Throughout the development of the Museum the personality of the Curator cannot be ignored as they affected the profile and perception of the Museum. Operated largely as a one-person operation throughout the careers of both Honeyman and Piers their interests, talents, affiliations could not help but affect the Museum's development. The Museum's profile was determined by the Curator's relationships with both the public and the Government.

With the reality of working as a one-person operation through most of Honeyman's and Piers' careers as well as the missionary-like zeal with which both approached their position came the involvement of their personal families in the Museum. Both Honeyman and Piers drew on support offered by their families to deal with some of the work load. Honeyman's daughter Isabella Goudge, who after his death took over the operations of the Museum must have volunteered on occasion in order to secure such a position. Piers drew on the assistance of his wife, Constance; his son, Edward; and his sisters Nora and Bessie. The family involvement reveals a very personal, familiar work place. The needed assistance reveals that the time consuming work of documenting and cataloguing, which did not need a great deal of skill, was too much for one person to accomplish. Therefore,

even though the Government documents list only one employee for the first fifty four (54) years, in truth the duties were far beyond the work load of one person.

By looking at the careers of both Honeyman and Piers one is struck by the longevity of their careers. Yet, the duration of each of these careers was typical of "early curators who stayed at the helm of their museum for decades and during their tenure never failed to bring single-minded dedication to their work."¹ This common characteristic has prompted historians to use such terms as "museum-maker" and "museum-builder", terms indicative of the scale of their accomplishments. In the cases of both Honeyman and Piers, when they took on the Curatorship they took on a lifestyle which allowed them to move in government, professional and educated circles. They, and their families, were thereby admitted in the company of the educated and powerful middle and upper classes of Halifax.

On a professional basis Honeyman was highly educated and qualified for the position of Curator. Yet he worked at a time when the museum as a profession was in its infancy. The duties relating to museum work were scarcely defined. Therefore the Museum under Honeyman followed along the lines of his personal areas of expertise, collecting, researching and publishing in the field of geology. The organization of the Museum as an institution lacked detail such as an acquisition policy and a collections management policy, whereas, during the Curatorship of Piers the role of a curator emerged with defined processes and procedures and an international identity. The Museum as an

¹ Susan Sheets-Pyenson, pp 19-20.

institution began keeping detailed records of collections and operations which were all directed through the institution's mandate. Piers struggled to remain relevant to his public in order to foster, promote and partake in a continuous learning culture. Therefore the professionalization movement had gone from the general to the specific, from the clarification of the sciences to the specific professions with in the disciplines.

The development of the Museum through its collection was a dynamic process. Not only did government policy and public interest affect the Museum's operations but also the Museum through careful examination of its collection, purpose and goals affected change and development. The practice of collecting, both institutional and private, affected what the Museum displayed as representative of Nova Scotian natural and human history. Change in mandates was necessitated from both the Nova Scotian people who donated collections as well as the Government who funded the institution's operations.

Tied into this dynamic interplay was the influence of economic survival. Government recognized and supported prosperous endeavours which spawned public interest and hence influenced the Museum. The growth in cultural tourism and its economic potential for Nova Scotia did not go unnoticed by the Government, the public, or the Museum. Therefore, collecting practises reflect the social, economic and political influences of the Nova Scotian condition.

The Provincial Government did support the Museum financially but its growing involvement was bringing about a new level of bureaucratization to culture. As Government participation grew,

the regulation of cultural identity became an acceptable activity. During the 1930's Nova Scotia witnessed the tourism industry developed into a viable cash industry. With the promise of economic development the Government's involvement extended to presenting an image attractive and marketable to the tourist. The Museum though had long been involved in creating an identity for Nova Scotia at home and abroad. After Confederation the Museum through the International and Provincial Exhibitions exhibited what the Province produced and hence the opportunities and lifestyle that could be had. With the anti-Confederation debates came the rise of regional identity during which time the Museum began to collect local objects and products. Finally, beginning in the 1920's and throughout the post-modern era the Museum focused its collecting on the areas of history and anthropology in an effort to define and preserve the vestiges of a "folkish" lifestyle which in rural Nova Scotia had escaped the effects of modernity.

This "acceptable" image was tied into the anti-modernist movement, a movement that was turning away from the progressive ideals of industrialization and towards the "simpler" ways of the past. People sought refuge from a quickly changing world in the solace of the pristine past, which still lived in the "untouched" portions of Nova Scotia. Therefore, one finds Government involvement in the promotion of this past linked with a surge in historical collecting, genealogical research, oral history and the shift in the collecting practices of the Museum. From the time of the Museum's founding its collections were promoted for the purpose of economic development. Through its first two

Curators the agents of this development had shifted dramatically from mineral resources to cultural resources.

The collection of the Museum had proven itself a powerful economic tool on several occasions. Drawing on the advantage that an institution can collect for posterity, beyond the life time of any individual collector, the collection came to define the institution. As exhibits of natural resources for the International Exhibitions the collection promoted industrial growth and investment potential. As cultural tourism grew in popularity the collection provided the raw materials from which to fashion a marketable regional cultural identity. By studying the Museum one is exposed to the contemporary perceptions, economic, social and political circumstance which influenced the development of its collection.

The history and development of the Nova Scotia Provincial Museum has been an integral influence in the development of Nova Scotia. The Museum offered a structure for a collection of Provincial scope. The Museum has been a teacher and a resource for intellectuals, students, the general public and tourists through the display of its collections. The Museum through its development of collections policies and institutional mandates has been a useful, proactive and responsive institution to its public. Its ability to change and to reflect society has been key to the Museum's success.

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